

Chapter LXVII: Schism Of The Greeks And Latins.--Part II.

It was on this fatal spot, that, instead of finding a confederate fleet to second their operations, they were alarmed by the approach of Amurath himself, who had issued from his Magnesian solitude, and transported the forces of Asia to the defence of Europe. According to some writers, the Greek emperor had been awed, or seduced, to grant the passage of the Bosphorus; and an indelible stain of corruption is fixed on the Genoese, or the pope's nephew, the Catholic admiral, whose mercenary connivance betrayed the guard of the Hellespont. From Adrianople, the sultan advanced by hasty marches, at the head of sixty thousand men; and when the cardinal, and Huniades, had taken a nearer survey of the numbers and order of the Turks, these ardent warriors proposed the tardy and impracticable measure of a retreat. The king alone was resolved to conquer or die; and his resolution had almost been crowned with a glorious and salutary victory. The princes were opposite to each other in the centre; and the Beglerbegs, or generals of Anatolia and Romania, commanded on the right and left, against the adverse divisions of the despot and Huniades. The Turkish wings were broken on the first onset: but the advantage was fatal; and the rash victors, in the heat of the pursuit, were carried away far from the annoyance of the enemy, or the support of their friends. When Amurath beheld the flight of his squadrons, he despaired of his fortune and that of the empire: a veteran Janizary seized his horse's bridle; and he had magnanimity to pardon and reward the soldier who dared to perceive the terror, and arrest the flight, of his sovereign. A copy of the treaty, the monument of

Christian perfidy, had been displayed in the front of battle; and it is said, that the sultan in his distress, lifting his eyes and his hands to heaven, implored the protection of the God of truth; and called on the prophet Jesus himself to avenge the impious mockery of his name and religion. [26] With inferior numbers and disordered ranks, the king of Hungary rushed forward in the confidence of victory, till his career was stopped by the impenetrable phalanx of the Janizaries. If we may credit the Ottoman annals, his horse was pierced by the javelin of Amurath; [27] he fell among the spears of the infantry; and a Turkish soldier proclaimed with a loud voice, "Hungarians, behold the head of your king!" The death of Ladislaus was the signal of their defeat. On his return from an intemperate pursuit, Huniades deplored his error, and the public loss; he strove to rescue the royal body, till he was overwhelmed by the tumultuous crowd of the victors and vanquished; and the last efforts of his courage and conduct were exerted to save the remnant of his Walachian cavalry. Ten thousand Christians were slain in the disastrous battle of Warna: the loss of the Turks, more considerable in numbers, bore a smaller proportion to their total strength; yet the philosophic sultan was not ashamed to confess, that his ruin must be the consequence of a second and similar victory. [271] At his command a column was erected on the spot where Ladislaus had fallen; but the modest inscription, instead of accusing the rashness, recorded the valor, and bewailed the misfortune, of the Hungarian youth. [28]

[Footnote 26: Some Christian writers affirm, that he drew from his bosom the host or wafer on which the treaty had not been sworn. The Moslems

suppose, with more simplicity, an appeal to God and his prophet Jesus, which is likewise insinuated by Callimachus, (l. iii. p. 516. Spondan. A.D. 1444, No. 8.)]

[Footnote 27: A critic will always distrust these spolia opima of a victorious general, so difficult for valor to obtain, so easy for flattery to invent, (Cantemir, p. 90, 91.) Callimachus (l. iii. p. 517) more simply and probably affirms, supervenitibus Janizaris, telorum multitudine, non jam confossus est, quam obrutus.]

[Footnote 271: Compare Von Hammer, p. 463.--M.]

[Footnote 28: Besides some valuable hints from Æneas Sylvius, which are diligently collected by Spondanus, our best authorities are three historians of the xvth century, Philippus Callimachus, (de Rebus a Vladislao Polonorum atque Hungarorum Rege gestis, libri iii. in Bel. Script. Rerum Hungaricarum, tom. i. p. 433--518,) Bonfinius, (decad. iii. l. v. p. 460--467,) and Chalcondyles, (l. vii. p. 165--179.) The two first were Italians, but they passed their lives in Poland and Hungary, (Fabric. Bibliot. Latin. Med. et Infimæ Ætatis, tom. i. p. 324. Vossius, de Hist. Latin. l. iii. c. 8, 11. Bayle, Dictionnaire, Bonfinius.) A small tract of Fælix Petancius, chancellor of Segnia, (ad calcem Cuspinian. de Cæsaribus, p. 716--722,) represents the theatre of the war in the xvth century.]

