

Chapter LXVI: Union Of The Greek And Latin Churches.--Part III.

After a tedious and troublesome navigation of seventy-seven days, this religious squadron cast anchor before Venice; and their reception proclaimed the joy and magnificence of that powerful republic. In the command of the world, the modest Augustus had never claimed such honors from his subjects as were paid to his feeble successor by an independent state. Seated on the poop on a lofty throne, he received the visit, or, in the Greek style, the adoration of the doge and senators. [54]

They sailed in the Bucentaur, which was accompanied by twelve stately galleys: the sea was overspread with innumerable gondolas of pomp and pleasure; the air resounded with music and acclamations; the mariners, and even the vessels, were dressed in silk and gold; and in all the emblems and pageants, the Roman eagles were blended with the lions of St. Mark. The triumphal procession, ascending the great canal, passed under the bridge of the Rialto; and the Eastern strangers gazed with admiration on the palaces, the churches, and the populousness of a city, that seems to float on the bosom of the waves. [55] They sighed to behold the spoils and trophies with which it had been decorated after the sack of Constantinople. After a hospitable entertainment of fifteen days, Palæologus pursued his journey by land and water from Venice to Ferrara; and on this occasion the pride of the Vatican was tempered by policy to indulge the ancient dignity of the emperor of the East. He made his entry on a black horse; but a milk-white steed, whose trappings were embroidered with golden eagles, was led before him; and the canopy was borne over his head by the princes of Este, the sons or kinsmen

of Nicholas, marquis of the city, and a sovereign more powerful than himself. [56] Palæologus did not alight till he reached the bottom of the staircase: the pope advanced to the door of the apartment; refused his proffered genuflection; and, after a paternal embrace, conducted the emperor to a seat on his left hand. Nor would the patriarch descend from his galley, till a ceremony almost equal, had been stipulated between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople. The latter was saluted by his brother with a kiss of union and charity; nor would any of the Greek ecclesiastics submit to kiss the feet of the Western primate. On the opening of the synod, the place of honor in the centre was claimed by the temporal and ecclesiastical chiefs; and it was only by alleging that his predecessors had not assisted in person at Nice or Chalcedon, that Eugenius could evade the ancient precedents of Constantine and Marcian. After much debate, it was agreed that the right and left sides of the church should be occupied by the two nations; that the solitary chair of St. Peter should be raised the first of the Latin line; and that the throne of the Greek emperor, at the head of his clergy, should be equal and opposite to the second place, the vacant seat of the emperor of the West. [57]

[Footnote 54: At the time of the synod, Phranzes was in Peloponnesus: but he received from the despot Demetrius a faithful account of the honorable reception of the emperor and patriarch both at Venice and Ferrara, (*Dux... sedentem Imperatorem adorat,*) which are more slightly mentioned by the Latins, (l. ii. c. 14, 15, 16.)]

[Footnote 55: The astonishment of a Greek prince and a French ambassador (Mémoires de Philippe de Comines, l. vii. c. 18,) at the sight of Venice, abundantly proves that in the xvth century it was the first and most splendid of the Christian cities. For the spoils of Constantinople at Venice, see Syropulus, (p. 87.)]

[Footnote 56: Nicholas III. of Este reigned forty-eight years, (A.D. 1393--1441,) and was lord of Ferrara, Modena, Reggio, Parma, Rovigo, and Commachio. See his Life in Muratori, (Antichità Estense, tom. ii. p. 159--201.)]

[Footnote 57: The Latin vulgar was provoked to laughter at the strange dresses of the Greeks, and especially the length of their garments, their sleeves, and their beards; nor was the emperor distinguished, except by the purple color, and his diadem or tiara, with a jewel on the top, (Hody de Græcis Illustribus, p. 31.) Yet another spectator confesses that the Greek fashion was piu grave e piu degna than the Italian. (Vespasiano in Vit. Eugen. IV. in Muratori, tom. xxv. p. 261.)]

