A

VIEW

OF THE

COMMERCE

OF

GREECE,

FORMED AFTER AN ANNUAL AVERAGE,

FROM 1787 TO 1797.

BY

FELIX BEAUJOUR,

EX-CONSUL IN GREECE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE.

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1800.

THE

TRANSLATOR'S

PREFACE.

AMONG the many works that have been hitherto published, respecting the present state of Greece, there is none which has treated of the subject most interesting to a trading nation --- its commerce; most of those, who have given an account of their travels, having confined their researches wholly to the discovery of ancient ruins, to the settling of the situations of ancient

cities, or to the traces of ancient manners and customs observable among the modern Greeks, or having, at least, treated only incidentally on the commerce of Greece. The following work is calculated to supply that deficiency, and with this view the translation of it was undertaken.*

The translator has endeavoured, as far as he was able, to retain the spirit of his author, and to avoid the redundancies and obscurities† with which

* The original work was published at Paris about three or four months since, in two volumes, 8vo; which, being very loosely printed, have been compressed now into one,

† These have been so great, that, had it not been for the kind assistance of some gentlemen, particularly one, whose name (were he permitted to mention it) would reflect the highest credit on his labours, the translator must have declined to proceed in the work. By their assistance, which he is proud to acknowledge, he has been enabled to complete his work, and therefore takes this opportunity of returning his sincere thanks to them.

the

the original work abounds. To avoid an unnecessary and tedious recurrence to that part of the work in which the Turkish weights, measures, and money are treated of, with the corresponding *French* weights, &c. he has, after some difficulty, constructed and prefixed a Table, by which may be seen, at one view, the weights, measures, and money of Turkey, with the corresponding English weights, &c. He has also to apologize for the insertion of French words in some parts of the following work, which he has been under the disagreeable necessity of doing, from his inability to find proper adequate corresponding English expressions, owing to the number of new words which the French have latterly coined. He is fully aware that he has committed many errors, for which he can rely only on the candour of the public,

trusting that that authenticity, variety, and extent, of information, (which could be acquired only by a long and actual residence on the spot, and which, notwithstanding the many verbose details in the original work, have caused it to experience a most rapid sale on the continent,) will secure him a candid, if not a favourable, reception, and will allow him to flatter himself with the hope, that he (notwithstanding his youth) has performed an acceptable service to his countrymen.

Carey-Street, Lincoln's Inn,
Sept. 1, 1800.

THE

THE

AUTHOR'S

PREFACE.

IT is usual, in the French residentships of the Levant, to spend the fine season in the country, whither the merchants go to forget the hurry of their counting-houses, and to devote themselves, in the midst of their family and groves of orange-trees, to sweet and agreeable amusements. As the consuls have some leisure at that time, I went myself, after the example of the merchants, to inhabit a country-house, seated at the foot of the hill which crowns Pella. I had selected this place, because it is neither at too great a distance from, nor too near to,

Salonichi, my usual residence; because its situation is smiling and picturesque, and perhaps, also, because, having been the cradle of Alexander, it is full of recollections.

The best-informed merchants of Salonichi came to see me. We discussed together the most important points of the commerce of the Levant. We forgot, in the heat of our discussions, the misfortunes of our country. We planned for it, for the future, the happiest lot; and, as the public good connected itself in our minds with economical and commercial ideas, we made these ideas the beginning and the end of our conversations.

From these conversations I have extracted the most interesting notices respecting the commerce of Greece, which I made the principal subject of my ministerial correspondence, and, at the end of every year, I presented the result of my views in the moral account of my conduct. My latter letters have been communicated by the minister to the Institute; but, as they are necessarily connected with the former ones, I thought it my duty, on my return from Greece, to publish both in this View.

I have expunged from these letters whatever related to our diplomatic system, and I have extracted from them all the details relative to commerce, agriculture, and manufactures. I know that these details are tedious; but I think they ought to be known, in order that the opprobrium of ignorance may not be handed down to perpetuity, on a point that so closely affects the wealth of nations. They are moreover proper to inform the government of the importance of the Greek commerce, the merchant of the best way of carrying it on, the husbandman of new objects of cultivation, and the artist of new manufactures.

