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The beauties of the Bosphorus

Pardoe, Julia

London, 1839-1840

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BEAUTIES OF THE BOSPHORUS,

BY MISS PARDOE.

AUTHOR OF "THE CITY OF THE SULTAN."

FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS BY W. H. BARTLETT.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS,
AND SOLD BY GEORGE VIRTUE, 26, IVY LANE.

W. H. Bartlett. J. Cousen.

THE SUMMER PALACE AT BEGLIER-BEY.

PALAIS D'ÉTÉ DE BEGLIER BEY. *DER SOMMER-PALAST ZU BEGLIER-BEY.*

London, Published for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839.

W. H. Bartlett. J. Carter.

INTERIOR OF ST. SOPHIA'S.

INTERIEUR DE SAINTE SOPHIE. *DAS INNERE DER ST. SOPHIENKIRCHE*

London, Published, for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839

W. H. Bartlett.

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H. Adlard.

VIEW FROM THE OCMEIDAN.

VUE DE L' OCMÉIDAN.

PROSPECT VOM OKMEIDAN.

London. Published for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839.

W. H. Bartlett.

J. B. Allen.

THIRD COURT OF THE SERAI BOURNOU.

TROISIÈME COUR DU SÉRAIL BOURNOU. *DRITTER HOF DES SERAIL BOURNOU.*

London, Published for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839.

W. H. Bartlett. J. G. Varrall.

THE CITY WALLS.

(Descending to the Port.)

MURS DE LA VILLE. *DIE FESTUNGSWERKE DER STADT.*

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W. H. Bartlett. H. Griffiths.

FOUNTAIN AND MARKET AT TOPHANNÉ.

FONTAINE ET MARCHÉ DE TOPHAUNE. *DIE FONTAINE UND DER.*

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W. H. Bartlett. R. Sands.

FOUNTAIN & MOSQUE OF CHAHZADÈ.

FONTAINE ET MOSQUÉE DE CHAZADE

DIE FONTAINE UND MOSCHEE

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W. H. Bartlett. W. Radclyffe.

INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF SULEIMANIÈ.

INTÉRIEUR DE LA MOSQUÉE DE SULÉIMANIE. *DAS INNERE DER MOSCHEE ZU SULEIMANIÈ.*

London, Published for the Proprietors by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839.

W. H. Bartlett.

G. K. Richardson.

THE PORT OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

PORT DE CONSTANTINOPLE.

DER HAFEN VON CONSTANTINOPEL.

London, Published for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue 26 Ivy Lane [illegible]

W. H. Bartlett.

J. Redaway.

COURT AND FOUNTAIN OF S^T. SOPHIA.

COUR ET FONTAINE DE S^TE SOPHIE.

DER HOF UND DIE FONTAINE ZU S^T. SOPHIE.

London, Published for the Proprietors by Geo. Virtue, 26 Ivy Lane, 1839.

W. H. Bartlett. S. Bradshaw.

ENTRANCE TO THE BLACK SEA.

(From the Giants Grave.)

ENTRÉE DE LA MER NOIRE, VUE DU TOMBEAU DU GÉANT. *SCENEREI DES SCHWARZEN MEERES VON DER RIESENGRUFT HER.*

London, Published for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839

W. H. Bartlett.

E. Benjamin.

RIVEN TOWER NEAR THE TOP KAPOUSI.

TOUR CREVASSÉE, PRÈS DE LA CIME KAPOUSI.

TRÜMMER DES THURMS AN DER SPITZE DES KAPOUSI.

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W. H. Bartlett. 34 R. Wallis.

THE SERAGLIO POINT.

POINTE DU SERAIL. *DAS ENDE DER SERAGLIO STRASSE.*

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W. H. Bartlett. J. Carter.

KAÏMAC SHOP IN THE TCHARTCHI.

KAÏMAC BOUTIQUE DANS LE BAZAR. DER KAUFLADEN KAIMAC IN DEN TCHARTCHI.

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W. H. Bartlett.

J. J. Hinchliffe.

YENIKEUIJ ON THE BOSPHORUS.

YENIKEUIJ SUR LE BOSPHORE.

YENIKEUIJ AM BOSPHORUS.

London, Published for the Proprietors, by Geo: Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1838.

W. H. Bartlett. F. W. Topham.

PALACE OF BELISARIUS.

PALAIS DE BÉLISAIRE. *DER PALLAST DES BELISARIUS.*

London, Published for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839.

W. H. Bartlett. R. Wallis.

A BENDT,

In the Forest above Belgrade.

UN BENDT, DANS LA FORÊT PRES DE BELGRADE.

EINE BIEGUNG IM WALDE OBERHALB BELGRAD.

London, Published for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839.

W.H. Bartlett. E. Benjamin.

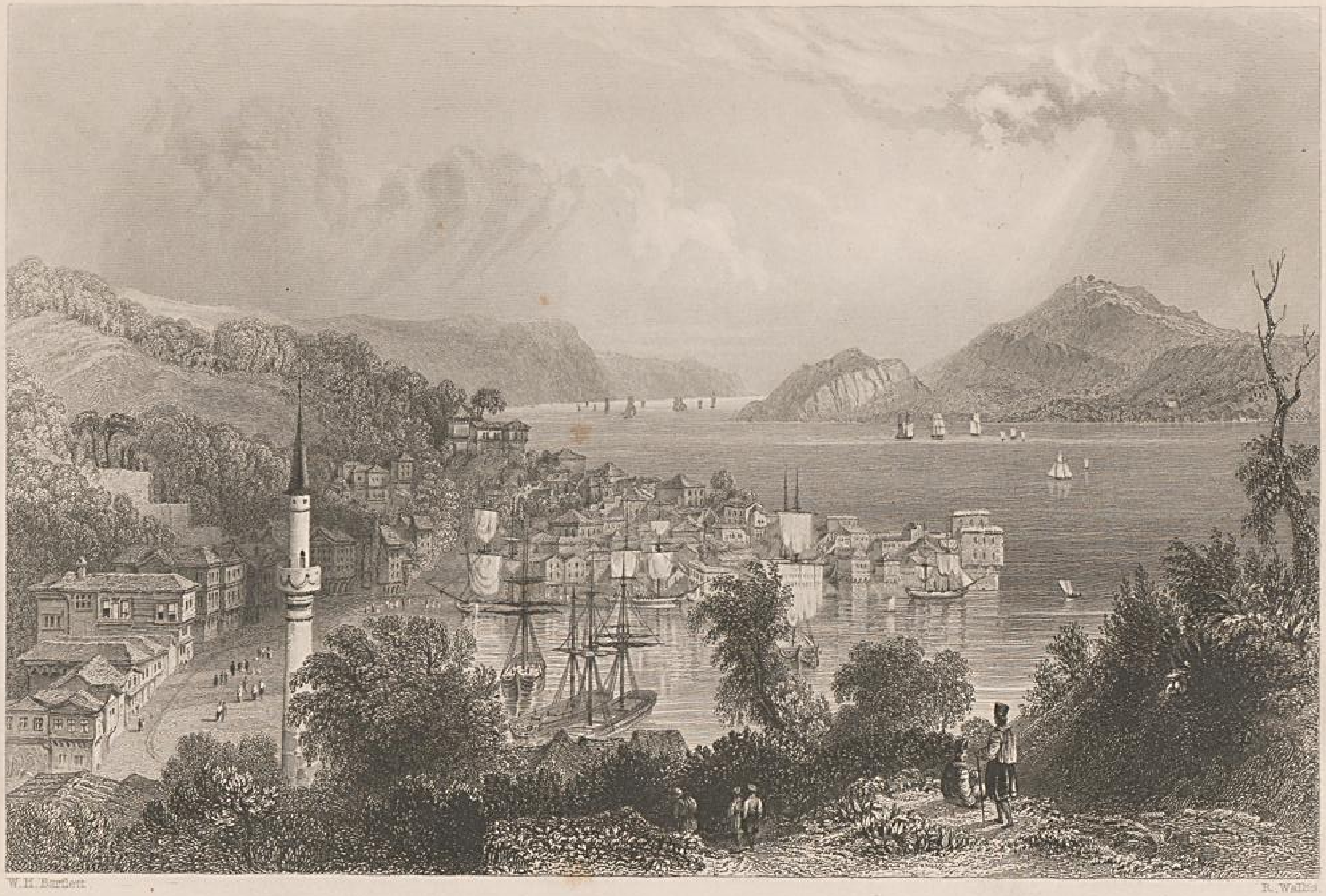
DOLMA-BATCHÉ.

(From the Necropolis of Pera)

DOLMA-BATCHE (VU DU CIMETIÈRE DE PÉRA)

DOLMA-BATCHÉ, (VOM LEICHENHOFE ZU PERA)

London, Published for the Proprietors by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, 1839



W. H. Bartlett.

R. Wallis.

THERAPIA AND THE GIANTS GRAVE.

THERAPIA ET LE TOMBEAU DES GÉANS

THERAPIA UND DIE RIESEN-GRUFT

London, Published for the Proprietors, by Geo. Virtue, 26 Ivy Lane, 1839.

ENVIRONS OF

CONSTANTINOPLE;

WITH

THE THRACIAN BOSPHORUS.

Drawn & Engraved by W. Hughes.

Scale of English Miles.

Note

The dotted lines, thus ------ indicate the courses of Aqueducts which supply the City with water.

CONTINUATION OF THE COAST
With the
PRINCES ISLANDS.
On half the Scale of the Map.

Longitude East from Greenwich.

London Published for the Proprietors by Geo. Virtue 26 Ivy Lane 1839.

it stands occupies a side of the Atmeidan, or Place of Horses, one of the most elevated portions of the city, and is only separated from the ancient race-course of the Romans by a handsome wall of white marble, intersected with gilt railing.

A singular feature in this mosque, and one by which its beauty is much enhanced, is the circumstance of its being the only temple in Constantinople having six minarets; and the peculiarity is stated to have grown out of the desire of its Imperial founder to possess a mosque in his capital rivalling that at Mecca in this particular. The permission of the Mufti having been with difficulty obtained, and the number of minarets at Mecca being increased to seven, in consequence of its not being deemed expedient that any other mosque should emulate that which is sanctified by the tomb of the Prophet, the temple built by Sultan Achmet at once exceeded in beauty every other in Stamboul. The arrangement of the minarets is effected in the most graceful manner; two of them only being attached to the principal building, while the remainder cut sharply and irregularly through the dense mass of foliage amid which the mosque is buried. Their galleries of Saracenic architecture look like fringes of lace, and their slender spires are touched with gold, and glitter in the sunshine; while the extreme beauty of the ancient trees, which are coeval with the building, throw out the dazzling whiteness of the whole pile, and their own sober depth of shadow relieves the eye with its refreshing coolness.

At the upper end of the Atmeidan stands the monument of Constantine, a square pillar, ninety feet in height, and indebted only to tradition for its name. And tradition has been but a sorry godmother, for, in the nineteenth century, she is unable to decide to which of the fourteen Emperors so called, it was really dedicated. It may have been the founder of the Empire—the first and almost the greatest of the whole; and then, indeed, it were worthy to exist for ever as the memorial of a strong arm and a brave spirit; but to him succeeded twelve other Constantines, supine and imbecile; mere cumberers of the earth, to whom it could but serve as a finger pointing to heaven to beckon thence the scorn of the angry gods upon his degenerate and dishonouring successors. It should have been—but, alas! it cannot—a record of the last, who washed away the reproach of the whole world upon his line, in the blood of a heroic heart—of that Constantine Paleologus, who offered himself up on the ruins of an expiring dynasty; the Imperial victim, who fell in the breach he had no longer strength to defend, and left a glorious name and a crumbling city to the victorious arms of the Infidels; the last and greatest of the Constantines, of whom no memorial now exists, save in the pages of the historian, and the strains of the poet. Had the column been indeed erected to his honour, the hand by which it was denuded might well have withered at its work; for the brazen covering by which the imperfect masonry was originally concealed has been torn away, and with it every vestige of its ancient splendour and appropriation. The stones, now laid bare to the unsparing touch of time, have every appearance of being carelessly and inartificially piled together; and traces of the huge brazen nails that formerly secured the outer surface, still remain to attest the Vandalism which no regret can now repair. To a casual observer, it appears incredible that so slight and imperfect a pile, so small in circumference and so great in height, should thus long have maintained its equilibrium.