But as soon as festivity and form had given place to a more serious treaty, the Greeks were dissatisfied with their journey, with themselves, and with the pope. The artful pencil of his emissaries had painted him in a prosperous state; at the head of the princes and prelates of Europe, obedient at his voice, to believe and to arm. The thin appearance of the universal synod of Ferrara betrayed his weakness: and the Latins opened the first session with only five archbishops,

eighteen bishops, and ten abbots, the greatest part of whom were the subjects or countrymen of the Italian pontiff. Except the duke of Burgundy, none of the potentates of the West condescended to appear in person, or by their ambassadors; nor was it possible to suppress the judicial acts of Basil against the dignity and person of Eugenius, which were finally concluded by a new election. Under these circumstances, a truce or delay was asked and granted, till Palæologus could expect from the consent of the Latins some temporal reward for an unpopular union; and after the first session, the public proceedings were adjourned above six months. The emperor, with a chosen band of his favorites and Janizaries, fixed his summer residence at a pleasant, spacious monastery, six miles from Ferrara; forgot, in the pleasures of the chase, the distress of the church and state; and persisted in destroying the game, without listening to the just complaints of the marquis or the husbandman. [58] In the mean while, his unfortunate Greeks were exposed to all the miseries of exile and poverty; for the support of each stranger, a monthly allowance was assigned of three or four gold florins; and although the entire sum did not amount to seven hundred florins, a long arrear was repeatedly incurred by the indigence or policy of the Roman court. [59] They sighed for a speedy deliverance, but their escape was prevented by a triple chain: a passport from their superiors was required at the gates of Ferrara; the government of Venice had engaged to arrest and send back the fugitives; and inevitable punishment awaited them at Constantinople; excommunication, fines, and a sentence, which did not respect the sacerdotal dignity, that they should be stripped naked and publicly whipped. [60] It was only by the

alternative of hunger or dispute that the Greeks could be persuaded to open the first conference; and they yielded with extreme reluctance to attend from Ferrara to Florence the rear of a flying synod. This new translation was urged by inevitable necessity: the city was visited by the plague; the fidelity of the marquis might be suspected; the mercenary troops of the duke of Milan were at the gates; and as they occupied Romagna, it was not without difficulty and danger that the pope, the emperor, and the bishops, explored their way through the unfrequented paths of the Apennine. [61]

[Footnote 58: For the emperor's hunting, see Syropulus, (p. 143, 144, 191.) The pope had sent him eleven miserable hacks; but he bought a strong and swift horse that came from Russia. The name of Janizaries may surprise; but the name, rather than the institution, had passed from the Ottoman, to the Byzantine, court, and is often used in the last age of the empire.]

[Footnote 59: The Greeks obtained, with much difficulty, that instead of provisions, money should be distributed, four florins per month to the persons of honorable rank, and three florins to their servants, with an addition of thirty more to the emperor, twenty-five to the patriarch, and twenty to the prince, or despot, Demetrius. The payment of the first month amounted to 691 florins, a sum which will not allow us to reckon above 200 Greeks of every condition. (Syropulus, p. 104, 105.) On the 20th October, 1438, there was an arrear of four months; in April, 1439, of three; and of five and a half in July, at the time of the union, (p.

172, 225, 271.)]

[Footnote 60: Syropulus (p. 141, 142, 204, 221) deploras the imprisonment of the Greeks, and the tyranny of the emperor and patriarch.]

[Footnote 61: The wars of Italy are most clearly represented in the xiiiith vol. of the Annals of Muratori. The schismatic Greek, Syropulus, (p. 145,) appears to have exaggerated the fear and disorder of the pope in his retreat from Ferrara to Florence, which is proved by the acts to have been somewhat more decent and deliberate.]