Whatever may be the fate reserved by the present war for the Othoman empire, the commerce of Greece belongs to Marseilles, and the force of things will bring it back to that place. But there is great reason to apprehend, that France will be deprived of that fine market of the Mediterranean, if the English chance to deprive it of the commerce of the Levant. Provence is not an agricultural country. It subsists by its industry and its navigation, and in a manner similar to the islands, whose produce is inadequate

adequate to their consumption; it will surrender to the first squadron that shall appear before its ports, *armed with barrels of meal instead of barrels of powder.*

This consideration has perhaps never been presented to government; it deserves, at present, to fix its whole attention. The English aspire openly to universal commerce, and wish to seize all the great factories of the world. The Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon, Batavia, Canton, Bassora, Alexandria, Marseilles, have all, in their turn, attracted their attentions. Invulnerable in their island, present every where by their *thousand* vessels, they stir up nations against each other, and tear empires to pieces, in order to deprive them of their tatters.

I ought, perhaps, to have published the *View of the Commerce of Greece* when that commerce existed for us; but, being at that time confined to the extremity of the Archipelago, I was too much distracted by the details of my administration. I am now about to occasion much regret: what will soften, in a small degree, my own, is the hope, that, by displaying our losses, I shall inspire

inspire the desire of repairing them. If this desire is fruitless, I shall have no other consolation remaining, than that of having shewn the French commerce all the good I wished to do it, and which I had in my heart.

But I ought to publish here, for the honour of the nation, a truth that is not sufficiently known; and that is, that the industry of our merchants is in every respect superior to that of foreign merchants.

I wish not here to depreciate the *commercial genius* of the English: I have learned too well to esteem it. But I ought to say, that if those Islanders are well adapted to commerce, the French are still more so than they. This is one of those plain truths, which we find incontestible, when we have lived in the midst of both for some time. Self national love does not blind me. It is certain, that the condition of commerce, in both nations, belongs solely to the difference of their commercial system. The English government has always done, and still does, every thing for its commerce: the French government has never done any thing for its own, except since the time of Colbert.

Colbert. For the last fifty years, particularly, our political system has floated about, at the pleasure of every petty interest, and we have never known the end to which it tended. This is a sad truth to publish; but dissimulation is impossible, at a time when it is known in every cabinet of Europe.

Let us have, then, a political system well connected with our commercial system, and, in twenty years, we shall have supplanted our rivals. We have no need of their waging war with our fleets; let them do it with our industry; we shall thus spare the effusion of human blood.

The Public are respectfully informed, that the publisher intended to have prefixed a Map of Modern Greece; but he has been unfortunately prevented, by not being able to meet with any that appeared to him to be sufficiently minute. He however begs leave to refer them to the Map published by Mr. FADEN, *of Charing-Cross; or to that of Turkey, in the Atlas belonging to Mr.* CRUTWELL'*s Gazeteer; or to the Map of Turkey, published by Mr.* WILKINSON, *of Cornhill.*

The

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Glass

I. The

A TABLE of the MEASURES, WEIGHTS, and MONEY, of TURKEY, with their corresponding ENGLISH MEASURES, WEIGHTS, and MONEY:

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

THE PRINCIPAL EUROPEAN COINS, WITH THE SUMS AT WHICH THEY ARE CURRENT IN TURKEY, AND THEIR AMOUNT IN ENGLISH MONEY. *According to the most authentic Accounts.*

MEASURES.

	Feet.	*Inch.*
Pic (for stuffs)	2	1
Quilot (for grain) of Stamboul or Constantinople, of Salonichi }	See the next article.	

WEIGHTS.

							lbs.	*oz.*
Drachm							0	$0\frac{1}{8}$
400	Oke						3	2
3200	44	Cantaar					137	8
1600	22	$\frac{1}{2}$	Quilot of Stamboul or Constantinople				68	12
6400	88	2	$3\frac{3}{4}$	Quilot of Salonichi			266	9*

MONEY. (Silver.)