Near this column, and about midway of the Atmeidan, are seen the remains of the Delphic Tripod—a relic rendered principally interesting by a tradition in which the Turks have firm faith, and which affirms, that when by any accident it shall be either destroyed or displaced, Constantinople will become once more a Christian capital. They furthermore assert that the first brazen head of the three serpents whose evolved bodies form the column, was lost in the transfer of the trophy to Stamboul; that the second was stricken off by Sultan Achmet, at a single blow of his scimetar, to prove the strength of his arm to his assembled troops; and that the third disappeared, no one knew how nor whither. It is certain that the fragment which now remains is headless, and, were it not for this national legend, almost unworthy of notice.

At the extremity of the square stands a handsome Obelisk of red Egyptian granite, raised upon a pedestal of white marble, coarsely embellished with the victories of Theodosius, which blend but badly with the elaborate hieroglyphics inscribed with such minute care immediately above them. The Obelisk is sixty feet in height, and is in itself very beautiful; but its charm is considerably weakened from its juxta-position with the architecture of another age and country.

But the Atmeidan has become in itself famous during the reign of the present Sultan by its historical associations—associations which are far more interesting than even the antiquarian treasures that it contains; for it was here that, during the destruction of the Janissaries in 1823, that fated body made a vigorous though ineffectual stand against the troops of their Imperial master. Thousands are said to have fallen in this square alone by the weapons of the soldiery of the Nizam Attick,* and the musketry to which they were exposed from the windows of the neighbouring houses. Here, too, several of the ringleaders were captured,

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* The attempt of the Sultan Selim to organize a regular army had nearly failed, from the fact of his having named the troops Nizam Djedid, or the New Regulation, which the present Sultan changed to Nizam Attick, or the Old Regulation, in order to appease the popular outcry against innovation; the first murmur being silenced by a declaration that the force then forming was a revival of that instituted by Solyman I., an assurance which at once reconciled the people to the change.

and hanged by order of the Sultan, on a large plane-tree near the gate leading into the outer court of the mosque, which has since been called by the Turks, " the Tree of Groans."

The interior of Sultan Achmet is chiefly remarkable, architecturally, for the immense size of the four columns which support the dome; for its spacious and elegant galleries, roofed with mosaic; and for its lofty marble pulpit. Its paramount claim to interest exists, however, in the fact, that it was within these walls that the Sandjâk Sherif, or Sacred Standard of Mahomet was exposed, after the refusal of the Janissaries to submit themselves to the will of the Sultan.

The Sandjâk Sherif had not been publicly exhibited in the capital for half a century; and the idea was a most politic one, as all the enthusiasm and fanaticism of the empire was sure to be enlisted under its folds. This standard, so revered by all good Musselmauns, is believed to have been the nether garment of Mahomet, and is the most solemn relic possessed by his disciples; and its appearance rallied at once every devout Moslem in the ranks of the sovereign.

A procession was formed from the Imperial Treasury to the mosque of Sultan Achmet; the Sultan, attended by all his court and household, was preceded by the Ulema and Softas of the city, rehearsing verses from the Korān. Public criers announced the exhibition of the holy standard throughout the capital, and the excitement was beyond all precedent.

When the cortège reached the mosque, which they entered by the great gate opposite the Atmeidan, the Chëëk-Islam mounted the steps of the pulpit, and planted the Sandjâk Sherif there with holy reverence; and as he did so, the Sultan pronounced an anathema against all those who refused to obey an authority so supported.

These circumstances throw a halo around the mosque of the Sultan Achmet which greatly enhances its actual beauty; and the traveller loiters willingly amid its dim magnificence, calling up visions of the past which stamp an extraneous value upon every detail of the edifice.

A curious and valuable collection of antique vases, of the most graceful designs and beautiful workmanship, many of them inlaid with gems and mother-of-pearl, are suspended throughout the mosque from transverse bars of iron; together with the eggs of ostriches, emblems of dependence on Providence; ears of corn, the symbols of plenty; and similar typical decorations.

But the glory of Sultan Achmet, as an edifice, is its inner, or cloistered court, surrounded by graceful Saracenic columns, whose capitals resemble clusters of stalactites, forming the base of arches of extraordinary beauty. In the centre of the court, which is paved throughout with rich marble, a stately fountain, surmounted by a handsome cupola, gives an aspect of refreshing coolness to the enclosure. On the left hand of the gate of entrance is situated a balcony, upon which opens one of the windows of the mosque, whence all firmans of public interest are read aloud to the people; and, taken altogether, whether as a public building, as a religious monument, or as the site of stirring incident, there is no temple in Stamboul more worthy of attention than the Imperial Mosque of Sultan Achmet.

THE COLUMN OF MARCIAN.

> There Rome's proud eagle, carved in living stone,
> Is lifted to the skies, and forms the base
> Of a still prouder statue, now unknown—
> Which, when first raised to its imperial place,
> Had thought to make futurity its own.
>
> MS. Poem.

The Column of Marcian stands near the gate of Adrianople, in the garden of a Turkish house; and is a fine remain of Roman splendour. The pedestal of the pillar is ornamented with wreaths of oak leaves; the shaft is eighty feet in height; and on the richly carved Corinthian capital rests a block of marble supporting a second capital, formed by four gigantic eagles, sustaining upon their extended wings the base of a statue now entirely destroyed. The name of the column would infer that the missing effigy was that of the Emperor Marcian; but many of the Greeks cling to the tradition that it was erected in honour of one of the heathen divinities, by whose statue it was surmounted: and they ascribe it indifferently to Apollo, Mercury, and Mars. By the Turks it is called *Kestachi*, and valued only as a stately feature in the landscape; although the worthy Moslem in whose garden it stands, is evidently much gratified by the admiration it elicits from strangers. A venerable olive-tree, whose rude and knotted trunk is in a state of picturesque decay, leans against the slender shaft; flowers bloom at its base; a cluster of dark cypresses, looking, despite their great height, like mere pigmies beside this lofty monument of human art, are in its immediate vicinity; while a small mosque, and a modest mausoleum, peep out in the distance from among the leafy trees of the enclosure.

Occasionally, as the tourist meditates beside it, or the artist, seated near the mouldering wall which separates it from the road, transfers its noble proportions to his canvass or his sketch-book, the cheerful voices of women come on his ear from the latticed casement of the dwelling by which it is immediately overlooked: nor can he fail to feel that he is himself the subject of their harmless mirth; his foreign and tasteless garb, his unturbaned head, his beardless chin—even the very nature of his occupation, is food for laughter and for jest; while the certainty of a present to old Akif, which is never refused by those who visit his classic garden, adds, in no inconsiderable degree, to the gratification of his harem, when the apparition of a wandering giaour comes to relieve the tedium of their existence.

Old Akif himself is also a worthy subject for the easel of the artist; he seems to have grown grey with the column, and to have withered with the olive-tree. The innovations of late years have wrought no reform in the garb or manner of Akif; he looks like an Asiatic Turk who had never gazed on the glories of the "Golden City." His turban is large and loosely folded; his tchalvar* are of the widest dimensions; his open sleeves of the extremest length; his waist-shawl is freighted with an ample tobacco-purse; and he leans upon his chibouque with an air of sturdy and majestic independence finely demonstrative of his proud and self-centered disposition. He does the honours of the monument like one who is conscious that he is conferring a favour. He neither murmurs at the heartless haste, nor at the tedious delay of his visitors; and he ultimately receives the gratuity of his departing guests with all the quiet and unmoved composure of a creditor tendering his hand for the payment of a well-won debt. The venerable Akif is no antiquarian in spirit; to him stones are stones, and inscriptions which do not treat of the Korān a mere waste of words; and as the smoke from his chibouque curls slowly over his long white beard, many a thought probably passes through his placid brain, not altogether flattering to the earnest Frank who scrambles about the ruin, seeking for traces of a time and people now passed away for ever.

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* Trowsers.

SCUTARI.

"——— the place of thousand tombs
That shine beneath, while dark above
The sad but living cypress glooms
And withers not, though branch and leaf
Are stamp'd with an eternal grief,
Like early unrequited love."

BYRON.

THE first object connected with the city of Constantinople visible to the voyager who approaches it from the Dardanelles, is the cypress canopy of the great Cemetery of Scutari. Its dark mass of funereal foliage rests like a thunder-cloud " no bigger than a man's hand" against the clear blue sky for a time; and then, as the vessel ploughs her way through the yielding waters, gradually looms out larger and larger upon the horizon, until the mind begins to take in some idea of its vast extent.

This extraordinary necropolis, perhaps the largest and most picturesque in the world, stretches its cold and silent shadows over hill and valley, covering upwards of three miles of country with the sable livery of death, and shutting out the sun-light from unnumbered graves. The Moslem, when he breathes his last, may truly be said to have sunk into " the quiet grave;" for his ashes are never desecrated for the sake of the poor space which they fill up; no second tenant ever crushes yet more deeply the remains of the original occupant of each narrow tomb; and thus the burial-places yearly extend themselves in every direction, and form a prominent feature in the Turkish landscape.

Nothing can be conceived more solemn than the effect of the deep and chilling gloom of the Cemetery of Scutari, with its thousand intersecting paths dimly perceptible in the noon-day twilight; and its million head-stones leaning against each other, as though to dispute every inch of the thrice-holy earth they occupy.

As the Turks have a superstition, in which they place implicit faith, that ere the end of the world the Mahommedans are to be expelled from Europe, they universally covet a grave in this Asiatic wilderness of tombs, in order to preserve their ashes from the contaminating contact of the giaour; and thus, year after year, the cypress-forest encroaches on the purple vineyard, and the golden cornfield; the blossoming fruit-trees, and the graceful maize waving its long and flexible leaves to the breeze, gradually disappear. The scythe of the reaper and the knife of the vintager are no longer busy; for the harvest now preparing where the husbandman once toiled, can be gathered in only on the Last Day!