Yet all these obstacles were surmounted by time and policy. The violence of the fathers of Basil rather promoted than injured the cause of Eugenius; the nations of Europe abhorred the schism, and disowned the election, of Felix the Fifth, who was successively a duke of Savoy, a hermit, and a pope; and the great princes were gradually reclaimed by his competitor to a favorable neutrality and a firm attachment. The legates, with some respectable members, deserted to the Roman army, which insensibly rose in numbers and reputation; the council of Basil was reduced to thirty-nine bishops, and three hundred of the inferior clergy; [62] while the Latins of Florence could produce the subscriptions of the pope himself, eight cardinals, two patriarchs, eight archbishops, fifty two bishops, and forty-five abbots, or chiefs of religious orders. After the labor of nine months, and the debates of twenty-five sessions, they attained the advantage and glory of the reunion of the Greeks. Four

principal questions had been agitated between the two churches; 1. The use of unleavened bread in the communion of Christ's body. 2. The nature of purgatory. 3. The supremacy of the pope. And, 4. The single or double procession of the Holy Ghost. The cause of either nation was managed by ten theological champions: the Latins were supported by the inexhaustible eloquence of Cardinal Julian; and Mark of Ephesus and Bessarion of Nice were the bold and able leaders of the Greek forces. We may bestow some praise on the progress of human reason, by observing that the first of these questions was now treated as an immaterial rite, which might innocently vary with the fashion of the age and country. With regard to the second, both parties were agreed in the belief of an intermediate state of purgation for the venial sins of the faithful; and whether their souls were purified by elemental fire was a doubtful point, which in a few years might be conveniently settled on the spot by the disputants. The claims of supremacy appeared of a more weighty and substantial kind; yet by the Orientals the Roman bishop had ever been respected as the first of the five patriarchs; nor did they scruple to admit, that his jurisdiction should be exercised agreeably to the holy canons; a vague allowance, which might be defined or eluded by occasional convenience. The procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father alone, or from the Father and the Son, was an article of faith which had sunk much deeper into the minds of men; and in the sessions of Ferrara and Florence, the Latin addition of filioque was subdivided into two questions, whether it were legal, and whether it were orthodox. Perhaps it may not be necessary to boast on this subject of my own impartial indifference; but I must think that the Greeks were strongly supported

by the prohibition of the council of Chalcedon, against adding any article whatsoever to the creed of Nice, or rather of Constantinople. [63] In earthly affairs, it is not easy to conceive how an assembly equal of legislators can bind their successors invested with powers equal to their own. But the dictates of inspiration must be true and unchangeable; nor should a private bishop, or a provincial synod, have presumed to innovate against the judgment of the Catholic church. On the substance of the doctrine, the controversy was equal and endless: reason is confounded by the procession of a deity: the gospel, which lay on the altar, was silent; the various texts of the fathers might be corrupted by fraud or entangled by sophistry; and the Greeks were ignorant of the characters and writings of the Latin saints. [64] Of this at least we may be sure, that neither side could be convinced by the arguments of their opponents. Prejudice may be enlightened by reason, and a superficial glance may be rectified by a clear and more perfect view of an object adapted to our faculties. But the bishops and monks had been taught from their infancy to repeat a form of mysterious words: their national and personal honor depended on the repetition of the same sounds; and their narrow minds were hardened and inflamed by the acrimony of a public dispute.

[Footnote 62: Syropulus is pleased to reckon seven hundred prelates in the council of Basil. The error is manifest, and perhaps voluntary. That extravagant number could not be supplied by all the ecclesiastics of every degree who were present at the council, nor by all the absent bishops of the West, who, expressly or tacitly, might adhere to its



decrees.]

[Footnote 63: The Greeks, who disliked the union, were unwilling to sally from this strong fortress, (p. 178, 193, 195, 202, of Syropulus.) The shame of the Latins was aggravated by their producing an old MS. of the second council of Nice, with filioque in the Nicene creed. A palpable forgery! (p. 173.)]

[Footnote 64: 'WV egw (said an eminent Greek) otan eiV naon eiselqw Datinwn ou proskunv tina tvn ekeise agiwn, epei oude gnwrizw tina, (Syropulus, p. 109.) See the perplexity of the Greeks, (p. 217, 218, 252, 253, 273.)]