									£.	*s.*	*d.*
Asper									0	0	$0\frac{1}{6}$
3	Para								0	0	$1\frac{4}{5}$
15	5	Bechlik							0	0	6
30	10	2	Onlouk						0	1	0
60	20	4	2	Yirmilik					0	2	0
90	30	6	3	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Izlote				0	3	0
120	40	8	4	2	$1\frac{1}{3}$	New Izlote, Grousch, or Piaster, properly so called			0	4	0
180	60	12	6	3	2	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Altmichlik		0	6	0
240	80	16	8	4	$2\frac{2}{3}$	2	$1\frac{1}{3}$	Ikilik	0	8	0
300	100	20	10	5	$3\frac{1}{3}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{2}{3}$	$1\frac{1}{4}$ Yusluk	0	10	0

MONEY. (Gold.)

	Piaster.	*Para.*	*£.*	*s.*	*d.*
Sequin					
Foundoukli	7	0†	or 1	8	0
Zermahboub, (or of Stamboul,)	5	0‡	or 1	0	0
Meshir (or of Cairo)	4	0§	or 0	16	0

FOREIGN COINS CURRENT in TURKEY.

(Silver.)

The Talari					
of Hungary, at	3	13	or 0	13	$5\frac{2}{3}$
of Saxony	3	8	or 0	12	$9\frac{2}{3}$
The Piaster					
of Spain *(Sévillane)*	3	12	or 0	13	$3\frac{3}{5}$
of Ragusa	2	5	or 0	8	6
The Ducat of Venice	3	12	or 0	13	$3\frac{3}{5}$

(Gold.)

The Sequin					
of Hungary, *(Madgiar,)* at	7	0	or 1	8	0
of Venice	7	20	or 1	10	0
of Holland, (or Ducatoon,)	9	0	or 1	16	0
of Tuscany	2	24	or 0	10	$7\frac{4}{5}$

* About one quarter of our measure. I have classed these two measures here, because they are more easily, and also more accurately, to be ascertained by weight than by any other mode.

† This is the usual price at which it is current. Its intrinsic value is only four piasters thirty-five paras, or eighteen shillings and eleven pence.

‡ This is also the price current. Its intrinsic value is only three piasters twenty-one paras, or thirteen shillings and nine pence.

§ Its intrinsic value is only three piasters eight paras, or twelve shillings and eight pence.

S, WEIGHTS, and MONEY, of TURKEY, with their corresponding ENGLISH MEASURES, WEIGHTS, and MONEY:

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

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EASURES.

	Feet.	*Inch.*
- - - - - - -	2	1

Constantinople, - - - - } See the next article.

VEIGHTS.

	lbs.	*oz.*
- - - - - - - - - - - -	0	$0\frac{1}{8}$
- - - - - - - - - - - -	3	2
- - - - - - - - - - - -	137	8
onstantinople - - - - - - -	68	12
- - - - - - - - - -	266	9*

ONEY. (Silver.)

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
- - - - - - - - - -	0	0	$0\frac{1}{8}$
- - - - - - - - - -	0	0	$1\frac{4}{5}$
- - - - - - - - - -	0	0	6
- - - - - - - - - -	0	1	0
- - - - - - - - - -	0	2	0
- - - - - - - - - -	0	3	0
ote, Grousch, or Piaster, properly so called - -	0	4	0
michlik - - - - - - - - -	0	6	0
Ikilik - - - - - - - -	0	8	0
$1\frac{1}{4}$ Yusluk - - - - - - -	0	10	0

MONEY. (Gold.)

Sequin	*Piaster.*	*Para.*		*£.*	*s.*	*d.*
Foundoukli - - -	7	0†	or	1	8	0
Zermahboub, (or of Stamboul,)	5	0‡	or	1	0	0
Meshir (or of Cairo) - -	4	0§	or	0	16	0

FOREIGN COINS CURRENT in TURKEY.

(Silver.)

The Talari						
of Hungary, at - -	3	13	or	0	13	$5\frac{2}{3}$
of Saxony - - -	3	8	or	0	12	$9\frac{2}{3}$
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of Spain *(Sévillane)* -	3	12	or	0	13	$3\frac{3}{5}$
of Ragusa - - -	2	5	or	0	8	6
The Ducat of Venice - - -	3	12	or	0	13	$3\frac{3}{5}$

(Gold.)

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A VIEW

OF THE

COMMERCE OF GREECE.

LETTER I.

Salonichi, 10 Vendemaire, Year 5.*

SALONICHI is the emporium of the commerce of Greece. I will not send you the view of that commerce without giving you some idea of that city, and of Macedonia, less illustrious on account of the richness of her soil and her productions than on account of her Alexander.