It is the custom at every Turkish burial for the officiating Imaum, or priest, to plant one cypress at the head and another at the foot of each grave; and hence, although the greater number necessarily perish for want of air and space, those which survive still stand sufficiently close to form a dense and gloomy forest. In a few instances, open spaces have been left (similar to that selected by the artist) in order to promote the entrance of the exterior air, and thus prevent the danger of infection from the exhalations of the graves; but the greater portion of the cemetery is one unbroken stretch of death-cumbered gloom, where turbaned head-stones and lettered columns gleam out among the dark boles of the cypresses like spectres of the past. Many a lesson may be learnt within the silent precincts of this vast necropolis. The gilded tombs enclosed within railings, and surmounted either by a rose-branch to designate the mistress, or a turban to indicate the master of the family, surrounded by the same emblems more minutely executed, are pompously inscribed with the names and titles of some powerful and wealthy race, who lie apart, and moulder unmingled with more common dust; though the depth of their slumber and the quiet of their rest are enjoyed as fully by the tenants of the less aristocratic graves on every side. The time-worn tablet, whose weight has pressed down the crumbling soil beneath it until it has lost its hold, lies half buried among the rank grass on one hand; while on the other, gilded and dazzling columns tell their tale of death, undefaced by the foul weather-stains which have made their predecessors recordless; and thus the work of years goes on—generation succeeds to generation even in this city of the dead—there lie the departed of yesterday and to-day, and there is "ample space and verge enough" for those who are to follow to-morrow. But a darker consciousness even than this grows on the wanderer who penetrates the depths of the still necropolis, as he pauses beside a group of lofty and turban-crested columns, each rising from a small square slab of stone—they tell of death, but the minute block of granite or marble at their base does not indicate a grave, for there is not the space allowed, narrow as are the limits needed, to lay the limbs of a human being decently and reverently in the earth. The eye of the stranger has not deceived him; for each of those small stones covers only the head of a victim to his own folly, or to the intrigues of others, whose dishonoured trunk found a fouler resting-place—some baffled politician, or betrayed traitor, or hated rival, cut off amid his dream of pride and power, and denied even the grave which would have once more levelled him with his kind. What a mockery are the elaborate turbans carved above each dissevered head; minutely tracing forth in their form, and fold, and size, the rank of the poor victim of whom a mere portion lies beneath, and serving as a perpetual scoff—the more bitter, that it is wordless! but the graves of love are there also, flower-strown, and tended by the gentle hand of regret and tenderness; and it is a relief to turn to these, and to forget that any hand save That One which holds the breath of a world within its palm, has helped to people the cypress-canopied Cemetery.

Every Turkish burial-place has its local superstition, but that of Scutari is the wildest and the most poetical of them all, and must not be passed over in silence.

The Bosphorus is haunted by clouds of birds, about the size of thrushes, and of dark plumage save on the breast, where the feathers are of a pale blue; they are said to be a species of *alcedo,* but as the Turks will not permit them to be destroyed, and it would be dangerous for any Frank to fire on them, the ornithologist has had no opportunity of determining the fact. These singular birds are never seen either to feed or to alight; nor will they deviate from their course even to admit the passage of a caïque, when, as occasionally occurs, they are flying very low; they merely rise a few feet higher in some instances, and in others suffer the boat to cleave its way through them without appearing to heed the fact. They fly rapidly, and in perfect stillness, from the Black Sea to the Propontis, where they instantly turn and wend their way back to the Euxine; arrived there, they wheel again, and return to the Sea of Marmora; and thus, from day-dawn till twilight, from day to day, and from month to month, they come and go along the channel without any apparent end or aim—without an instant's repose, without food, and without the slightest deviation from their course.

No instance of one of these singular birds having been picked up dead has ever occurred; and so mysterious and unearthly are their habits, that they have obtained the appellation of the "damned souls," from a tradition, partially believed, that they are the condemned spirits of the unholy ones, whose ashes have found a resting-place in the great cemetery, but whose spiritual essence is not permitted to mingle with the purer immortality of their less sinful neighbours. This superstition is supposed to have arisen from the circumstance, that, during a time of tempest, when the storm-wind will not permit the migratory flight of the birds along the channel, they fly skrieking to the cypress forest of the necropolis for shelter; and as these are the only periods at which they are known to emit a sound, the credulous in such matters—and in the East they are not few—have decided that their sharp thrilling cry is one of agony; and that they are compelled, during the continuance of the elemental warfare, to narrate to each other the catalogue of crime which has cut them off from the repose of the grave, and condemned them to everlasting wandering over the face of the waters!

But in describing the peculiarities of the great Asiatic Cemetery, the "Silver City" of Scutari, to which it is so striking an appendage, must not be passed over without notice. Its gleaming houses crowd the graceful point of land which forms the termination of the mountain-chain that shuts in the Asian side of the Bosphorus, and then falls back only to be bathed at its base by the wider and wilder waves of the Sea of Marmora. Nothing can be imagined more perfectly beautiful than the position of the town of Scutari, as it sweeps round this graceful point, and throws the long shadows of its arrowy minarets far across the ripple of the Bosphorus towards the European shore; and then, where the rocky coast, at the base of which it is set like a pearl, recedes before the billows of the Propontis, is itself overshaded by the majestic Bulgurlhu Daghi, dark and frowning, and standing out amid the clear blue of heaven in stern defiance, a mark for the storm and the tempest; while as the sun-light falls upon the shimmering waters at its foot, towards which the hanging gardens of the principal dwellings lovingly incline, clothing the rocky descent with fringes of changeful embroidery, its graceful outlines are lengthened or widened in fairy circles as the fitful breeze plays over the surface of the glittering sea. Clusters of houses are framed in by luxuriant foliage; imperial kiosques, painted in rainbow tints, give an air of midsummer gladness to its shores; verdure descends in rich masses to the very lip of the two seas by which it is laved; and not an arrow's flight from its quay stands the "Maiden's Tower," a small and picturesque castle, built upon so diminutive a rock that its foundations cover the whole surface, and give to the edifice the appearance of floating upon the waves.

This little fortress, with its lofty tower and castellated walls, is also the subject of a legend; and thus it runs:—A certain Sultan, whose name is now forgotten, had a most fair daughter, the only child which had been vouchsafed to him by the Prophet, and on whom his heart was anchored, as on his best hope. Beautiful as a Houri, graceful as a Peri, and gay as the summer wind when it sweeps over the rose-garden of Nishapor, the girl was growing into womanhood, when the anxious father consulted a celebrated astronomer on her future destiny; who, after having carefully turned over the party-coloured pages of the mysterious volume of human fate, uttered the frightful prophecy, that, in her eighteenth year, she was to become the prey of a serpent.

Horror-stricken at so dreadful a denunciation, the agonized Sultan caused the erection of the Guz-couli, or Maiden's Tower, wherein he immured his lovely daughter; in order, by thus cutting her off from the very earth until the fateful period should be overpast, to remove even the possibility of the threatened calamity. "But," pursues the legend, "who can war against his *kismet?** Who can control his *felech?*† What is written, is written; and the page of the future had been read." Death came to the princess in a case of fresh figs from Smyrna, in which a small asp had been concealed; and she was found on her eighteenth birth-day dead upon her sofa, with the fruit beside her; and the reptile, like that which poisoned the crimson tide in the veins of the imperial Cleopatra, lying gorged and loathsome upon her bosom!

The tale is a pretty one; but there is another tradition, which terminates somewhat differently, and which clothes the serpent in the garb of a young Persian prince, whose curiosity having been aroused by the marvellous whisperings around him of the matchless beauty of the imprisoned fair-one, had dared to row his caïque by night beneath the very walls of the Guz-couli; and had contrived an interview with the captive, won her heart, and contrived by means of a silken cord and a strong arm, to carry her off at the very crisis of her fate! The reader can select his own version of the "eventful historie."

The Fruit-market of Scutari touches on the shore; and in the midst stands an ancient fountain, of simple but pleasing architecture. The volume of water is very great, and its quality almost unrivalled; it descends from the dusky mountain of Bulgurlhu; and from some superstition, which it would be difficult to comprehend, the Turks never permit its supply to be appropriated by the inhabitants of the European shore of the channel, even on occasions of the greatest drought; and thus, in 1836, when water was frightfully scarce, and was transported from the villages at the very mouth of the Black Sea to the thirsting city, at immense cost both of time and money, the fountain of Scutari was suffered to run to waste, and to pour the overflow of its tempting and abundant streams into the Bosphorus.

The view from the market across the Channel is very beautiful; and the locality in itself eminently characteristic and interesting. The profuse supply of the most luscious and delicious fruits is amazing to an European eye, while the prices at which they are sold are equally astonishing. The grapes and melons of Scutari are renowned throughout the East; its figs almost rival those

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* Fate.

† Constellation.

of Smyrna; and there is no island throughout the Archipelago where the pomegranate is richer or more juicy. Oranges, lemons, peaches, and the delicate golden apple, which resembles that of the West only in form, also abound; and with a handful of piastres, the amused Frank, determined on a harmless experiment, may freight his caïque with an offering which would do no discredit to Pomona herself.

MUSICIANS AT THE ASIAN SWEET WATERS.

We're coming, we're coming to gladden the throng,
With laughter and legend, with music and song;
Dark eyes gleaming round us; light tones on the air:
And the greetings of childhood to welcome us there;
A sun in the sky, and a breeze on the sea,
Oh! shew us the minstrels more happy than we!
MS. POEM.

A DESCRIPTION has already been given of the Asian Valley of Sweet Waters; of its majestic plane trees, its laughing river, and its delicious greensward; of the young beauties who throng its recesses, the Sultanas who grace its drives; and the rosy children who make its echoes vocal. But its musicians are a race apart, and the artist demands for them

"A separate mention and a guarded page."

and in truth they are well worthy of it!

Their minstrelsy is none of the sweetest; it requires not the ear of science to detect their discords, nor the taste of the poet to smile at their absurdities; and yet, it is impossible not to welcome them with smiles, for you know that joy and laughter follow in their train: the calpac of the one, and the turban of the other, alike covers a shrewd and a busy brain. How much may be told in a song, or hinted in a stanza! Look at the group around them! The matron is there, wary and watchful, remembering the years of her own youth, and the evils by which she was then surrounded; and yet beguiled by the "cunning minstrelsie" of the wandering bards into temporary forgetfulness of all save the charm of their ready wit and simple seeming: the young beauty is beside her, veiled and draped with jealous care, it is true, but with a heart as warm, and a fancy as buoyant, as though yashmacs and lattices were unknown in the land of her birth; her pale cheek flushes, and her pulses quicken as she listens; for to her the songs of the pilgrim-bards tell a deeper and a dearer tale than to her placid grand' dame; while the attentive children gather together in groupes, and gaze and hearken in mute and wondering admiration. Many a wild legend do the minstrels chaunt, in a slow, drawling, monotonous tone, which can add but little to the charm of the subject-matter of their song; while an occasional rasp of the grating tambourine, a rapid rattling of its silver bells, and the hollow sound emitted by the small Arab drums which are their usual accompaniment, alone serve to relieve the tedium of recitation. Pleasant, however, must be the lays which they pour forth; for many of their fair auditors will remain unweariedly for hours, listening and applauding with low-breathed "Mashallahs!" and "Ajaibs!"* and without a single symptom of ennui.

Wallachian and Jewish musicians are common; and the extraordinary length of time during which they will dwell upon a single note, with their heads thrown back, their mouths open, and their eyes fixed, and then follow it up with a whole sentence, rapidly and energetically uttered, is most singular. But these oriental troubadours are not without their rivals in the admiration of the veiled beauties who surround them; conjurors, improvvisatori, story-tellers, and Bulgarian dancers, are there also, to seduce away a portion of their audience; while the interruptions caused by fruit, sherbet, and water-venders, are incessant. They are, however, the most popular of all; and a musician, whose talent is known and acknowledged, seldom fails to pass a very profitable day at the Asian Sweet Waters on every occasion of festival.

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* Wonderful!

BEGLIER BEY.

> ——————— "The coast
> Lay at this period quiet as the sky,
> The sands untumbled, the blue waves untoss'd,
> And all was stillness, save the sea-bird's cry,
> And dolphin's leap, and little billow cross'd
> By some low rock or shelve that made it fret,
> Against the boundary it scarcely wet."
>
> * * * * *
>
> * * * * *
>
> "Mother-of-pearl, and porphyry, and marble,
> Vied with each other on this costly spot;
> And singing birds without were heard to warble;
> And the stain'd glass which lighted this fair grot
> Varied each ray." BYRON.