While they were most in a cloud of dust and darkness, the Pope and emperor were desirous of a seeming union, which could alone accomplish the purposes of their interview; and the obstinacy of public dispute was softened by the arts of private and personal negotiation. The patriarch Joseph had sunk under the weight of age and infirmities; his dying voice breathed the counsels of charity and concord, and his vacant benefice might tempt the hopes of the ambitious clergy. The ready and active obedience of the archbishops of Russia and Nice, of Isidore and Bessarion, was prompted and recompensed by their speedy promotion to the dignity of cardinals. Bessarion, in the first debates, had stood forth the most strenuous and eloquent champion of the Greek church; and if the apostate, the bastard, was reprobated by his country, [65] he appears in ecclesiastical story a rare example of a patriot who was recommended to

court favor by loud opposition and well-timed compliance. With the aid of his two spiritual coadjutors, the emperor applied his arguments to the general situation and personal characters of the bishops, and each was successively moved by authority and example. Their revenues were in the hands of the Turks, their persons in those of the Latins: an episcopal treasure, three robes and forty ducats, was soon exhausted: [66] the hopes of their return still depended on the ships of Venice and the alms of Rome; and such was their indigence, that their arrears, the payment of a debt, would be accepted as a favor, and might operate as a bribe. [67] The danger and relief of Constantinople might excuse some prudent and pious dissimulation; and it was insinuated, that the obstinate heretics who should resist the consent of the East and West would be abandoned in a hostile land to the revenge or justice of the Roman pontiff. [68] In the first private assembly of the Greeks, the formulary of union was approved by twenty-four, and rejected by twelve, members; but the five cross-bearers of St. Sophia, who aspired to represent the patriarch, were disqualified by ancient discipline; and their right of voting was transferred to the obsequious train of monks, grammarians, and profane laymen. The will of the monarch produced a false and servile unanimity, and no more than two patriots had courage to speak their own sentiments and those of their country. Demetrius, the emperor's brother, retired to Venice, that he might not be witness of the union; and Mark of Ephesus, mistaking perhaps his pride for his conscience, disclaimed all communion with the Latin heretics, and avowed himself the champion and confessor of the orthodox creed. [69] In the treaty between the two nations, several forms of consent were proposed,

such as might satisfy the Latins, without dishonoring the Greeks; and they weighed the scruples of words and syllables, till the theological balance trembled with a slight preponderance in favor of the Vatican. It was agreed (I must entreat the attention of the reader) that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, as from one principle and one substance; that he proceeds by the Son, being of the same nature and substance, and that he proceeds from the Father and the Son, by one spiration and production. It is less difficult to understand the articles of the preliminary treaty; that the pope should defray all the expenses of the Greeks in their return home; that he should annually maintain two galleys and three hundred soldiers for the defence of Constantinople: that all the ships which transported pilgrims to Jerusalem should be obliged to touch at that port; that as often as they were required, the pope should furnish ten galleys for a year, or twenty for six months; and that he should powerfully solicit the princes of Europe, if the emperor had occasion for land forces.

[Footnote 65: See the polite altercation of Marc and Bessarion in Syropulus, (p. 257,) who never dissembles the vices of his own party, and fairly praises the virtues of the Latins.]

[Footnote 66: For the poverty of the Greek bishops, see a remarkable passage of Ducas, (c. 31.) One had possessed, for his whole property, three old gowns, &c. By teaching one-and-twenty years in his monastery, Bessarion himself had collected forty gold florins; but of these, the archbishop had expended twenty-eight in his voyage from Peloponnesus,

and the remainder at Constantinople, (Syropulus, p. 127.)]

[Footnote 67: Syropulus denies that the Greeks received any money before they had subscribed the act of union, (p. 283;) yet he relates some suspicious circumstances; and their bribery and corruption are positively affirmed by the historian Ducas.]

[Footnote 68: The Greeks most piteously express their own fears of exile and perpetual slavery, (Syropul. p. 196;) and they were strongly moved by the emperor's threats, (p. 260.)]

[Footnote 69: I had forgot another popular and orthodox protester: a favorite bound, who usually lay quiet on the foot-cloth of the emperor's throne but who barked most furiously while the act of union was reading without being silenced by the soothing or the lashes of the royal attendants, (Syropul. p. 265, 266.)]