The TOPOGRAPHY of MACEDONIA.

The provinces of Greece lost, with their liberty, their name and their boundaries. All

* October 1, 1797.

has been confounded together since the conquest of that country. The military government, which was that of its conqueror, was every where established; and, with this government, Sultan Mourad II. established military divisions or districts, similar to those which prevailed in his Asiatic dominions. These divisions are known under the names of Pachalik, Moussemlik, Vaïvodalik, and Agalik. The greatest of these divisions are the Pachaliks, and the smallest are the Agaliks. These governments are not distributed hierarchically, but are independant on each other. Those who are invested with them are the depositaries of the sovereign power, and they exercise it in all its plenitude; they accumulate into their own hands every power except that which relates to the deciding of disputes, and which is delegated to the Q'uadi; and they strike off, or cause to be stricken off before them, the head of a man, with as much coolness as a butcher slaughters an ox. The Porte generally disposes of the Pachaliks and the Moussemliks to the best bidders; and, sometimes, those offices are conferred by favour. The commission continues for that space of time which elapses between two bairams, that is to say, for a year; but, with the assistance of money, this space is prolonged for two bairams. When a city is discontented with a Pacha or a Mousselim, in order

der to be rid of those officers, it offers as many purses* as they can themselves give in order to preserve their places, and the affair is then decided by the weight of gold. The Vaïvodaliks and Agaliks are conferred in a similar manner; but, in certain districts of Greece, they are bound to a privilege of perpetual grant. These grants have been made in favour of some families which have rendered the greatest services to the state. The Ghâvrinos, who have conquered Macedonia, possess, therefore, many Agaliks. Lastly, there are Agaliks and Vaïvodaliks, which are sold by auction, and of which leases are granted as they are of farms. All the domains of the sultans are let to farm in this manner. Since the reign of Abdul-Ahmid, which is the era of a most rapid acceleration in the decay of the Othoman empire, the Agaliks of Greece are often conquered by open force by Albanian adventurers. The Porte then grants that investiture, which it cannot refuse. Some of these successful Agas have even, in these latter times, usurped the Vaïvodaliks; and, if we judge of their future conduct by the manner in which they have commenced their encroachments, there is reason to fear that they will shortly seize upon the Pachaliks. It is thus

* A purse is equivalent to the sum of 500 écus or crowns, about £125 sterling.

that the Pachas of Scutari and Janina have made themselves masters of their governments, and there is sufficient ground for the presumption, that those governors will make their fiefs hereditary. The Beys of Sérès and Mélénuk in Upper Macedonia, and those of Zigna and Kathérin in Lower Macedonia, hold their Agaliks in a similar manner.

The modern divisions of Greece exist only in systems of geography. Indeed, there are *none*, because there are *too many*. That we may proceed, however, with some order, I will mention the ancient divisions and the principal jurisdictions which occur in them.

Macedonia is situated in a vast plain, of a semi-circular shape, whose diameter, very irregularly formed, borders on the sea. On the east, and at the commencement of the semi-circle, is Mount Pangæus, of which the Isle of Thasus is merely a continuation, and which extends from the fortress of La Cavale to the back of Sophia. The Scomius crowns the semi-circle on the north, and that mountain is only a branch of the Pangæus, which on the north of Strumzza changes its direction, and extends, from the east to the west, to Uskup. There the Scomius terminates, and presents a long narrow neck of land through which the Axius or Verdar enters Macedonia. On the right of the river commences Mount Scardus, which runs in

in a direct line from Monastir to Ochrida, where it is divided into various masses or branches, which diverge from the south to the west, but of which the most southern branch borders on Olympus. Olympus continues the semi-circle still farther, and closes it at the entrance of the Vale of Tempe, where it falls abruptly into the sea, forming an *escarpment* of five hundred toises. On this escarpment is erected the Castle of Platamona, which defends the western coast of Macedon, as that of La Cavale protects it on the eastern coast. The two passes of Ochrida and Uskup are not so strongly fortified as those fortresses are; but it would be almost as difficult to penetrate them, if they were guarded, because the road of Uskup is wholly destroyed by the torrents, which descend from the mountains into the Verdar, and that of Ochrida, being formed on the vestiges of the *Ignatian Way*, is partly covered with the waters which discharge themselves into the Lychnidian lake.