Before I lose sight of the field of Warna, I am tempted to pause on the

character and story of two principal actors, the cardinal Julian and John Huniades. Julian [29] Cæsarini was born of a noble family of Rome: his studies had embraced both the Latin and Greek learning, both the sciences of divinity and law; and his versatile genius was equally adapted to the schools, the camp, and the court. No sooner had he been invested with the Roman purple, than he was sent into Germany to arm the empire against the rebels and heretics of Bohemia. The spirit of persecution is unworthy of a Christian; the military profession ill becomes a priest; but the former is excused by the times; and the latter was ennobled by the courage of Julian, who stood dauntless and alone in the disgraceful flight of the German host. As the pope's legate, he opened the council of Basil; but the president soon appeared the most strenuous champion of ecclesiastical freedom; and an opposition of seven years was conducted by his ability and zeal. After promoting the strongest measures against the authority and person of Eugenius, some secret motive of interest or conscience engaged him to desert on a sudden the popular party. The cardinal withdrew himself from Basil to Ferrara; and, in the debates of the Greeks and Latins, the two nations admired the dexterity of his arguments and the depth of his theological erudition. [30] In his Hungarian embassy, we have already seen the mischievous effects of his sophistry and eloquence, of which Julian himself was the first victim. The cardinal, who performed the duties of a priest and a soldier, was lost in the defeat of Warna. The circumstances of his death are variously related; but it is believed, that a weighty encumbrance of gold impeded his flight, and tempted the cruel avarice of some Christian fugitives.

[Footnote 29: M. Lenfant has described the origin (Hist. du Concile de Basle, tom. i. p. 247, &c.) and Bohemian campaign (p. 315, &c.) of Cardinal Julian. His services at Basil and Ferrara, and his unfortunate end, are occasionally related by Spondanus, and the continuator of Fleury.]

[Footnote 30: Syropulus honorably praises the talent of an enemy, (p. 117:) τοιαυτα τινα ειπεν ο Ιουλιανου πεπλatusmenwV agan kai logikwV, kai met episthmhV kai deinothtoV 'RhtprikhV.]

From an humble, or at least a doubtful origin, the merit of John Huniades promoted him to the command of the Hungarian armies. His father was a Walachian, his mother a Greek: her unknown race might possibly ascend to the emperors of Constantinople; and the claims of the Walachians, with the surname of Corvinus, from the place of his nativity, might suggest a thin pretence for mingling his blood with the patricians of ancient Rome. [31] In his youth he served in the wars of Italy, and was retained, with twelve horsemen, by the bishop of Zagrab: the valor of the white knight [32] was soon conspicuous; he increased his fortunes by a noble and wealthy marriage; and in the defence of the Hungarian borders he won in the same year three battles against the Turks. By his influence, Ladislaus of Poland obtained the crown of Hungary; and the important service was rewarded by the title and office of Waivod of Transylvania. The first of Julian's crusades added two Turkish laurels on his brow; and in the public distress the fatal errors

of Warná were forgotten. During the absence and minority of Ladislaus of Austria, the titular king, Huniades was elected supreme captain and governor of Hungary; and if envy at first was silenced by terror, a reign of twelve years supposes the arts of policy as well as of war. Yet the idea of a consummate general is not delineated in his campaigns; the white knight fought with the hand rather than the head, as the chief of desultory Barbarians, who attack without fear and fly without shame; and his military life is composed of a romantic alternative of victories and escapes. By the Turks, who employed his name to frighten their perverse children, he was corruptly denominated Jancus Lain, or the Wicked: their hatred is the proof of their esteem; the kingdom which he guarded was inaccessible to their arms; and they felt him most daring and formidable, when they fondly believed the captain and his country irrecoverably lost. Instead of confining himself to a defensive war, four years after the defeat of Warná he again penetrated into the heart of Bulgaria, and in the plain of Cossova, sustained, till the third day, the shock of the Ottoman army, four times more numerous than his own. As he fled alone through the woods of Walachia, the hero was surprised by two robbers; but while they disputed a gold chain that hung at his neck, he recovered his sword, slew the one, terrified the other, and, after new perils of captivity or death, consoled by his presence an afflicted kingdom. But the last and most glorious action of his life was the defence of Belgrade against the powers of Mahomet the Second in person. After a siege of forty days, the Turks, who had already entered the town, were compelled to retreat; and the joyful nations celebrated Huniades and Belgrade as the bulwarks of Christendom. [33] About a