THE Sultan's summer-palace of Beglier Bey, on the Asiatic shore, is the most elegant object on the Bosphorus. It is an irregularly fronted and extensive edifice, stretching along the lip of the channel, whose waves wash its long and stately terraces of glittering marble, and sometimes penetrate into their latticed and mysterious recesses. The building is of wood; and the harem presents a line of gables perforated with long ranges of windows secured by most minute screens of gilded wood: the Salemliek, containing the State apartments, the private saloons of the Sultan, and the rooms occupied by the Imperial household, is an octagonal pile, of which the pointed roof is surmounted by a crescent supporting a star, whose richly gilded points flash in the sunshine like lambent fire. The entire building is painted in white and pale gold; and it has rather the appearance of a fairy-palace, called into existence by enchantment, than the mere every-day work of human hands.

A marble gate, terminating the terrace in the direction of the city, admits the visitor into a garden bright with flowers, and redolent of perfume; where fountains for ever fling their delicate jets of water against the sky, with a soft and soothing music well suited to the spot; and where birds of gorgeous plumage wander at will, as rainbow-tinted as the blossoms amid which they sport. A line of gilt lattices veils the seaward boundary of this delicious retreat; and, passing beside these, an inlaid door of stately proportions gives admittance to the Hall of Entrance.

"The first glance of the interior is not imposing. The double staircase, sweeping crescent-wise through the centre of the entrance, contracts its extent so much as to give it the appearance of being insignificant in its proportions; an effect which is, moreover, considerably heightened by the elaborated ornaments of the carved and gilded balustrades and pillars. But such is far from being the case in reality; as, from this outer apartment, with its flooring of curious woods, arabesqued ceiling, and numerous casements, open no less than eight spacious saloons, appropriated to the Imperial household.

"Above this suite are situated the State Apartments, which are gorgeous with gilding, and richly furnished with every luxury peculiar alike to the East and to the West. The Turkish divans of brocade and embroidered velvet are relieved by sofas and lounges of European fashion—bijouterie from Geneva—porcelain from Sèvres — marbles from Italy — gems from Pompeii—Persian carpets—English hangings; and, in the principal saloons, six of the most magnificent, if not actually *the* six *most* magnificent pier-glasses in the world: a present to the Sultan from the Emperor of Russia, after the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. Enclosed within a deep frame of silver gilt, bearing the united arms of the two Empires, these costly glasses reflect in every direction the ornaments of the apartment, and produce an effect almost magical; while the highly-ornamented cieling, richly wrought with delicate wreaths of flowers, and the bright-coloured carpets covering the floor, combine to fling over the saloon an atmosphere of light and gladness, which is increased by the dazzling glories of the parterre spread out beneath the windows, with its flashing fountains, golden orangery, and long line of gleaming lattices.

"The Reception-room is small, and remarkable only for the comfortably-cushioned divan on which the Sultan receives his visitors; and the noble view that it commands of the channel, from the Seraglio point to the Castle of Mahomet.

"The Banquetting Hall is entirely lined with inlaid woods of rare and beautiful kinds, finely mosaiced; the ceiling and the floor being alike enriched with a deep garland of grapes and vine leaves, flung over groups of pine-apples of exquisite workmanship.

"Hence, a long gallery conducts to the private apartments of the Sultan; and on every side are graceful fountains of white marble, whose flashing waters fall with a musical monotony into their sculptured basins. In one, the stream trickles from a plume of feathers, so delicately worked in alabaster that they almost appear to bend beneath the weight of the sparkling drops that gem them: in another, the water gushes forth, overflowing a lotus-flower, upon whose lip sports a group of Cupids. The private apartments, which separate the harem from the state wing of the palace, are the very embodiment of comfort: two of them are lined with wickerwork, painted cream-colour—the prettiest possible idea, executed in the best possible style.

" The harem is, of course, a sealed book; for, as the ladies of the Sultan's household have never been allowed to indulge their curiosity by a survey of that portion of the palace appropriated to Mahmoud himself, it can scarcely be expected that any intruder should be admitted beyond the jealously-barred door forming their own boundary."*

The Bath of this imperial residence has already been described in an earlier portion of our work; and we have now only to notice the extensive and princely gardens, which rise, terrace above terrace, to the very summit of the mountain which overhangs the palace. Each terrace is under the charge of a foreign gardener, and arranged according to the fashion of his own land; but the finest portion of the grounds contains a noble sheet of water, called the Lake of the Swans, whose entire surface is frequently thickly covered with these graceful birds, of which the Sultan is so fond, that he sometimes passes hours in contemplating them as they glide over the still water; and, in the words of Wordsworth,

> " Swim double—swan and shadow."

Boats, gaily gilded and painted, are moored under the shadows of the magnolias, willows, and other beautiful trees which form the framework of the lake; and about fifty yards from the bank stands a pretty, fanciful edifice, called the Air Bath,—an elegant retreat from the oppressive heats of summer; whose roof, and walls, and floor, are alike formed of marble, wrought in marine devices; and whose fountains, trickling down the walls, pour their waters over a succession of ocean-shells, marine divinities, sea-weeds, and coral reefs; and keep up a constant current of cool air, and murmur of sweet sound, perfectly charming. Inferior apartments branch off on either side from this beautiful saloon, and altogether it is as pretty a toy as ever exhausted fancy in its invention.

A gilded kiosque glitters amid the group of cypresses and plane-trees by which the last height is crowned; and the artist has ably portrayed the magic beauty of the scene which is mapped out beneath him as he stands beside the boundary-wall of the palace garden. The undulating shores, belted with houses, and sheltered by richly-wooded hills,—the castle-crowned rocks,—the gleaming sails of the passing vessels upon the channel,—and, far away, the "storm-tossed Euxine," lashing its billows as if in scorn against the fortress-barriers that bristle its shores—all combine to form a picture well calculated to arrest the eye of the painter and the admiration of the tourist.

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* City of the Sultan.

SAINT SOPHIA.

> "Sophia's cupola, with golden gleam."
>
> BYRON.

THE great object of every lion-hunting traveller in Turkey is to obtain ingress to the mosques; and as this privilege is only accorded to great personages, and to each European Ambassador once during his residence in Constantinople, many are necessarily fated to disappointment. No golden key will unlock the mysterious gates, nor lift aside the veil of the temple; and it is with a disgust and a reluctance which they scarcely care to conceal, that the officiating priests condescend to do the honours of the shrine, even when the Imperial firman leaves them no alternative.

The court of St. Sophia, like that of every other mosque in the city, is paved with marble, and shaded by magnificent plane-trees, whose far-spreading branches and luxuriant foliage chequer the vast space with alternate patches of light and shadow, which produce a fine effect; and collect in the vicinity of the holy edifice groups of quiet-looking Moslems, who spread their carpets, and seat themselves to smoke their chibouques, and watch the pious who pass into the temple from sunrise to sunset.

An elegant fountain, with a projecting octagonal roof, whose marble basin is screened by a covering of iron net-work from the pollution of the birds which swarm upon the roof and amid the intricacies of the building, affords to the Faithful the necessary opportunity of performing their preliminary ablutions ere they enter the mosque; while in its immediate vicinity, amulet and scent merchants, generally hadjis or pilgrims, with their green turbans and flowing beards, spread their mats, and expose for sale all descriptions of chaplets, perfumes, relics from Mecca, charms against the Evil Eye, amber and ivory mouth-pieces for the chibouque, and dyes and toys for the harem.

As these pilgrim-merchants are generally gifted with a quiet facetiousness of manner which never fails to amuse a Turk, they collect about them numbers of idlers, whose picturesque costume and graceful attitudes form at every moment studies for the painter: the tall Effendi, with his turban of cachemire and his furred pelisse, stands beside the red-capped and blue-coated soldier; while, squatted at their feet, pipe in hand, and passing the beads of his tusbee* listlessly through his fingers as he intently follows the discourse which is going on around

* Chaplet.

him, may be seen the Emir in his green robe, proud of his descent from the Prophet; and near him the Dervish, with his conical hat of grey felt; the Santon, or saint, all filth and holiness; and occasionally a closely-muffled female, her dark eyes flashing out between the folds of her snowy veil, her feet covered with boots and slippers of yellow morocco. and her form shrouded in a heavy cloak of dark-coloured cloth.

If a stranger approach to examine the wares of the hadji, it is curious to witness the interest which every individual takes in the success of his trade. The lookers-on will seize a chaplet of Arabian wood, rub it rapidly in their hands, and hold it towards him, that he may inhale its perfume, expatiating all the time on its extreme sweetness; while exclamations of "*Guzel! peh guzel!*—good! very good!" form a perfect chorus: or they will smear their beards with dye to convince him of its efficacy, if by these means they can induce the sale of any of the scattered articles about them. Nor are they fastidious in their commercial notions, for they stand quietly and encouragingly by, while the wily hadji cheats the unclean giaour, without evincing any inclination to rescue the victim; and as he bears away some treasure, for which he has probably paid about five times its value, the worthy Moslems see him depart with an ejaculation of "*Allah buyúk der*—God is great!" and then calmly resume the chibouque and the narration where each had been interrupted.

From the court, a stately covered peristyle, similar to that of St. Peter's at Rome, whose ponderous granite columns are imbedded in the walls, conducts to the body of the mosque; and here the visitor casts off his shoes, and puts on the slippers of yellow morocco, which are alone permitted to press the floor of the temple. This done, the great gates (which close upon a block of porphyry) are thrown back, the curtain of tapestry is drawn aside, and in a moment the eye is bewildered amid the space which is suddenly spread out before it.

The richly mosaiced floor of jasper, porphyry, verd-antique, and marble, is covered with bright-coloured carpets; thousands of stained glass lamps are suspended in complicated designs from transverse rods of iron which traverse the body of the building in every direction; the Imperial closet, facing the pulpit, is of finely and intricately-wrought marble, with a cornice that looks like petrified point-lace; but it is the vastness of St. Sophia which for a time fills the imagination and satisfies the fancy of the traveller; and it requires time to divest him of the feeling of involuntary awe by which he is at first overwhelmed, ere he can compel himself to any analysis of the detail around him. Gigantic pillars encircle the dome, which is of a magnitude strikingly majestic; and a host of antique treasures are collected together, each a gem in itself; but they are forced into most incongruous contact. Columns of various proportions and architectural orders,—some of Egyptian granite, others of porphyry, or scagliola, or precious and rare marbles,—are to be seen on all sides; but the mind is confused by their extraordinary juxtaposition; and they lose half their beauty from their want of arrangement. Eight majestic porphyry pillars from the Temple of Heliopolis are contrasted with columns of verd-antique from that of Ephesus; the walls are incrusted with marble, jasper, porphyry, and verd-antique, to about mid-height, where a gallery, entirely surrounding the mosque, supported by plain pillars, and floored with marble, affords accommodation for several hundred persons; but the dome, which was formerly adorned with minute mosaics, was whitewashed when the conquering Mahommedans converted the Christian church of St. Sophia into a temple of Islamism; and the original richness of the design is now only to be distinguished in spots where the plaister has fallen away; while, as if to render the ruin more complete, the inferior Imaums attached to the mosque make a trade of the fragments of mosaic, which they tear away and dispose of to travellers, who thus thoughtlessly contribute towards the destruction of a noble work of industry and art.