The irregular shape of the diameter forms on the south the two corresponding gulphs of Amphipolis and Salonichi as well as the two small intervening gulphs of Chalcis, a peninsula formed by a chain of mountains which are detached from Scomius on the north of Strumza, and which, running from north to south through the whole extent of Macedonia, dis-

appear at the isthmus of Athos. Mount Athos itself, and the islands of Scopoli and Skiathi, are only branches of that mountain, which may be considered as the most woody place in all Macedon. That mountain has various branches, which turn to the east, where they join Mount Pangæus near the fortress of La Cavale, and which run in a similar manner to the west towards the mountains of Vodina, whence, after being continued by the north of Pieria, they are at length united to Olympus.

All these mountains, which intersect each other more or less obliquely, form various plains in Macedonia. These are, towards the east, the plain of Philippi; towards the north, that of Sérès; towards the west, the plain of Kathérin; and towards the south, that of Pella. Chalcis is a rugged and mountainous country; the only plain which it has of any extent is that of Calamari, which is continued by an infinite number of turnings from the extremity of the Gulph of Thermæ to the peninsula of Cassandria. This peninsula is the most pleasant district of Macedonia; it is intersected with clumps of firs, which are adorned with a perpetual verdure.

The plain of Philippi is six leagues from north to south, and three or four from east to west. It opens on two sides, to Angistha which is on the north-west, and, by the way of Prava,

Prava, to Salonichi towards the south-west. It is near this latter opening that was fought the battle in which the Roman liberty expired. The artificial hills are still discernible on which were pitched the camps of Brutus and Cassius: those of Octavius and Antony were opposite on the west. The two armies were separated only by a small stream, which formed a morass as it discharged itself into the sea. The right wing of Antony bordered on the morass, and his line extended on the left to the road that leads from Salonichi. Augustus had the left wing of his army with its back to Mount Prava, and on his right he joined the line of Antony. The body of his army was posted between the heads of the ravins or gutters, which had been formed by the torrents that had descended from the mountains, and which were filled up on the south, in order to make an opening to the defile. On the north of the two armies were impassable pools of water. Brutus and Cassius were confined, we know not why, without any possibility of retreat, at the foot of Mount Pangæus. In this position their army must be necessarily conquered, or it must have been wholly taken captive. This circumstance will perhaps explain the precipitate despair of those two Romans which has been so much blamed by historians. On the contrary, Octavius and Antony could retire, in case of a defeat, by the

way of Salonichi; nor could their retreat have been incommoded in these defiles, where one thousand men could prevent the progress of a hundred thousand.

The plain of Sérès extends from the Lake of Amphipolis to Mélénik, and is in length more than fifteen leagues, in breadth from three to four. This magnificent valley, celebrated through all Roumelia for the richness of its productions, is intersected by the Strymon, which rises at the foot of Scomius.

The valley of Kathérin is bounded on the east by the heights of Pydna, on the west by Olympus, on the south by the sea, and on the north by the mountains of Pieria, which depart from Kara-Veria, and proceed from the east to the west to Olympus. This valley may be from fifteen to eighteen leagues in circumference.

Lastly, the plain of Pella, in the midst of which flows the Verdar, extends from east to west, from Salonichi to the hills which surround Jénidgé. This plain is bounded on the north by a chain of mountains which appear to surround the extremity of the gulph as a rampart, and which are continued to the west to Vodina, and to the east to the Lake of Amphipolis. The line, drawn from the foot of the mountains to the sea, is a league, where the mountain is nearest to the sea, and four leagues where it is most distant from the sea.

The

The Mountain Kourtiach, which is two leagues to the north-west of Salonichi, appears to be the most elevated of all the intervening mountains which lie towards the south, and is five hundred and fifty toises above the level of the sea. This mountain inclines gradually as it approaches the eastern extremity of the Thermæan Gulph, and forms there a gentle declivity, on which Salonichi is erected in the form of a crescent. The road which washes this crescent is at the extremity of the gulph, and is open on all sides, except on the south-west. On the south are two points called Kara-Bouroun, and commonly Kara-Bernous. The Great Bouroun is three leagues distant from the port, and projects more than a league into the sea. The Little Bouroun, which does not project into the sea more than three hundred toises, and which forms the eastern extremity of the road, is a league and a half distant from Salonichi. There are on the east, on the coast of Calamari, and also on the west, heaps of mud deposited there by the Verdar, which, since the time of Alexander, have augmented the territory through which it flows with nearly three leagues.