month after this great deliverance, the champion expired; and his most splendid epitaph is the regret of the Ottoman prince, who sighed that he could no longer hope for revenge against the single antagonist who had triumphed over his arms. On the first vacancy of the throne, Matthias Corvinus, a youth of eighteen years of age, was elected and crowned by the grateful Hungarians. His reign was prosperous and long: Matthias aspired to the glory of a conqueror and a saint: but his purest merit is the encouragement of learning; and the Latin orators and historians, who were invited from Italy by the son, have shed the lustre of their eloquence on the father's character. [34]

[Footnote 31: See Bonfinius, *decad. iii. l. iv. p. 423*. Could the Italian historian pronounce, or the king of Hungary hear, without a blush, the absurd flattery which confounded the name of a Walachian village with the casual, though glorious, epithet of a single branch of the Valerian family at Rome?]

[Footnote 32: Philip de Comines, (*Mémoires*, l. vi. c. 13,) from the tradition of the times, mentions him with high encomiums, but under the whimsical name of the Chevalier Blanc de Valaigne, (Valachia.) The Greek Chalcondyles, and the Turkish annals of Leunclavius, presume to accuse his fidelity or valor.]

[Footnote 33: See Bonfinius (*decad. iii. l. viii. p. 492*) and Spondanus, (A.D. 456, No. 1--7.) Huniades shared the glory of the defence of Belgrade with Capistran, a Franciscan friar; and in their respective

narratives, neither the saint nor the hero condescend to take notice of his rival's merit.]

[Footnote 34: See Bonfinius, decad. iii. l. viii.--decad. iv. l. viii.

The observations of Spondanus on the life and character of Matthias Corvinus are curious and critical, (A.D. 1464, No. 1, 1475, No. 6, 1476, No. 14--16, 1490, No. 4, 5.) Italian fame was the object of his vanity. His actions are celebrated in the *Epitome Rerum Hungaricarum* (p. 322--412) of Peter Ranzanus, a Sicilian. His wise and facetious sayings are registered by Galestus Martius of Narni, (528--568,) and we have a particular narrative of his wedding and coronation. These three tracts are all contained in the first vol. of Bel's *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*.]

In the list of heroes, John Huniades and Scanderbeg are commonly associated; [35] and they are both entitled to our notice, since their occupation of the Ottoman arms delayed the ruin of the Greek empire. John Castriot, the father of Scanderbeg, [36] was the hereditary prince of a small district of Epirus or Albania, between the mountains and the Adriatic Sea. Unable to contend with the sultan's power, Castriot submitted to the hard conditions of peace and tribute: he delivered his four sons as the pledges of his fidelity; and the Christian youths, after receiving the mark of circumcision, were instructed in the Mahometan religion, and trained in the arms and arts of Turkish policy. [37] The three elder brothers were confounded in the crowd of slaves; and the poison to which their deaths are ascribed cannot be verified

or disproved by any positive evidence. Yet the suspicion is in a great measure removed by the kind and paternal treatment of George Castriot, the fourth brother, who, from his tender youth, displayed the strength and spirit of a soldier. The successive overthrow of a Tartar and two Persians, who carried a proud defiance to the Turkish court, recommended him to the favor of Amurath, and his Turkish appellation of Scanderbeg, (Iskender beg,) or the lord Alexander, is an indelible memorial of his glory and servitude. His father's principality was reduced into a province; but the loss was compensated by the rank and title of Sanjiak, a command of five thousand horse, and the prospect of the first dignities of the empire. He served with honor in the wars of Europe and Asia; and we may smile at the art or credulity of the historian, who supposes, that in every encounter he spared the Christians, while he fell with a thundering arm on his Mussulman foes. The glory of Huniades is without reproach: he fought in the defence of his religion and country; but the enemies who applaud the patriot, have branded his rival with the name of traitor and apostate. In the eyes of the Christian, the rebellion of Scanderbeg is justified by his father's wrongs, the ambiguous death of his three brothers, his own degradation, and the slavery of his country; and they adore the generous, though tardy, zeal, with which he asserted the faith and independence of his ancestors. But he had imbibed from his ninth year the doctrines of the Koran; he was ignorant of the Gospel; the religion of a soldier is determined by authority and habit; nor is it easy to conceive what new illumination at the age of forty [38] could be poured into his soul. His motives would be less exposed to the suspicion of interest or revenge, had he broken his