St. Sophia also boasts of two miraculous objects, which must not be passed over in silence—the " Sweating Stone," and the " Bishop's Door." The first is a column, partially cased with iron, and having a deep cavity worn away beneath the metal in one particular spot, where the visitor is directed to insert his finger, and to test the humidity of the marble, which is said thus to have resisted the contact of any merely human touch since the hand of the Prophet rested upon it. It is, however, certain that the miracle sometimes fails.

The " Bishop's Door" is situated on the northern side of the gallery, and is veiled by a mass of masonry, on which are many traces of violence, the cement being of so powerful a nature as to have resisted all attempts at its destruction. The door-frame is of fine white marble, and quite perfect; and the legend runs, that the united efforts of all the masons in Stamboul, are insufficient to force a passage to the apartment, in which, protected by a powerful talisman, a Greek Bishop, who was officiating at the altar when the Turks poured into the city after the defeat of Constantine, sits in his full canonicals, perusing an open volume of so holy a nature that Moslem eye must never look upon it; and this same Bishop will, as both the Turks and Greeks firmly believe, on the day when St. Sophia becomes again a Christian shrine, walk forth from his walled-up chamber, and chaunt a solemn high mass at the great altar!

From this gallery the best view of the whole interior of the edifice is obtained; as that which encircles the dome is at such an immense height from the ground, that it reduces the dimensions of the building almost to insignificance, while the eye takes in the vast proportions of the dome itself, and the mind is absorbed by that single contemplation.* Clouds of blue doves occasionally wing their way across the body of the mosque; and it is a singular and beautiful fact, that they are the unmolested descendants of the birds which were found there by the Turks when they first became the masters of St. Sophia; and so holy are they in their eyes, that the destruction of one of them would be attended with great danger to the aggressor.

From the lower gallery the whole extent of the mosque may be contemplated in its silent and solemn grandeur. In the centre of the wide and uncumbered space, the mighty dome rests on the capitals of a circle of gigantic and rudely-fashioned columns; immediately beneath you are the pillars that support the far-stretching gallery in which you stand; on one hand rises the marble pulpit, with its noble flight of steps shut in by an elaborately sculptured door; and on the other, the Imperial closet, with its delicate tracery and gilded lattices. Two huge wax candles flank the *mihrab*, or arched recess at the eastern end of the building, which are lighted every night, and last exactly twelve months; they are about eighteen inches in circumference, and throw their light over the Korān of the Chèïk Islam, or High Priest, who occupies the *mihrab* during the hours of worship. No private shrines, as in the Catholic churches—no stalls or pews, as in our own places of worship—contract and cumber the body of the building; and the effect of its extent is, consequently, much heightened. Altogether, St. Sophia, despite all its incongruities, is decidedly an architectural wonder, and well worthy of the admiration which has been lavished upon it for centuries.

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* The height of the mosque to the summit of the dome is one hundred and eighty-five French feet; the dome itself, from the gallery to the leads, forty-seven; and its diameter fifty-four.

THE OCMEIDAN.

> " The tough bow yields before the sinewy arm;
> And, swift as lightning, through the yielding air
> The winged arrow whistles to the mark."

THE Ocmeidan, or Place of Arrows, is an extensive plain, situated behind the village of Tatavola, called by the Greeks who inhabit it the hamlet of St. Demetrius; and stretching along above the deep valley of this little Christian colony, and beside the cemeteries of Pera.

The view which it commands, where it touches upon the harbour, is most magnificent; the " Seven Hills" are all before it, with their galaxy of mosques and palaces: two of them linked together by the hoary aqueduct of Valens, and all gleaming in white marble, and overtopped by the dusky mountains of Asia Minor. Beneath it spreads the Golden Horn, crowded with shipping, and traversed by a light floating bridge, seeming to the eye as frail and unstable as that of El Sirat; but which is crossed by the Faithful from the Golden City only to arrive at the infidel dwellings of the Franks, instead of the houri-tenanted valleys of Paradise; forming, meanwhile, an extremely pretty feature in the landscape.

A fringe of forest-trees descends to the very edge of the plain, which is full of gentle undulations, and is rendered remarkable by being studded over at irregular distances by columns of stone or marble, bearing inscriptions, and not unfrequently lettered with gold. These columns, which have much the appearance of funereal monuments, are simply records of the skill of the Imperial Toxopholite who now sways the sceptre of the Ottoman empire, and whose dexterity in the use of the " cloth-yard shaft" is presumed to be unequalled Throughout his dominions. Archery is a sport to which Sultan Mahmoud is much attached; and he is said to boast that, during the last forty years of his life, he has never suffered a week to pass in which he has not practised his well-worn bow. His proficiency in the science may therefore be inferred: though it is certain that none, save an Imperial arm, could ever have

> " Sped the winged arrow"

to such a distance, as some of the columnar records, to which allusion has just been made, appear to testify.

Three hundred yards is, in one instance, cited as the space cleared by the feathered messenger of the Caliph: the ground was measured, and the pillar was raised, and the Sultan departed from the Ocmeidan, satisfied that no subject throughout his empire could outdo " the shooting of that day;" nor was it probable that any bowman could be found to controvert his opinion; and none, it is said, knew this better than the page who had picked up the marvellous arrow, and received two purses* when he restored it to his imperial master.

There is much etiquette observed in the archery parties of the Sultan. First flies the arrow of Mahmoud himself, as he stands on the right of a line of Pashas and Beys, who have been formally invited to partake of the sport; and immediately off start half a dozen of the pages of the household to recover the missive, and to mark the spot where it falls. These functionaries, who endeavour to out-speed each other, and to secure the prize which, on the occasion of a longer shot than usual, they are sure to receive from their sovereign, run with their heads close to the earth, and generally contrive to pick up the arrow without checking their speed, and to carry it on for some distance before they affect to find it, when they proclaim their success with a shrill cry; and the measurement of the ground takes place at once, where the shot is considered sufficiently remarkable to warrant the ceremony.

The very " long bow," which we have cited to have been drawn by the Sultan on the happy occasion when the space over which his arrow had travelled was declared to be three hundred yards, is said to have been the frolic of a sportive and daring page, who, having gathered it up at a reasonable distance, ran on until he had a vision of detection, when he stopped, unquestioned if not unsuspected, and at once established the fame of his Imperial master as the first Toxopholite in Europe.

When the Sultan has ascertained his success, each of his courtly companions shoots in turn; but it is almost needless to remark, that their arrows always fall short of the mark: while, despite the diplomatic frauds of time-serving dependants, it is equally certain that there are few archers either so skilful or so graceful as the Emperor of Turkey.

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* Ten Pounds sterling.

THE SERAÏ BOURNOU.

> " A rich confusion form'd a disarray
> In such sort, that the eye along it cast
> Could hardly carry any thing away,
> Object on object flashed so bright and fast:
> A dazzling mass of gems, and gold, and glitter,
> Magnificently mingled in a litter."
> BYRON.

THE celebrated Seraï Bournou, occupying the obtuse point of the triangle on which Constantinople is built, boasts, as perhaps its greatest peculiarity, that it was once in itself a city. The ancient Byzantium was founded in the year A. C. 660, by a Lacedemonian colony; and a portion of the original walls are actually standing at this day, and still serve to separate the palace gardens from the public street. The mouldering but solid masonry which now girdles the Imperial residence of the Caliphs, once belted a city; and the groves and alleys that are to-day scantily traversed by slaves, eunuchs, and women, were in times of old thickly peopled with an active, busy, and enterprising population.

Byzantium, enriched by the first Constantine, and made the key-stone of a new Empire, and the capital of a second Rome—Byzantium, where a hundred of his august race feasted and governed in their turn, and which was ultimately lost to Christendom by the last and bravest of the line—is now a mere Moslem palace, where the echoes of the war-trumpet, and the neighing of the war-steed, have been replaced by the twanging of the lute, and the voices of women; even its ancient name is never heard, and its broad sun-lighted honours have been exchanged for silence and mystery.

It is asserted by historians that the capital of Byzantium was formerly enriched with columns and statues, and that monuments, now no longer in existence, were profusely collected within its walls: be that as it may, the only remnant of classic antiquity now remaining is a stately column of marble, formed of huge blocks piled upon each other to the height of ninety feet, and standing upon a raised square platform, or terrace, planted with trees, in an outer court of the palace; and known as the Column of

Theodosius; though it is evident, in comparing this pillar with the descriptions of antiquaries, that it cannot be the original monument called by that name: nor, it is presumed, can its present position be that which it originally occupied in the city. A venerable cypress, many feet higher than the column, screens it on the seaward side, but the statue which once surmounted the capital is gone; and one deep rent, almost separating the shaft throughout its whole thickness, and evidently produced by the shock of one of those earthquakes to which Constantinople was formerly so subject, attests its ancient origin; while its graceful proportions, and the elaborately-defined acanthus of its capital, render it one of the most interesting monuments now existing in the capital.

The most striking feature of the Seraï Bournou in the present day is its surpassing orientalism. Fountains, palaces, streets, and market-places—all the public rendezvous of Stamboul have suffered change, save the mysterious dwelling of the Caliphs. European innovations have crept with spirit-steps across the land: tapestry hangings and jewelled toys are scattered over the summer-palace of Asia; gaudy chintzes from the looms of Britain shut out the sun-light from the gilt-latticed casements of the imperial kiosques; silks from the warehouses of Genoa and Lyons cover the sofas of the regal pile at Beshik-Tash; but in the hidden recesses of the palace of Amurath all is unchanged, as though the genius of mutability had never waved his wand over the children of the Prophet.

Its effect from the sea of Marmora is as singular as it is beautiful. The wall by which it is enclosed is separated from the water only by a narrow wharf or terrace, pierced at intervals by a close lattice-work, through which the fair tenants can look out upon the sun-lighted waves, and on to the fantastic islands of the Propontis; in some places overgrown with the most luxurious parasites, among which are conspicuous the rich dark leaves of the ivy, and the clustering verdure of the gorgeous caper-plant, with its galaxy of blossoms; and in others, surmounted by a light and graceful kiosque, now, however, tarnished by the weather, and mouldering into disuse; for since the present Sultan girded himself with the sword of sovereignty, and eschewed the mysterious exclusiveness of his predecessors, the Seraï Bournou has ceased to be a chosen residence for the Ottoman court. And even as the victorious Mahomet II. feelingly apostrophized the denuded and desecrated palace of the last Constantine, when he entered as a conqueror the august abode of his vanquished enemy, only to find it ravaged by his own soldiery, may the silent Seraï be addressed to-day in the celebrated words of a Persian poet:—"The spider has woven his web in the halls of the Cæsars, and the owl has kept her unstartled watch on the towers of Afrasiab."

Nothing can be seen from the water save a line of gilded kiosques, gracefully clustered together on the extreme point of the land; the roofs and domes of a few scattered buildings; and here and there a slender minaret pointing heavenward from the midst of a dense forest of rich and stately trees, of which numbers overhang the boundary walls, and throw their long cool shadows over the current of the Propontis; whose depth is so great, even to the edge of the terrace, that vessels of burthen pass close beside the Golden Gate, or seaward entrance to the palace—a stately portal of marble, so richly overlaid with arabesques of burnished gold, that it is scarcely possible to look upon it beneath a mid-day sun.

Gliding round the point into the harbour, the voyager next comes upon a pavilion nestled beneath the walls of the Seraï, and known as the waiting-room of the Franks, where, in the previous reigns, the European Ambassadors were detained on days of audience until it was the pleasure of the Sultan to admit them within the sacred boundaries of the palace-grounds; and a few roods beyond this pavilion is a low door, of which the bars are now thickly overgrown with rust, and the bolts immovable from disuse, known as the Pasha's Gate, through whose ill-omened opening, tradition tells, that recreant or suspected nobles who suffered the bowstring, were formerly cast into the deep waters of the harbour; while romance, greedy of her own legend, asserts that hence were also hurled the degenerate beauties who chanced either to offend, to weary, or to disgust the Sardanapalus of the hour, to the mercy of the

——" rolling waves, which hide
Already many a once love-beaten breast,
Deep in the caverns of the deadly tide."