The breadth of the Thermæan Gulph, taken from Cape Paillouri to Cape St. George, is fifteen leagues; it is contracted at the promontory of Cassandria, and is not more than eight leagues. The depth or length of the gulph,

from

from Cape Paillouri to the road of Salonichi, is twenty-seven leagues.

Salonichi is situate in 40° 41′ 10″ of north latitude. Its longitude, taken from the meridian of Paris, is 20° 28′.

Athens is in 57° 58′ 1″ of latitude, and Corinth at 57° 55′ 54″.

The surface of Greece contains six thousand one hundred and fifty square leagues. Of these, Macedonia contains two thousand; Epirus, from the Drilo, or Drino-Nero, to the Gulph of Arta, one thousand seven hundred; and the northern part of Greece two thousand four hundred and fifty.

Macedonia contains seven hundred thousand souls, which is about three hundred and seventy persons to a square league. The country of Zagora presents the *maximum* of population in Greece; the Morea and Epirus present the *minimum*. In the country of Zagora are reckoned six hundred and thirteen persons to a square league, and in the Morea not more than three hundred. Thessaly contains three hundred thousand souls; and Epirus, which is double that country in extent, has only four hundred thousand. Ætolia, Phocis, and Bœotia, have scarcely two hundred thousand souls; and the population of Attica, according to the most just calculations, does not exceed twenty thousand. The Morea, whose surface is a

thousand square leagues, has less than three hundred thousand inhabitants. Upon the whole, the population of Greece cannot be estimated beyond 1,920,000 souls. Six of our best departments are worth more, at this day, than the whole of this country, so much boasted of.

Macedonia, Thessaly, the eastern part of Phocis, and Bœotia, are fertile countries. The soil of Attica is light, and is only fit for the cultivation of barley and olives. The Morea, on the contrary, is capable of every species of cultivation: its valleys produce wheat, and its mountains abound in pasturage. Epirus, which is every where intersected by mountains, is, on the contrary, the most barren.

The agricultural productions of Macedonia alone are worth all those of the rest of Greece. With regard to the productions of industry, they are more equally divided. The most industrious province is Thessaly, then Macedonia, Epirus, the Morea, Attica, and lastly a part of Bœotia, known under the name of the country of Livadia. The rest of Bœotia, Phocis, and Locris, have no species of manufacture.

Greece is divided into four great Pachaliks, viz. those of Tripolitza, of Egripo or Negropont, of Janina, and Salonichi. The Pachalik of Tripolitza comprehends all the Morea; that of Egripo extends over the whole island of that name, over Bœotia, and the eastern part of

Phocis;

Phocis; Naupactus or Lepanto has a petty pacha peculiar to itself; Athens and Livadia are governed by vaïvodes; Larissa by a mousselim; and the country of Zagora, which is the ancient Magnesia, by its own primates.

The pacha of Janina governs the whole of Epirus;* and that of Salonichi the whole southern part of Macedonia. The whole of the northern part is governed by its own beys, and Pieria is under the dependance of the aga of Kathérin: this petty lord reigns now on Olympus instead of Jupiter.

DESCRIPTION of SALONICHI.

Salonichi was known, under the name of Thermæ, till the reign of Cassander, who enlarged it, and gave it the name of Thessalonica,† his wife, the daughter of Philip the Second, and the sister of Alexander. It is situated at the

* I do not reckon the petty Pachaliks of Aulone and Delvino, which are perpetually invaded by the pacha of Janina.