The same year, and almost the same day, were marked by the deposition of Eugenius at Basil; and, at Florence, by his reunion of the Greeks and Latins. In the former synod, (which he styled indeed an assembly of dæmons,) the pope was branded with the guilt of simony, perjury, tyranny, heresy, and schism; [70] and declared to be incorrigible in his vices, unworthy of any title, and incapable of holding any ecclesiastical office. In the latter, he was revered as the true and holy vicar of Christ, who, after a separation of six hundred years, had reconciled the Catholics of the East and West in one fold, and under one

shepherd. The act of union was subscribed by the pope, the emperor, and the principal members of both churches; even by those who, like Syropulus, [71] had been deprived of the right of voting. Two copies might have sufficed for the East and West; but Eugenius was not satisfied, unless four authentic and similar transcripts were signed and attested as the monuments of his victory. [72] On a memorable day, the sixth of July, the successors of St. Peter and Constantine ascended their thrones the two nations assembled in the cathedral of Florence; their representatives, Cardinal Julian and Bessarion archbishop of Nice, appeared in the pulpit, and, after reading in their respective tongues the act of union, they mutually embraced, in the name and the presence of their applauding brethren. The pope and his ministers then officiated according to the Roman liturgy; the creed was chanted with the addition of filioque; the acquiescence of the Greeks was poorly excused by their ignorance of the harmonious, but inarticulate sounds; [73] and the more scrupulous Latins refused any public celebration of the Byzantine rite. Yet the emperor and his clergy were not totally unmindful of national honor. The treaty was ratified by their consent: it was tacitly agreed that no innovation should be attempted in their creed or ceremonies: they spared, and secretly respected, the generous firmness of Mark of Ephesus; and, on the decease of the patriarch, they refused to elect his successor, except in the cathedral of St. Sophia. In the distribution of public and private rewards, the liberal pontiff exceeded their hopes and his promises: the Greeks, with less pomp and pride, returned by the same road of Ferrara and Venice; and their reception at Constantinople was such as will be described in the following chapter.

[74] The success of the first trial encouraged Eugenius to repeat the same edifying scenes; and the deputies of the Armenians, the Maronites, the Jacobites of Syria and Egypt, the Nestorians and the Æthiopians, were successively introduced, to kiss the feet of the Roman pontiff, and to announce the obedience and the orthodoxy of the East. These Oriental embassies, unknown in the countries which they presumed to represent, [75] diffused over the West the fame of Eugenius; and a clamor was artfully propagated against the remnant of a schism in Switzerland and Savoy, which alone impeded the harmony of the Christian world. The vigor of opposition was succeeded by the lassitude of despair: the council of Basil was silently dissolved; and Felix, renouncing the tiara, again withdrew to the devout or delicious hermitage of Ripaille. [76] A general peace was secured by mutual acts of oblivion and indemnity: all ideas of reformation subsided; the popes continued to exercise and abuse their ecclesiastical despotism; nor has Rome been since disturbed by the mischiefs of a contested election. [77]

[Footnote 70: From the original Lives of the Popes, in Muratori's Collection, (tom. iii. p. ii. tom. xxv.,) the manners of Eugenius IV. appear to have been decent, and even exemplary. His situation, exposed to the world and to his enemies, was a restraint, and is a pledge.]

[Footnote 71: Syropulus, rather than subscribe, would have assisted, as the least evil, at the ceremony of the union. He was compelled to do both; and the great ecclesiarch poorly excuses his submission to the emperor, (p. 290--292.)]

[Footnote 72: None of these original acts of union can at present be produced. Of the ten MSS. that are preserved, (five at Rome, and the remainder at Florence, Bologna, Venice, Paris, and London,) nine have been examined by an accurate critic, (M. de Brequigny,) who condemns them for the variety and imperfections of the Greek signatures. Yet several of these may be esteemed as authentic copies, which were subscribed at Florence, before (26th of August, 1439) the final separation of the pope and emperor, (Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions, tom. xliii. p. 287--311.)]

[Footnote 73: Hmin de wV ashmoi edokoun jwnai, (Syropul. p. 297.)]

[Footnote 74: In their return, the Greeks conversed at Bologna with the ambassadors of England: and after some questions and answers, these impartial strangers laughed at the pretended union of Florence, (Syropul. p. 307.)]