chain from the moment that he was sensible of its weight: but a long oblivion had surely impaired his original right; and every year of obedience and reward had cemented the mutual bond of the sultan and his subject. If Scanderbeg had long harbored the belief of Christianity and the intention of revolt, a worthy mind must condemn the base dissimulation, that could serve only to betray, that could promise only to be forsworn, that could actively join in the temporal and spiritual perdition of so many thousands of his unhappy brethren. Shall we praise a secret correspondence with Huniades, while he commanded the vanguard of the Turkish army? shall we excuse the desertion of his standard, a treacherous desertion which abandoned the victory to the enemies of his benefactor? In the confusion of a defeat, the eye of Scanderbeg was fixed on the Reis Effendi or principal secretary: with the dagger at his breast, he extorted a firman or patent for the government of Albania; and the murder of the guiltless scribe and his train prevented the consequences of an immediate discovery. With some bold companions, to whom he had revealed his design he escaped in the night, by rapid marches, from the field or battle to his paternal mountains. The gates of Croya were opened to the royal mandate; and no sooner did he command the fortress, than George Castriot dropped the mask of dissimulation; abjured the prophet and the sultan, and proclaimed himself the avenger of his family and country. The names of religion and liberty provoked a general revolt: the Albanians, a martial race, were unanimous to live and die with their hereditary prince; and the Ottoman garrisons were indulged in the choice of martyrdom or baptism. In the assembly of the states of Epirus, Scanderbeg was elected general of the Turkish war; and

each of the allies engaged to furnish his respective proportion of men and money. From these contributions, from his patrimonial estate, and from the valuable salt-pits of Selina, he drew an annual revenue of two hundred thousand ducats; [39] and the entire sum, exempt from the demands of luxury, was strictly appropriated to the public use. His manners were popular; but his discipline was severe; and every superfluous vice was banished from his camp: his example strengthened his command; and under his conduct, the Albanians were invincible in their own opinion and that of their enemies. The bravest adventurers of France and Germany were allured by his fame and retained in his service: his standing militia consisted of eight thousand horse and seven thousand foot; the horses were small, the men were active; but he viewed with a discerning eye the difficulties and resources of the mountains; and, at the blaze of the beacons, the whole nation was distributed in the strongest posts. With such unequal arms Scanderbeg resisted twenty-three years the powers of the Ottoman empire; and two conquerors, Amurath the Second, and his greater son, were repeatedly baffled by a rebel, whom they pursued with seeming contempt and implacable resentment. At the head of sixty thousand horse and forty thousand Janizaries, Amurath entered Albania: he might ravage the open country, occupy the defenceless towns, convert the churches into mosques, circumcise the Christian youths, and punish with death his adult and obstinate captives: but the conquests of the sultan were confined to the petty fortress of Sfetigrade; and the garrison, invincible to his arms, was oppressed by a paltry artifice and a superstitious scruple. [40] Amurath retired with shame and loss from the walls of Croya, the castle and residence of the Castriots; the

march, the siege, the retreat, were harassed by a vexatious, and almost invisible, adversary; [41] and the disappointment might tend to imbitter, perhaps to shorten, the last days of the sultan. [42] In the fulness of conquest, Mahomet the Second still felt at his bosom this domestic thorn: his lieutenants were permitted to negotiate a truce; and the Albanian prince may justly be praised as a firm and able champion of his national independence. The enthusiasm of chivalry and religion has ranked him with the names of Alexander and Pyrrhus; nor would they blush to acknowledge their intrepid countryman: but his narrow dominion, and slender powers, must leave him at an humble distance below the heroes of antiquity, who triumphed over the East and the Roman legions. His splendid achievements, the bashaws whom he encountered, the armies that he discomfited, and the three thousand Turks who were slain by his single hand, must be weighed in the scales of suspicious criticism. Against an illiterate enemy, and in the dark solitude of Epirus, his partial biographers may safely indulge the latitude of romance: but their fictions are exposed by the light of Italian history; and they afford a strong presumption against their own truth, by a fabulous tale of his exploits, when he passed the Adriatic with eight hundred horse to the succor of the king of Naples. [43] Without disparagement to his fame, they might have owned, that he was finally oppressed by the Ottoman powers: in his extreme danger he applied to Pope Pius the Second for a refuge in the ecclesiastical state; and his resources were almost exhausted, since Scanderbeg died a fugitive at Lissus, on the Venetian territory. [44] His sepulchre was soon violated by the Turkish conquerors; but the Janizaries, who wore his bones enchased in a