† Some learned men have thought that it was Philip the Second who gave Thermæ the name of Thessalonica, to commemorate a victory which he gained here over the Thessalonians. The symbol of victory, ΝΙΚΗ, which is represented on the greatest part of the coins of Thessalonica, appears to confirm this hypothesis respecting the origin of its name.

eastern extremity of the Thermæan Gulph, on the middle of the coast, on the projection which forms on the south-west the declivity of Mount Kourtiach. The appearance presented by this city, when viewed from the road, is that of a crescent, or of a semi-circle, whose diameter is continued along the sea. The length of the diameter is nine hundred toises, and its greatest breadth one thousand seven hundred. Its walls, flanked with little towers, and erected upon hewn stones of a most enormous thickness, are of brick, and of Greek construction, and they exhibit on every side fragments of columns, confounded with fragments of antiquity. Salonichi is situated on the south: the houses, being ranged in the form of an amphitheatre on the declivity of a hill, and surrounded with gardens planted with cypress, present a most agreeable prospect. But, as soon as we enter the city, we are surprised at meeting with none but narrow crooked streets, houses badly built, and not one square, nor even one single cross-way, that was paved. Salonichi, viewed within, has the appearance of one of our villages, and is, notwithstanding, one of the finest cities of Turkey. Revolutions cannot destroy cities, because every circumstance tends to increase their population. Such are, in Turkey, Constantinople and Alexandria, situated between two seas, which serve for their communication. Such is also Salonichi;

erected on the extremity of a deep gulph, which renders it the emporium of European Turkey.

Considered as a place of commerce, Salonichi is of great importance; but is of none, if considered as a fortified town. It has a castle, situated on the top of the semi-circle; and, at the two extremities of the diameter, are two bastions, which have floating batteries. The western bastion is the Gunners' tower, and that on the east is the Janisaries' tower. Salonichi has no other fortifications: it is destitute of a fossé, and its rampart has no lining. The road is capable of being well defended, if some works were erected on the point of the little promontory of Bouroun. In its present state it is exposed to the feeblest squadron, and any armed vessel might enter it, and thence cannonade that city, which, to defend it, has not four cannons mounted, and not one gunner who knows how to point them.

The castle contains nothing remarkable, except some columns of *verd antique*, the fragments of a temple dedicated to Hercules, and a shattered triumphal arch, erected in the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, in honour of Antoninus Pius, and of Faustina, his daughter.* The Turks call this castle *Yedi-Koulé*,

* On this arch is read the following inscription: ΦΑΥΣΤΕΙΝΗ ΣΗΒΑΣΤΗ ΚΑΙ ΛΟΥΚΙΩ ΚΟΜΟΔΩ Η ΠΟΛΙΣ, and beneath, in a smaller character, ΤΙΤΩ ΑΝΤΟΝΙΝΩ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΩ ΕΥΣΕΒΕΙ.

Koulé, and the Greeks *Epta Piryon*, which is equivalent, in either language, to "the Seven "Towers;" because, like that of Constantinople, it is flanked with seven towers, of which the middle one (and which is the highest) is eighty feet in height.

The castle of the Seven Towers is of Greek construction, but all the towers are of Venetian workmanship. The declivity, on which Salonichi is erected, rises insensibly to this castle, where it forms a point. On the north of the castle the mountain inclines, and afterwards rises very considerably,* whence, after being continued towards the north-west, it joins the mountain Kourtiach. Thus situated, the castle of the Seven Towers is commanded by all the adjacent heights on the north, and, since the use of artillery, there cannot be any utility in defending the place.

The gunners' tower, and that of the janisaries, are both Turkish works, and so ill constructed that the batteries are not even sheltered; but they flank the port, and serve *in terrorem*.

* The words of the author are, *se relève à une demi-portée de canon*: "elevates itself to half a cannon-shot." The ordinary rate at which a cannon-ball goes is computed to be about three miles, more or less, according to the nature of the country in which it is discharged: according to this calculation, the mountain above-mentioned rises a mile and a half.

The

The other most remarkable works are the tower of the *Chain* and that of the *Statue*.

The tower of the Chain, Gingirli-Koulé, is situate on the south-east of an angle of the Seven Towers. It is so named from a fascia, which passes under the battlements, and embraces the whole of its circumference. In this tower are casemates, in which are deposited pieces of artillery of a most enormous size, but which are wholly useless. On the platform is a battery, which might play with considerable effect on the eastern quarter of the city, but it has no cannon fit for use.

The tower of the Statue, Namasia-Koulé, is situate on the west, opposite a small monastery of *dervichs*. It is so called, because it contains a shapeless statue of colossal size, which is said to be that of Thessalonica, represented under the form of a woman, at whose foot the prow of a vessel has been carved.