[Footnote 75: So nugatory, or rather so fabulous, are these reunions of the Nestorians, Jacobites, &c., that I have turned over, without success, the Bibliotheca Orientalis of Assemanus, a faithful slave of the Vatican.]

[Footnote 76: Ripaille is situate near Thonon in Savoy, on the southern side of the Lake of Geneva. It is now a Carthusian abbey; and Mr. Addison (Travels into Italy, vol. ii. p. 147, 148, of Baskerville's

edition of his works) has celebrated the place and the founder. Æneas Sylvius, and the fathers of Basil, applaud the austere life of the ducal hermit; but the French and Italian proverbs most unluckily attest the popular opinion of his luxury.]

[Footnote 77: In this account of the councils of Basil, Ferrara, and Florence, I have consulted the original acts, which fill the xviith and xviiiith tome of the edition of Venice, and are closed by the perspicuous, though partial, history of Augustin Patricius, an Italian of the xvth century. They are digested and abridged by Dupin, (Bibliothèque Ecclés. tom. xii.,) and the continuator of Fleury, (tom. xxii.;) and the respect of the Gallican church for the adverse parties confines their members to an awkward moderation.]

The journeys of three emperors were unavailing for their temporal, or perhaps their spiritual, salvation; but they were productive of a beneficial consequence--the revival of the Greek learning in Italy, from whence it was propagated to the last nations of the West and North. In their lowest servitude and depression, the subjects of the Byzantine throne were still possessed of a golden key that could unlock the treasures of antiquity; of a musical and prolific language, that gives a soul to the objects of sense, and a body to the abstractions of philosophy. Since the barriers of the monarchy, and even of the capital, had been trampled under foot, the various Barbarians had doubtless corrupted the form and substance of the national dialect; and ample glossaries have been composed, to interpret a multitude of words, of



Arabic, Turkish, Sclavonian, Latin, or French origin. [78] But a purer idiom was spoken in the court and taught in the college; and the flourishing state of the language is described, and perhaps embellished, by a learned Italian, [79] who, by a long residence and noble marriage, [80] was naturalized at Constantinople about thirty years before the Turkish conquest. "The vulgar speech," says Philelphus, [81] "has been depraved by the people, and infected by the multitude of strangers and merchants, who every day flock to the city and mingle with the inhabitants. It is from the disciples of such a school that the Latin language received the versions of Aristotle and Plato; so obscure in sense, and in spirit so poor. But the Greeks who have escaped the contagion, are those whom we follow; and they alone are worthy of our imitation. In familiar discourse, they still speak the tongue of Aristophanes and Euripides, of the historians and philosophers of Athens; and the style of their writings is still more elaborate and correct. The persons who, by their birth and offices, are attached to the Byzantine court, are those who maintain, with the least alloy, the ancient standard of elegance and purity; and the native graces of language most conspicuously shine among the noble matrons, who are excluded from all intercourse with foreigners. With foreigners do I say? They live retired and sequestered from the eyes of their fellow-citizens. Seldom are they seen in the streets; and when they leave their houses, it is in the dusk of evening, on visits to the churches and their nearest kindred. On these occasions, they are on horseback, covered with a veil, and encompassed by their parents, their husbands, or their servants." [82]

[Footnote 78: In the first attempt, Meursius collected 3600 Græco-barbarous words, to which, in a second edition, he subjoined 1800 more; yet what plenteous gleanings did he leave to Portius, Ducange, Fabrotti, the Bollandists, &c.! (Fabric. Bibliot. Græc. tom. x. p. 101, &c.) Some Persic words may be found in Xenophon, and some Latin ones in Plutarch; and such is the inevitable effect of war and commerce; but the form and substance of the language were not affected by this slight alloy.]

[Footnote 79: The life of Francis Philelphus, a sophist, proud, restless, and rapacious, has been diligently composed by Lancelot (Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions, tom. x. p. 691--751) (Istoria della Letteratura Italiana, tom. vii. p. 282--294,) for the most part from his own letters. His elaborate writings, and those of his contemporaries, are forgotten; but their familiar epistles still describe the men and the times.]