bracelet, declared by this superstitious amulet their involuntary reverence for his valor. The instant ruin of his country may redound to the hero's glory; yet, had he balanced the consequences of submission and resistance, a patriot perhaps would have declined the unequal contest which must depend on the life and genius of one man. Scanderbeg might indeed be supported by the rational, though fallacious, hope, that the pope, the king of Naples, and the Venetian republic, would join in the defence of a free and Christian people, who guarded the sea-coast of the Adriatic, and the narrow passage from Greece to Italy. His infant son was saved from the national shipwreck; the Castriots [45] were invested with a Neapolitan dukedom, and their blood continues to flow in the noblest families of the realm. A colony of Albanian fugitives obtained a settlement in Calabria, and they preserve at this day the language and manners of their ancestors. [46]

[Footnote 35: They are ranked by Sir William Temple, in his pleasing Essay on Heroic Virtue, (Works, vol. iii. p. 385,) among the seven chiefs who have deserved without wearing, a royal crown; Belisarius, Narses, Gonsalvo of Cordova, William first prince of Orange, Alexander duke of Parma, John Huniades, and George Castriot, or Scanderbeg.]

[Footnote 36: I could wish for some simple authentic memoirs of a friend of Scanderbeg, which would introduce me to the man, the time, and the place. In the old and national history of Marinus Barletius, a priest of Scodra, (de Vita. Moribus, et Rebus gestis Georgii Castrioti, &c. libri xiii. p. 367. Argentorat. 1537, in fol.) his gaudy and cumbersome robes

are stuck with many false jewels. See likewise Chalcondyles, l vii. p. 185, l. viii. p. 229.]

[Footnote 37: His circumcision, education, &c., are marked by Marinus with brevity and reluctance, (l. i. p. 6, 7.)]

[Footnote 38: Since Scanderbeg died A.D. 1466, in the lxiid year of his age, (Marinus, l. xiii. p. 370,) he was born in 1403; since he was torn from his parents by the Turks, when he was novennis, (Marinus, l. i. p. 1, 6,) that event must have happened in 1412, nine years before the accession of Amurath II., who must have inherited, not acquired the Albanian slave. Spondanus has remarked this inconsistency, A.D. 1431, No. 31, 1443, No. 14.]

[Footnote 39: His revenue and forces are luckily given by Marinus, (l. ii. p. 44.)]

[Footnote 40: There were two Dibras, the upper and lower, the Bulgarian and Albanian: the former, 70 miles from Croya, (l. i. p. 17,) was contiguous to the fortress of Sfetigrade, whose inhabitants refused to drink from a well into which a dead dog had traitorously been cast, (l. v. p. 139, 140.) We want a good map of Epirus.]

[Footnote 41: Compare the Turkish narrative of Cantemir (p. 92) with the pompous and prolix declamation in the ivth, vth, and vith books of the Albanian priest, who has been copied by the tribe of strangers and

moderns.]

[Footnote 42: In honor of his hero, Barletius (l. vi. p. 188--192) kills the sultan by disease indeed, under the walls of Croya. But this audacious fiction is disproved by the Greeks and Turks, who agree in the time and manner of Amurath's death at Adrianople.]

[Footnote 43: See the marvels of his Calabrian expedition in the ixth and xth books of Marinus Barletius, which may be rectified by the testimony or silence of Muratori, (*Annali d'Italia*, tom. xiii. p. 291,) and his original authors, (Joh. Simonetta de Rebus Francisci Sfortiæ, in Muratori, *Script. Rerum Ital.* tom. xxi. p. 728, et alios.) The Albanian cavalry, under the name of Stradiots, soon became famous in the wars of Italy, (*Mémoires de Comines*, l. viii. c. 5.)]

[Footnote 44: Spondanus, from the best evidence, and the most rational criticism, has reduced the giant Scanderbeg to the human size, (A.D. 1461, No. 20, 1463, No. 9, 1465, No. 12, 13, 1467, No. 1.) His own letter to the pope, and the testimony of Phranza, (l. iii. c. 28,) a refugee in the neighboring isle of Corfu, demonstrate his last distress, which is awkwardly concealed by Marinus Barletius, (l. x.)]