The one assertion is, however, probably as apocryphal as the other; for the sluggish waters of the port must have been assuredly less inviting to the ministers of death than the hurried current of Marmora, where, scarcely an arrow's flight from the Seraglio walls, it rushes towards the gulph of Nicodemia. Be that as it may, however, the walls of the Seraï, terminating a short space beyond this gate, where the court of Yeni Djami descends to the harbour, take an upward direction, and are flanked at their extreme point as they traverse the city, by a gaily-gilded kiosque, poised, as if by magic, upon one of the buttresses, and entirely surrounded by lattice-work, which, while it conceals the interior of the building, permits its tenants to command every object beneath them.

Directly opposite to this glittering pavilion, called the Kiosque of Justice, is situated the magnificent portal which gives its name to the Turkish government—the " Sublime Porte"—a stately and imposing gate of entrance to the great public offices of the Empire. This noble and finely-proportioned structure, perhaps one of the most striking in the world, is flanked by two deep niches, containing slabs of marble, whereon are exposed the heads of such criminals below the rank of Pashas, or enemies taken in battle or captured by stratagem, as it is the pleasure of the monarch to reveal to the eyes of the people; and the gilded kiosque, to which allusion has been made, owes its appellation to the circumstance, that it is from thence that the Sultan ascertains the effect of the exhibition upon the populace, and the fact that his orders have been executed by the proper functionaries.

The principal and highest entrance to the Seraï Bournou occupies one side of a square, of which the Mosque of St. Sophia encloses a second; while the remainder is formed by lines of mean-looking houses and coffee-shops. A very beautiful fountain, now fast falling to decay, stands in the centre of the space; whence the water gushes forth in an ample volume, dancing and glittering in the sun-light. It is a fine specimen of the ancient Moorish architecture, and is surmounted by five domes—one occupying the centre of the pile, and richly perforated with transparent chiselling; while four minor lateral cupolas form the extremities of the roof, which is terminated by a deep overhanging cornice, highly ornamented with a heavy cornice and a series of minute arabesques. Two broad and steep steps of white marble lead to the building, which is, with the exception of the Kilidge Ali Pasha Djiamini at Tophannè, the finest structure of the kind in the capital; and a group of sentinels and eunuchs loitering under the lofty portal of the Seraglio gate, give a last touch of orientalism to the picture.

The first court of this celebrated Palace cannot fail to disappoint the highly-wrought anticipations of the visitor, who imagines, when he has once succeeded in passing the magic threshold so rarely trodden by any foot save those of the monarch and his immediate court, that all the wonders of Eastern mystery and magnificence are to burst on him at once; and his astonishment may be conceived, when he finds himself standing in a spacious oblong enclosure, which is rather an excrescence than an appendage to the palace; in which the only striking object is one of the most enormous and beautiful maple-trees in the world, looking like a forest growing from a single trunk, chequering an immense space with light and shadow, and affording shelter to a perfect colony of beautiful blue doves. On the right hand of the court are situated the infirmaries, the wood-stores, and the bakehouses; on the left, the once elegant Greek church of St. Irene, now converted into an arsenal; and on a line with this desecrated edifice, the Mint, a handsome range of building, to which are attached the dwellings of the *Chekir-Encine*, or Superintendent of the Public Works; and the *Tarafhannè*, or Inspector of the same department.

Passing along beside a high wall, the visitor finds himself at the *Orta Kapousi*, or Middle Gate, a place of death and doom, where rivers of blood are declared to have been shed. This gate is flanked by two towers, forming a *saillie;* and near it is the *Djillăt Odossi*, or executioner's apartment, the temporary prison of condemned Vèzirs, who, on their entrance to the Seraï, when they had fallen under the suspicion and displeasure of the Sultan, were arrested on this spot without previous warning; and hence the Turkish expression, "arrested between the two doors." In case of exile, their sentence was read to them on this spot, and its fulfilment enforced by the officers of the Seraï; in that of death, it was at once carried into effect by the tenant of the tower. Above the gateway is a range of iron spikes, on which the forfeited heads were exposed to blacken in the sunshine; while on the wall immediately beneath, a *yafta*, or proclamation of the crime which had drawn down the destruction of the culprit, was affixed to the wall. These *yaftas* were written in large characters, on a scroll shaped like a cone, and remained exposed so long as the weather spared them, unless the bostanji of the guard could be bribed by the friends of the victim, when they generally disappeared.

It was at the *Orta Kapousi* that the celebrated mortar of the Ulema is said to have been formerly deposited, but no trace of it now remains; and a hope may be indulged that this revolting instrument of torture never really had existence. Indeed, every vision of death and suffering is swept from the mind as the threshold of the *Orta Kapousi* is passed, and the pilgrim stands at the entrance of the third court. The gate, fraught with images of doom as it is approached from without, is all gaiety, gilding, and glitter, within. No sound of wail, no voice of weeping is permitted to penetrate deeper into the dwelling of the Light of the World, and Brother of the Sun! In the thickness of the wall is situated a guard-room, where the eunuchs of the palace vary their monotonous and imprisoned existence by bandying vapid pleasantries with the lounging and listless soldiery; weapons both for use and ornament are hung upon the walls, and a range of low sofas afford the means of rest and enjoyment to the guard. The other face of the gate is screened by a rich projecting roof, all paint and gilding, which advances at least five feet beyond the façade of the building, and is supported by two lofty columns of white marble, whose shafts are wrought into the semblance of palm-trees, and whose heavily carved capitals are surmounted by square pillars overlaid with mosaic and gilded arabesques. The roof itself is pointed, and crowned by a flashing crescent of gold; while underneath it is divided into a lattice-work of gilt bars, traversing a ground of the brightest blue, and looking like a sheet of turquoise.

The elaborately tesselated pavement beneath, apparently intended to represent the reflection of the roof, is composed of curious stones, cemented together with some preparation, which, in its present state, appears as though liquid gold had been used to connect the different portions; and the effect of the whole is so extraordinary, so sumptuous, and so totally unlike any thing that can be seen in Europe, that it is presumed that any apology for this somewhat prolix description will be deemed unnecessary; and the rather, that very few Franks have yet penetrated into the mysteries of this stronghold of the Mahommedan Emperors. The court into which this magnificent gate gives entrance, contains the Throne-room and the Library. The former is the State Reception-room in which Abdul Hamet Khan, the father of the present Sultan, received the European ministers, and the Great Officers of the Empire on all occasions of ceremony. It is a handsome building, surmounted by a dome, and approached by a double flight of steps, having a fountain in the centre, and forming a terrace, protected by an awning of crimson silk. The interior is simple in its arrangement, and perfect in its proportions. The ceiling is heavy with arabesques, and rich with gilding; and the shadows of the mighty maples and thickly-planted cypresses which overhang it, tend to increase its beauty.

The Imperial Library occupies a range of kiosques in the Saracenic taste, with open peristyles, whose columns support a row of arches of the most graceful dimensions, and is said to possess treasures in manuscripts of untold value; but the hour is not yet arrived when those treasures will be laid bare to the research of the student, and the antiquary, the philosopher, and the man of science. Meanwhile, the *coup-d'œil* is charming; and it is almost with regret that the visitor finds himself hurried on to the fourth court, containing the beautiful edifice sometimes called the Kiosque of Bagdat. Here it is asserted that the jewels of the Constantines, and the treasures of all the preadamite Sultans are secured; that the towers are vaulted, and that each is a mine of wealth. Here also, it is said, that rebellious beauties have pined away a joyless existence, when they have been bold enough to oppose the power of their personal attractions to the despotic pleasure of a sensual master, who would not destroy his own hope while there remained a prospect of subjecting their distaste to his arbitrary will.

Beyond the fourth court is situated the "Garden of Delight," in which stand the gilded kiosques appropriated to the harem, and the young princes of the Imperial house. Here, all is a confusion of glare and glitter; parterres, only less gorgeous than the buildings which rise among them; and pavilions, besprent with paint and gilding, looking as bright as the flowers which blossom on every side. Clusters of roses, blooming in baskets of gilded wicker-work; fountains, murmuring sweet music under the deep shadows of overhanging boughs: and in every direction, the carefully-latticed and jealously-guarded casements of the harem, which no infidel foot may tread with impunity.

None of the ladies belonging to the household of the present Sultan inhabit the Seraï Bournou, save when he is himself an inmate of the palace; and the extensive harem is now solely occupied by half a dozen octogenarian wives of the Sultan Selim, whose age preserved them from the fate of the younger and more beautiful portion of his establishment; who, in accordance with Eastern ideas of expediency, were put to death on the accession of the present Sultan, lest they should dishonour themselves by an alliance with a subject, after having formed part of the household of the sovereign: but notwithstanding this fact, the harem is sacred, and no prying eye nor intrusive foot is permitted to disturb the peaceful repose of the worthy relicts of the unfortunate, misguided, and martyred Selim.

TOP-HANNÈ.

> " ——— Leave the sail still furl'd, and ply
> The nearest oar that's scatter'd by,
> And midway to those rocks where sleep
> The channel'd waters dark and deep,
> Rest from your task."
>
> BYRON.

HAD the noble bard from whom the lines which head the chapter are derived, written them as a guide to the traveller who first seeks to look on the suburb of Top-hannè, situated between Galata and the valley of Dolma-Batchè, they could not have been more judiciously framed; for, as the caïque heaves, unpropelled for an instant by the oars of the rowers, midway between the rocky shore of Asia and the pier of Top-hannè, the eye of taste is greeted by a scene of surpassing beauty.

The Mosque of Sultan Mahmoud, with its slender minarets, dipped in gold for a third of their height, and cinctured with galleries as light as petrified cobwebs—its gilded gates, and noble flight of marble steps—is seen to the rear of the Arsenal, where a long line of brass guns (whence salutes are fired on all occasions of public rejoicing) are ranged along the head of the channel. The cannon-foundry, which gives its name to the locality, terminates the battery at one extremity; and above it, on the side of the hill, stand the remains of the Galata Seraï, which having been grievously injured during the great fire of Pera, from an Imperial palace, has now degenerated into a college for the pages of the household. A handsome barrack bounds the suburb on the side next the harbour, and the Top-hannè pier is the great landing-place for caïques plying from Scutari, and the villages on the Bosphorus. But the especial boast of this pretty spot is the fountain in the fruit-market, the celebrated Kilidge Ali Pasha Djiamini, or Fountain of the Mosque of Ali Pasha, a French renegade, who built the temple bearing his name, which stands on the western side of the square.