[Footnote 80: He married, and had perhaps debauched, the daughter of John, and the granddaughter of Manuel Chrysoloras. She was young, beautiful, and wealthy; and her noble family was allied to the Dorias of Genoa and the emperors of Constantinople.]

[Footnote 81: Græci quibus lingua depravata non sit.... ita loquuntur vulgo hâc etiam tempestate ut Aristophanes comicus, aut Euripides tragicus, ut oratores omnes, ut historiographi, ut philosophi....

litterati autem homines et doctius et emendatius.... Nam viri aulici veterem sermonis dignitatem atque elegantiam retinebant in primisque ipsæ nobiles mulieres; quibus cum nullum esset omnino cum viris peregrinis commercium, merus ille ac purus Græcorum sermo servabatur intactus, (Philelph. Epist. ad ann. 1451, apud Hodium, p. 188, 189.)

He observes in another passage, uxor illa mea Theodora locutione erat admodum moderatâ et suavi et maxime Atticâ.]

[Footnote 82: Philelphus, absurdly enough, derives this Greek or Oriental jealousy from the manners of ancient Rome.]

Among the Greeks a numerous and opulent clergy was dedicated to the service of religion: their monks and bishops have ever been distinguished by the gravity and austerity of their manners; nor were they diverted, like the Latin priests, by the pursuits and pleasures of a secular, and even military, life. After a large deduction for the time and talent that were lost in the devotion, the laziness, and the discord, of the church and cloister, the more inquisitive and ambitious minds would explore the sacred and profane erudition of their native language. The ecclesiastics presided over the education of youth; the schools of philosophy and eloquence were perpetuated till the fall of the empire; and it may be affirmed, that more books and more knowledge were included within the walls of Constantinople, than could be dispersed over the extensive countries of the West. [83] But an important distinction has been already noticed: the Greeks were stationary or retrograde, while the Latins were advancing with a rapid and progressive

motion. The nations were excited by the spirit of independence and emulation; and even the little world of the Italian states contained more people and industry than the decreasing circle of the Byzantine empire. In Europe, the lower ranks of society were relieved from the yoke of feudal servitude; and freedom is the first step to curiosity and knowledge. The use, however rude and corrupt, of the Latin tongue had been preserved by superstition; the universities, from Bologna to Oxford, [84] were peopled with thousands of scholars; and their misguided ardor might be directed to more liberal and manly studies. In the resurrection of science, Italy was the first that cast away her shroud; and the eloquent Petrarch, by his lessons and his example, may justly be applauded as the first harbinger of day. A purer style of composition, a more generous and rational strain of sentiment, flowed from the study and imitation of the writers of ancient Rome; and the disciples of Cicero and Virgil approached, with reverence and love, the sanctuary of their Grecian masters. In the sack of Constantinople, the French, and even the Venetians, had despised and destroyed the works of Lysippus and Homer: the monuments of art may be annihilated by a single blow; but the immortal mind is renewed and multiplied by the copies of the pen; and such copies it was the ambition of Petrarch and his friends to possess and understand. The arms of the Turks undoubtedly pressed the flight of the Muses; yet we may tremble at the thought, that Greece might have been overwhelmed, with her schools and libraries, before Europe had emerged from the deluge of barbarism; that the seeds of science might have been scattered by the winds, before the Italian soil was prepared for their cultivation.

[Footnote 83: See the state of learning in the xiii<sup>th</sup> and xiv<sup>th</sup> centuries, in the learned and judicious Mosheim, (*Instit. Hist. Ecclés.* p. 434--440, 490--494.)]

[Footnote 84: At the end of the xv<sup>th</sup> century, there existed in Europe about fifty universities, and of these the foundation of ten or twelve is prior to the year 1300. They were crowded in proportion to their scarcity. Bologna contained 10,000 students, chiefly of the civil law. In the year 1357 the number at Oxford had decreased from 30,000 to 6000 scholars, (*Henry's History of Great Britain*, vol. iv. p. 478.) Yet even this decrease is much superior to the present list of the members of the university.]