[Footnote 45: See the family of the Castriots, in Ducange, (*Fam. Dalmaticæ*, &c, xviii. p. 348--350.)]

[Footnote 46: This colony of Albanese is mentioned by Mr. Swinburne,

(Travels into the Two Sicilies, vol. i. p. 350--354.)]

In the long career of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, I have reached at length the last reign of the princes of Constantinople, who so feebly sustained the name and majesty of the Cæsars. On the decease of John Palæologus, who survived about four years the Hungarian crusade, [47] the royal family, by the death of Andronicus and the monastic profession of Isidore, was reduced to three princes, Constantine, Demetrius, and Thomas, the surviving sons of the emperor Manuel. Of these the first and the last were far distant in the Morea; but Demetrius, who possessed the domain of Selybria, was in the suburbs, at the head of a party: his ambition was not chilled by the public distress; and his conspiracy with the Turks and the schismatics had already disturbed the peace of his country. The funeral of the late emperor was accelerated with singular and even suspicious haste: the claim of Demetrius to the vacant throne was justified by a trite and flimsy sophism, that he was born in the purple, the eldest son of his father's reign. But the empress-mother, the senate and soldiers, the clergy and people, were unanimous in the cause of the lawful successor: and the despot Thomas, who, ignorant of the change, accidentally returned to the capital, asserted with becoming zeal the interest of his absent brother. An ambassador, the historian Phranza, was immediately despatched to the court of Adrianople. Amurath received him with honor and dismissed him with gifts; but the gracious approbation of the Turkish sultan announced his supremacy, and the approaching downfall of the Eastern empire. By the hands of two illustrious deputies, the

Imperial crown was placed at Sparta on the head of Constantine. In the spring he sailed from the Morea, escaped the encounter of a Turkish squadron, enjoyed the acclamations of his subjects, celebrated the festival of a new reign, and exhausted by his donatives the treasure, or rather the indigence, of the state. The emperor immediately resigned to his brothers the possession of the Morea; and the brittle friendship of the two princes, Demetrius and Thomas, was confirmed in their mother's presence by the frail security of oaths and embraces. His next occupation was the choice of a consort. A daughter of the doge of Venice had been proposed; but the Byzantine nobles objected the distance between an hereditary monarch and an elective magistrate; and in their subsequent distress, the chief of that powerful republic was not unmindful of the affront. Constantine afterwards hesitated between the royal families of Trebizond and Georgia; and the embassy of Phranza represents in his public and private life the last days of the Byzantine empire. [48]

[Footnote 47: The Chronology of Phranza is clear and authentic; but instead of four years and seven months, Spondanus (A.D. 1445, No. 7,) assigns seven or eight years to the reign of the last Constantine which he deduces from a spurious epistle of Eugenius IV. to the king of Æthiopia.]

[Footnote 48: Phranza (l. iii. c. 1--6) deserves credit and esteem.]

The protovestiare, or great chamberlain, Phranza sailed from

Constantinople as the minister of a bridegroom; and the relics of wealth and luxury were applied to his pompous appearance. His numerous retinue consisted of nobles and guards, of physicians and monks: he was attended by a band of music; and the term of his costly embassy was protracted above two years. On his arrival in Georgia or Iberia, the natives from the towns and villages flocked around the strangers; and such was their simplicity, that they were delighted with the effects, without understanding the cause, of musical harmony. Among the crowd was an old man, above a hundred years of age, who had formerly been carried away a captive by the Barbarians, [49] and who amused his hearers with a tale of the wonders of India, [50] from whence he had returned to Portugal by an unknown sea. [51] From this hospitable land, Phranza proceeded to the court of Trebizond, where he was informed by the Greek prince of the recent decease of Amurath. Instead of rejoicing in the deliverance, the experienced statesman expressed his apprehension, that an ambitious youth would not long adhere to the sage and pacific system of his father. After the sultan's decease, his Christian wife, Maria, [52] the daughter of the Servian despot, had been honorably restored to her parents; on the fame of her beauty and merit, she was recommended by the ambassador as the most worthy object of the royal choice; and Phranza recapitulates and refutes the specious objections that might be raised against the proposal. The majesty of the purple would ennoble an unequal alliance; the bar of affinity might be removed by liberal alms and the dispensation of the church; the disgrace of Turkish nuptials had been repeatedly overlooked; and, though the fair Maria was nearly fifty years of age, she might yet hope to give an heir to the empire. Constantine