Rich as Constantinople avowedly is in fountains of various architecture, the whole city cannot boast another of equal beauty and workmanship; its elaborate arabesques are beyond praise, and when the sun-light touches them, almost look like jewels. Its proportions are perfect; and it stands in the centre of an unencumbered space, pouring out its dense volume of water into a capacious basin of glittering marble, and producing an effect highly scenic. On one side rises the mosque to which it belongs—a heavy pile, with thick and stunted minarets—a memorial of the days when a Christian, after denying his God and forswearing his faith, might still enjoy the confidence, and earn the honours of the Moslem; days now gone for ever, and looked back upon with surprise by the Osmanli themselves, who have learnt to feel that services based upon apostasy, and zeal whose germ was falsehood, are alike hollow, worthless, and untenable. On the other hand is situated the elegant Kiosque of Halil Pasha, with its lordly portal and gold-latticed casements—an embodiment of the fairy-palaces of the Arabian Tales; and all around and about are piled the luscious fruits of Europe and of Asia. As this is the great market for the growers of Scutari, the islands of Marmora, and all the Asiatic villages on the channel, the display may be imagined; piles of perfumed melons are heaped beside pyramids of grapes, which look as though they were carved in amber; delicate pasteks, green and glittering as emeralds, are contrasted by golden pomegranates; pistachio-nuts, lemons, quinces, oranges, and apples, are scattered in all directions; while the downy peach, and the plum, blushing through its own bloom, tempt the touch of the wanderer at every step. The Moslem merchant is there, gravely squatted upon his mat, with his yellow slippers lying beside him, and his chibouque, charged with the potent tobacco of Latakia between his lips, quietly awaiting a customer; while the restless Greek is near him, now trilling a romaïka—now cursing, in the name of his saints, the tardiness of the buyers—now mumbling a prayer to the

Panagia,* as his fitful humour serves; while, here and there among the merchants, wanders a bowed and bearded Jew, with shabby *beniche*† and cringing gait, vending spurious opium, second-hand finery, and stale sweetmeats.

Altogether, the scene is singularly attractive; and the Frank traveller must pay many visits to the Fruit-market of Top-hannè, and the beautiful Kilidge Ali Pasha Djiamini, ere he wearies of so novel and so exciting a spectacle.

THE WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

> Girdling a peopled world they stretch along—
> A mighty grasp about a mightier space;
> Where heroes strove in vain, and poet's song
> Hath shed around a glory and a grace.
> Here the proud Crescent braved the holy Cross,
> And reared its symbol on each saintly shrine;
> And here, triumphant 'mid an Empire's loss,
> Thy proud heart ceased to beat—Imperial Constantine!
> MS. POEM.

THE walls of Constantinople are fraught with interesting memories. To the historian they tell of the varying fortunes of a mighty empire; to the antiquary, of the noblest days of Roman art; and to the soldier, of the bold and heroic deeds of a race long gone, but living still in the page of tradition; while, to the traveller and the man of taste, they offer scenes of picturesque beauty, varying at every point of his pilgrimage; and presenting a succession of landscape-views which defy alike the description of the tourist, and the pencil of the painter.

The city of Constantinople occupies a triangular promontory above the Propontis, and it has been strongly fortified on all sides, as well those which are washed by the sea, as on that which is the base of the triangle, and connects it with the main land. The walls extend twelve miles, sweeping from sea to sea, running along the whole length of the harbour, restraining the billows of the sea of Marmora, and terminating in the celebrated fortress of the Seven Towers. They are every where ruinous, and in several places so utterly dilapidated as to be wholly useless for the purposes of defence; their reparation being a herculean

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* Virgin.

† Robe.

project at present unmeditated by the Turks, and probably never to be accomplished. At some points the foundation of the walls is formed by huge masses of rock, a species of architecture still to be traced in a few of the most ancient Grecian structures, and formerly termed Cyclopæan; and fabulously asserted to be the work of giants, owing to the enormous size and weight of the stones employed. In other spots, particularly on the side of Marmora, the masonry commences regularly from the very edge of the water; and where the action of the waves has displaced the original material, piles of broken shafts of the most beautiful proportions, hewn into fragments, have, in endless instances, been substituted to prevent the ingress of the water to the gardens and kiosques by which the shore is fringed. The antiquarian treasures thus recklessly lavished where baser material would have sufficed, are said to be beyond price; and many a sculptured capital and graven stone may be detected as the caïques slowly glide along over the glittering ripple, which render the traveller willing to believe and to mourn over the fact. Permission has in several instances been sought by strangers to remove some of these tempting reliques, but it has always been coldly and resolutely denied.

The most ancient portion of the walls is necessarily that which enclosed the ancient Byzantium, now known as the Seraglio Point, where the apex of the triangle divides the Propontis from the port, and instead of being peopled by the busy multitude of a city, is silent in the stateliness of its gilded palace and overhanging groves. Portions of the original walls are still standing, and separate the seraglio gardens from the adjacent streets; and even in their ruin they retain traces of the strength and massiveness which have enabled them to exist from the year 660 A.C.—at which period they were erected by the hands of the Lacedæmonian colony who first peopled this magnificent spot—even to the nineteenth century, as if in scorn of the frail and unstable works of later and less laborious architects.

The wall which encircles the present city was built nine hundred and seventy-eight years subsequently, by the Emperor Constantine, and frequently repaired by Theodosius, and other sovereigns, who have each in succession left commemorative inscriptions upon the masonry. Thus, on one spot is graven "Theodosius, King, by the grace of Christ;" on another, "The illustrious Theodosius, the great King, by the grace of Christ;" while numberless crosses, and the remains of half-obliterated sentences, now beyond solution, are to be found in various places.

Perhaps the most picturesque portion of the walls is that which stretches from the cemetery of Eyoub along the road leading to Balouclé, or the "Church of Fishes." A dilapidated palace, known as the "Palace of Constantine," (and supposed to have belonged to the first of that name,) is among the most striking objects in this quarter of the city; it appears to be coeval with the wall, and to have mouldered under the same influences. The view which it commands is extensive and magnificent; and its ruin has a regality about it which speaks of Rome in her best days of pride and power. The walls are, in this direction, unusually well preserved, and of great height, and no breach is perceptible for a considerable distance, as this side of the city offered fewer facilities to an invading army than many other points, and the defences have consequently been subjected to no violence beyond that of the ever-gnawing and corroding tooth of time. A dense coating of ivy clothes the whole hoary mass of masonry; octagonal towers, draperied with the same rich parasite, rise at intervals like a succession of feudal castles; and the moat at their base is rife with vegetation, amid which the wild fig-tree with its broad fan-like leaf, the acacia with its peach-like blossoms, and the weeping birch, waving its flexile branches to the wind like the hair of a young beauty, are the most conspicuous.

Two of these octagonal towers flank the more lofty portion of the wall, and several breaches are shortly afterwards discernible. Here the defences are tripled; and a double moat, commencing at the Rodosto Gate, terminates only at the entrance of the Seven Towers, on the Sea of Marmora. This triple wall is considerably lower than that which stretches along from Eyoub; and as it follows the undulations of the hills upon which the city is built, it necessarily permits a great portion of the enclosure to be visible from without; and to this circumstance may possibly be attributed the fact, that it was on this side that Mahomet, encouraged by a sight of the fair capital which he coveted, was induced to attempt its capture. The Top Kapousi, or Gate of the Cannon, remains as a memorial of his success; and it derives its name from the fact of its being surmounted by several immense balls of marble, such as are used by the Turks for the supply of their most ponderous pieces of ordnance, and which were placed there by the triumphant Moslems to perpetuate the capture of the devoted Christian city.

Immediately in front of the Cannon Gate, but at a short distance from the moat, rises an artificial mount called by the Turks, Maltèpè, on whose summit the invading Prophet planted his standard, and whence he directed the attack. The view from this height is magnificent, as the eye sweeps the whole of the city, commands a vast extent of country, and loses itself among the far-stretching waves of the sea of Marmora, glancing over the islands by which it is studded, and the mountain-belt which partially hems it in. Here it was, near this stately gate, and in one of the numerous breaches made in the city wall during this unequal war, where more than two hundred thousand Turks besieged, both by sea and land, a town defended only by eight thousand men at arms, and those depressed by long sufferings, and pent up in this their last stronghold, without a hope beyond their own arms and hearts, that the last Greek Emperor, the immortal Constantine Paleologus, proved to the world the power and pride of individual genius and heroism. Here it was that he fought, that he struggled—and that, spurning an existence which would have outlived his cause, he nobly fell, offering himself up as the last and proudest victim to his religion and his country. The body of the brave Paleologus was found in a breach near the Top-Kapousi; he had bought his freedom from Moslem thrall with his heart's blood, and with him perished a long line of Grecian Emperors. A dense vegetation now chokes up the moat; and forest-trees, nourished by the rich soil, flourish on the very spot; but while one Greek heart beats in a noble breast, and one Greek hand can wield a worthy pen, the memory of the last of the Paleologi can need no graven epitaph, nor can the heart of man devise for him a more fitting mausoleum!

The next point of interest is the fortress known as that of the Seven Towers. What a spell is in the very name, to all those who are either interested in, or conversant with, Eastern history! What volumes of human power and of human suffering does it not involve! Captives have sickened with despair—ambassadors have sighed at delay within those walls of darkness and of crime—monarchs have made a jest of foreign vengeance, and nobles have felt the weight of native displeasure!

This extensive fortress originally consisted, as its name implies, of seven principal towers, dominating a series of dungeons, courts, and guard-rooms, whose secrets seldom transpired beyond the walls. A strong garrison, lofty outworks, and jealously-barred cells, insured the safety (in so far as escape was concerned) of the captives whom state policy or private hate consigned to this formidable prison. Hecatombs of heads, sacrificed to one or the other of these impulses, gave their name to a small enclosure now called the "Place of Heads," where they are said to have been piled upon each other until the mound was of sufficient height to enable the executioners to command from its summit a wide view of the sun-lighted Propontis; while a dark vault is shown, upon whose brink the stranger stands with quailing heart, and looks down upon the "Well of Blood," whose ensanguined stream once overflowed its margin, and ran reeking under the broad daylight over the marble pavement of the court beyond, to pollute the pure waters of the sea of Marmora. Stone tunnels, into which the writhing wretches who were doomed to this merciless death were forced by the sharp scimitars and handjars* of their jailors, and there left to expire of famine; and *oubliettes*, whose gnawing jaws opened to receive their victims only to deliver them back mutilated and bleeding to the depths of the ocean-grave, where their sufferings were destined to end for ever, are to be seen on all sides; while the promenades provided for the prisoners within the guarded precincts are overshadowed by the funereal cypress, as though fresher and brighter foliage would there have been a mockery.

Not the least remarkable object pointed out to the stranger within the walls of the Seven Towers is a dry well, celebrated as that into which Mustapha III., on some misunderstanding between the courts of the Sultan and the Czarina Catherine, very unceremoniously caused her representative, the Count Obrescoff, to be lowered, and left during several days, ere he entered upon his more legitimate period of a captivity which endured three weary years; while racks, and wheels, and other complicated instruments of torture, are scattered through the fortress, as if to prove the ingenuity of mankind in inventions of pain and horror!

Four of the towers to which the stronghold is indebted for its appellation, are now partially in ruin; and the gloomy walls no longer give back the stifled echoes of moral suffering. From a state-prison for attainted Turks, the fortress became the compulsatory abode of the Moscovite Ambassadors on all outbreakings of discord between the Autocrats of Russia and Turkey; and still more recently it has served as a plague-hospital for the Greeks, and thus exchanged its experience of human torture for one which, although equally bitter, is Heaven-inflicted, and not born of the malice or the tyranny of man. But, although the record of blood is now filled up, and the dark volume of violence sealed—it may be hoped, for ever—the entrance-gate of the Seven Towers is still an object of dread and terror to the Turks; and it is difficult even for the traveller to pass it by without a quickening pulse!

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* Daggers.

THE MOSQUE OF CHAZADE.

> "And as the smoke condensed itself into a vapoury outline, and I saw a giant form rise into the air, I found words, and spoke. 'In the name of the Prophet,' I faultered out, 'what art thou?' And the shape answered in a shrill whistle, like the east wind through the storm-stripped branches of the forest, and said, 'Pass on thy way, and impede me not: I guard the graves of the mighty.' And I looked, and lo! the vapour rested on the tombs of two of earth's proudest; so I veiled my eyes, and departed thence in trembling."—THE GNOME KING.