listened to the advice, which was transmitted in the first ship that sailed from Trebizond; but the factions of the court opposed his marriage; and it was finally prevented by the pious vow of the sultana, who ended her days in the monastic profession. Reduced to the first alternative, the choice of Phranza was decided in favor of a Georgian princess; and the vanity of her father was dazzled by the glorious alliance. Instead of demanding, according to the primitive and national custom, a price for his daughter, [53] he offered a portion of fifty-six thousand, with an annual pension of five thousand, ducats; and the services of the ambassador were repaid by an assurance, that, as his son had been adopted in baptism by the emperor, the establishment of his daughter should be the peculiar care of the empress of Constantinople. On the return of Phranza, the treaty was ratified by the Greek monarch, who with his own hand impressed three vermilion crosses on the golden bull, and assured the Georgian envoy that in the spring his galleys should conduct the bride to her Imperial palace. But Constantine embraced his faithful servant, not with the cold approbation of a sovereign, but with the warm confidence of a friend, who, after a long absence, is impatient to pour his secrets into the bosom of his friend. "Since the death of my mother and of Cantacuzene, who alone advised me without interest or passion, [54] I am surrounded," said the emperor, "by men whom I can neither love nor trust, nor esteem. You are not a stranger to Lucas Notaras, the great admiral; obstinately attached to his own sentiments, he declares, both in private and public, that his sentiments are the absolute measure of my thoughts and actions. The rest of the courtiers are swayed by their personal or factious views; and how

can I consult the monks on questions of policy and marriage? I have yet much employment for your diligence and fidelity. In the spring you shall engage one of my brothers to solicit the succor of the Western powers; from the Morea you shall sail to Cyprus on a particular commission; and from thence proceed to Georgia to receive and conduct the future empress."--"Your commands," replied Phranza, "are irresistible; but deign, great sir," he added, with a serious smile, "to consider, that if I am thus perpetually absent from my family, my wife may be tempted either to seek another husband, or to throw herself into a monastery." After laughing at his apprehensions, the emperor more gravely consoled him by the pleasing assurance that this should be his last service abroad, and that he destined for his son a wealthy and noble heiress; for himself, the important office of great logothete, or principal minister of state. The marriage was immediately stipulated: but the office, however incompatible with his own, had been usurped by the ambition of the admiral. Some delay was requisite to negotiate a consent and an equivalent; and the nomination of Phranza was half declared, and half suppressed, lest it might be displeasing to an insolent and powerful favorite. The winter was spent in the preparations of his embassy; and Phranza had resolved, that the youth his son should embrace this opportunity of foreign travel, and be left, on the appearance of danger, with his maternal kindred of the Morea. Such were the private and public designs, which were interrupted by a Turkish war, and finally buried in the ruins of the empire.

[Footnote 49: Suppose him to have been captured in 1394, in Timour's

first war in Georgia, (Sherefeddin, l. iii. c. 50;) he might follow his Tartar master into Hindostan in 1398, and from thence sail to the spice islands.]

[Footnote 50: The happy and pious Indians lived a hundred and fifty years, and enjoyed the most perfect productions of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. The animals were on a large scale: dragons seventy cubits, ants (the formica Indica) nine inches long, sheep like elephants, elephants like sheep. Quidlibet audendi, &c.]

[Footnote 51: He sailed in a country vessel from the spice islands to one of the ports of the exterior India; invenitque navem grandem Ibericam quâ in Portugalliam est delatus. This passage, composed in 1477, (Phranza, l. iii. c. 30,) twenty years before the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, is spurious or wonderful. But this new geography is sullied by the old and incompatible error which places the source of the Nile in India.]

[Footnote 52: Cantemir, (p. 83,) who styles her the daughter of Lazarus Ogli, and the Helen of the Servians, places her marriage with Amurath in the year 1424. It will not easily be believed, that in six-and-twenty years' cohabitation, the sultan corpus ejus non tetigit. After the taking of Constantinople, she fled to Mahomet II., (Phranza, l. iii. c. 22.)]

[Footnote 53: The classical reader will recollect the offers of

Agamemnon, (Iliad, c. v. 144,) and the general practice of antiquity.]

[Footnote 54: Cantacuzene (I am ignorant of his relation to the emperor of that name) was great domestic, a firm assertor of the Greek creed, and a brother of the queen of Servia, whom he visited with the character of ambassador, (Syropulus, p. 37, 38, 45.)]