THE Mosque of Chazade (or Choabbas) is beautifully situated near the Aqueduct of Valens, which spans the valley upon whose edge it stands. Like all the other religious edifices of Constantinople, it is built in the form of a Greek cross, and is ornamented throughout its interior with arabesques, and sculptured marble. The trees which surround its court are ancient, and of majestic growth; but its principal beauty exists in the very elegant fountain, and the noble tombs which are attached to it. These buildings fringe the street in which it stands, and form an architectural group unequalled for its perfect orientalism throughout the city. The gilded lattices of the fountain, its domed and graceful roof, and the shifting crowd ever collected about its marble steps, contrast finely with the silent stateliness of the mosque itself, upon whose white and glittering surface no trace of mere perishable ornament can be detected. A cluster of domes, rising from amid a mass of foliage, where the broad-leafed and far-stretching maple mingles its fresh bright greenness with the dark, rigid, and eternal gloom of the cypress, marks the site of the mosque, and of the four tombs by whose vicinage it is distinguished; the larger and taller cupola being that of the temple, which, however, does not so greatly dominate the others as to injure the harmony of their effect.

The most richly ornamented Mausoleum is that of the Sultana Chazade—which name is supposed to be a corruption of Sheherazade, an appellation bringing at once to memory the fair and wily Princess of tale-telling notoriety, so dear to our youth; and admitting the possibility that the Imperial founder of the mosque, and occupant of the mausoleum, were indeed the namesake of the indefatigable bride of the fable-loving Sultan, the eye which rests upon her tomb does not disturb the illusion which old associations have woven about the fancy; for even had its tenant been the renowned daughter of the Vèzir herself, she could not have found a fitter resting-place. The elegant tomb-house is hexagonal, and the fluted dome is supported on eight light and graceful columns, whose Saracenic capitals form a portion of the sculptured cornice which surrounds the base of the cupola. The windows are of richly stained glass; and the sarcophagus rests on a low platform in the centre of the marble floor, in solitary state.

The other three tombs attached to the Mosque of Chazade, are those of three Vèzirs; and, in two instances, their wives and sons lie beside them. A few scattered graves, almost overgrown with the dense vegetation common to the country, have been niched here and there in the recesses formed by the angles of the buildings; and clouds of blue doves inhabit the eaves of the temple, and fill the air with their low monotonous note, giving a solemnity to the spot congenial to its use. They call to each other from the roofs of the tombs sadly and soothingly, like sentinels passing the watchword of peace over the ashes of the dead, and seem, in their earnest melancholy, to echo the answer of the Gnome King to the pilgrim Hamet—" Pass on thy way, and impede me not: I guard the graves of the mighty."

SULEIMANIÈ.

" ——— Solyman, the glory of their line."
BYRON.

THE Mosque of Solyman " the Magnificent," called by the Turks Suleimaniè, is esteemed the most elegant religious edifice in Constantinople. The splendid windows of painted glass, which are said to be unequalled throughout the world, were a spoil from the Persians, from whom they were wrested by Solyman to decorate the temple of which he was the founder; and the effect of their elaborately-blended rays on the marble walls of the mosque is strikingly fine and impressive. The dome is supported by four slight and well-proportioned pillars, and rests upon their delicate capitals so lightly, as to give a character to the interior of this beautiful building quite distinct from that of every other mosque in the city. But the four columns of porphyry which occupy the angles of the edifice, are the boast of Suleimaniè. The rare relics of a pagan temple, they are of the most exquisite symmetry and finish, and are supposed to have originally served as pedestals to as many antique statues. Hanging arches of that delicate Arabian architecture so little known in Europe, and so justly prized by the Turks, relieve the base of the dome; and the cornice of the platform on which the meuzzin performs his prostrations, and regulates the devotions of the faithful during the service, is finely chiselled to represent a wreath of lotus leaves. The pulpit is shaped like the blossom of the arum, and being composed of fine white marble, has the effect of a gigantic flower petrified into stone. The great entrance-gates of the edifice are very costly, being thickly inlaid with devices of mother-of-pearl; and the marble floor is over-strown with rich carpets.

The entire roof of the building is highly ornamented, and sentences from the Korān, beautifully written in the oriental character, are scattered over the walls. The *mihrab*, or niche at the eastern extremity of the edifice, occupying the position which, when the ground-plan of the Mahommedan temples was borrowed from St. Sophia, was filled by the christian altar, is also inscribed with the names of the Deity and the Prophets. The immense wax candles that flank the mihrab are lighted every night during the reading of the Korān by the officiating Kiatib.* Those at the mosque of St. Sophia are eighteen inches in circumference, and last for twelve months; and the waxen giants of Suleimaniè, although considerably smaller, are still of enormous size; but as these are merely supposed to light the holy page of the priest, the body of the building is illuminated by thousands of small coloured lamps, suspended from the roof in various devices, by slight rods of iron, and producing to an European eye, a festal effect strangely incompatible with the sacred uses of the place.

But Suleimaniè possesses one peculiar feature, to which it is indebted for an interest beyond all the other mosques of Constantinople, and one of so high and honourable a character, that it is even more worthy of record than its pillars of porphyry, or its " cunning work" in glass and marble; and it is of so distinctive a nature that it must not be passed over in silence.

A richly wrought gallery, extending along the whole northern face of the edifice, is heaped with chests of sundry sizes, and of all descriptions, from the rude trunk of cypress-wood, painted a dull green, and decorated with huge groups of flowers, tawdrily and clumsily executed — the treasure-hoard of the petty trader, or the roving tatar †—to the heavy iron-clamped strong box of the

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* Reader of the Koran.

† Professional courier.

exiled noble, or the wandering merchant: these are piled one on the other to the very roof of the building, and each is carefully marked with some hieroglyphic known only to its absent owner, and to its temporary guardians. Each package, when received by the authorities at Suleimaniè, is described and registered with the most scrupulous exactness; and when once it has been deposited within the holy precincts of the mosque, it remains intact and inviolate, whatever time may elapse, or whatever changes may ensue ere it is reclaimed by its proper owner, either in the government, or the institutions of the Empire. The sacredness of the trust is felt, acknowledged, and respected; and men of every nation, and professors of every creed, are free to deposit their property within the walls of Suleimaniè, secure of its restoration whenever they may see fit to reclaim it.

It is said that the amount of treasure in gold, silver, jewels, and rich stuffs, thus collected together, is immense; and that many of the chests have occupied their place in the gallery for a century. But this fact does not operate against their security—no seal is ever forced at Suleimaniè; and this great national bank, for such it truly is, remains untouched and sacred throughout every popular convulsion, and every intestine change. Here the Turkish government exercises no despotism, exacts no avaniah,* levies no tax; and amid all its reverses, and all its necessities, preserves an admirable integrity which is less generally known than it deserves to be.

THE PORT OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

> " Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,
> What rainbow-tints, what magic charms are found!
> Rock, river, forest, mountain—all abound,
> And bluest skies that harmonize the whole."
>
> BYRON.

THERE is no better point whence to obtain a view of the Port of Constantinople than from the great cemetery of the " Infidel Hill" of Pera. The harbour lies at your feet, crowded with shipping, moored in treble lines along the shore, and filling every little creek and bay. The minaretted city cresting

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* Fine.

the opposite height like a diadem, stretches along in all the splendour of its mosques and palaces; terminated in one direction by the Eski-Seraï, glittering among its cypresses and plane-trees, and enclosed within the picturesque walls, which are washed by the blue waves of the Bosphorus and the Propontis, to which the hoary trees that overhang them pay back their tribute of shade and freshness; and on the other, by the historical suburb of Eyoub; while, in the distance, the bright sea of Marmora dances in the light, bearing a thousand gleaming sails upon its bosom, and its scattered islands heave up their fantastic outline like marine monsters; the Thracian Olympus, and the mountain-chain of which it is the monarch, form the frame-work of the picture; while Scutari closes in upon the eye, sweeping gracefully along the edge of the Propontis, until it grows into majesty as it nears the Bosphorus, and flings over the waves of "the ocean-stream," the stately shadow of Burlgurlhu Daghi.

Innumerable caïques dart from shore to shore across the harbour, freighted with veiled women, and men of many lands; and the shrill warning cry of the boatmen as they shoot along, cutting through the water like wild-birds, continually passing and repassing, and yet never coming in collision—the crowds of sea-fowl sporting among the shipping, and diving under the oars of every boat—the light bridge, flung like a fairy-wand across the port—all conspire to render the Golden Horn one of the most picturesque scenes in the world; while above the bright landscape and the glittering sea, spreads a sky of such intense and vivid blue, as invests every object with a tint and a distinctness from which it derives a new and a peculiar beauty.

The variety of costume, the constant succession of living groups, and the rapid motion of the arrowy caïques, are altogether beyond the reach of description; while the pencil of the artist can alone convey any distinct idea of the numerous objects of interest and beauty which throng the shores. Close beside the termination of the floating bridge, where it abuts on the Stamboul side of the harbour, (at a gateway known as "the Gate of the Garden," owing to its vicinity to the grounds of the ancient palace,) and close under the walls, stands a green pavilion, in which former Sultans were accustomed to give audience to the European Ambassadors; while immediately above it, erected on a buttress of the wall itself, is a light-looking summer saloon, canopied with creeping plants, called the Kiosque of Pearls, whence the sovereign can overlook the whole extent of the port and the European shore. Not far from this pretty kiosque, and level with the water's edge, is a low iron door, through which the bodies of those who were executed within the Seraglio are said to have been cast into the sea at midnight, and committed to the current that sweeps rapidly round the point; but it bears little appearance of having latterly been in request, as its massy hinges are rusted, and immovable.

Stately trees, sweeping downward to the water—lofty minarets, shooting gracefully towards heaven — crowds of shipping—groups of human beings, varying alike in feature, language, and costume—lofty mountains, far-stretching forests, and thickly peopled hills—the junction of two seas—an unrivalled landscape, and a cloudless sky, are among the many distinctive glories of the Golden Horn.

ENTRANCE TO THE BLACK SEA.

> " Then by the lightning's blaze to mark
> Some toiling tempest-shatter'd bark;
> Her vain distress-guns hear:
> And when a second sheet of light
> Flash'd o'er the blackness of the night—
> To see no vessel there!"
>
> Coleridge.

The entrance to the Black Sea, as seen from the summit of the Jouchi-Daghi, or Giant's Mountain, (the spot selected by the artist,) is the grandest *coup-d'œil* on the Bosphorus. As the line of shore terminates on either hand, the picturesque and jagged rocks suddenly yield to a low and sandy stretch of coast; and beyond are visible the " Blue Symplegades," heaving up their dark and irregular masses from the encircling waters of the Sea of Storms, which, stretching far away on all sides, is ultimately blent with the horizon.

The ruins of two Genoese Castles crown the abrupt peaks of a portion of the mountain-chain of which the Jouchi-Daghi is the monarch. One of them, whose mouldering walls descend nearly to the lip of the channel, has its beautiful legend of womanly high-heartedness; for a tale is there recorded of a young fair girl, scarcely yet arrived at the first years of womanhood, the daughter of the Governor, who defended the fortress for three entire days after the death of her father, who fell mortally wounded by a poisoned arrow, as he was gallantly meeting the enemy; and with a diminished and despairing garrison, boldly held the castle until she was herself killed in its defence. Fable has now peopled

F. Sigrist