Salonichi, in its present state, still retains four ancient monuments, together with many fine edifices of the lower empire: that is, after Athens, the city of Greece, in which there remains the greatest number of antiquities.

The four antique monuments are, the *gate of Verdar*, the *Incantadas*, or enchanted figures, the *Rotunda*, and the *Triumphal Arch of Constantine*.

The gate, denominated that of *Verdar*, because it leads to the river of that name, is in the west, on the spot occupied by the gate of Rome under the emperors. It is formed by a triumphal arch of the best taste. This arch was erected to Octavius and Mark Antony by the inhabitants of Thessalonica, who were eager to do honour to those masters of the world, after the battle of Philippi. The proportions of this monument are exact, and the ornaments simple. Its height does not exceed eighteen feet, but it appears to be buried one-third in the ground, and must be at least twenty feet high. The breadth of the arch is twelve feet. The vault of it is carved, the entablature is ornamented with garlands, and on either side of the external front are two bas-reliefs of equal size, which represent the two triumphant commanders standing before a horse, led by a child. All the additional ornaments, which are between the cornices, are characteristic of what we call the little triumph, or ovation. The arch, which is still in good preservation, is constructed with fine square pieces of marble, and is six feet thick. On one of its fronts is an inscription, specifying all the magistrates, who, at the time of the erection of the arch, presided over the state, among whom is distinguished *a politarch*, a magistrate whose dignity answered to that of prætor.

The triumphal arch of Augustus was situated between the gate of Rome and the commencement of the Roman street, which ran from east to west through the whole city, and which led to the gate of Cassandria, before which appeared the triumphal arch of Constantine. This superb street was thus terminated by two triumphal arches.

The arch of Constantine is still subsisting entire, but there are only some vestiges remaining of the marble with which it was covered. It is forty-five feet high, and must have been sixty. The length of its diameter is thirty feet; and on the internal front of the arch is represented the triumph of Constantine. That prince is mounted on a horse, in a military habit, and appears to be haranguing his soldiers, who are arranged around him. This monument, in my opinion, was erected in honour of Constantine, by the city of Thessalonica, after his victory over Licinius, or after that which he gained over the Sarmatians, as may be inferred from an inscription which I discovered on one of the pieces of marble* which covered the pavement of that city. The bas-relief is overcharged with

* I caused one of these pieces of marble to be conveyed to the Consul's house, on which was an inscription in honour of Boniface, Marquis of Montserrat, who, at the time of the conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders, had for his share the principality of Thessalonica.

figures,

figures, which are destitute of expression, and all the ornaments are of a wretched taste. Pococke, who had seen the arch of Constantine, affirms that it is worthy of the most illustrious and the finest times of Greece; which proves that that traveller, who was in all other respects very learned, was ignorant of the first ideas of design, and had a bad skill in architecture. In the fine and flourishing times of Greece, brick was not used; and all that is above the foundations is of brick in this monument. In the age of good taste, the figures were in perspective; but here neither optics nor proportions are observed. This is the true æra of the decline of the arts; an æra bordering on the reign of Theodosius, which was, in every respect, the end of the Roman greatness.

On the north of the arch of Constantine is the *Rotunda*, a round building of Roman construction. We see, by its form, that it was evidently erected on the plan of the Pantheon at Rome. I could prove by medals, that this temple is that of the gods *Cabiri*,* and that it was erected in the reign of Trajan. Its design is

* On many Thessalonian medals, one of the Cabiri is represented with a hammer in his hand, as Vulcan is: on others, Victory, ΝΙΚΗ, the symbol of the city, is carrying one of the Cabiri: on others, one of the Cabiri is represented as standing in a temple: the name is often written, in large characters, ΚΑΒΕΙΡΟΣ.

simple and grand; its circular form is happy, and an ample cupola arches majestically over the whole of it. This cupola was perforated at the top, in order to admit the smoke of the victims which were burned on the altar, placed immediately beneath. This altar was in the form of a conch, or sea-shell, and was erected in the middle of the temple; and, beneath the scite which it occupied, are vast reservoirs, wrought with stone, which were destined to receive the blood of the victims.

The ground, reaching from the Rotunda to the sea by the shortest way, was the finest part of Thessalonica. There stood the Hippodrome, which formed a continued ellipsis, whose greater axis, taken from north to south, was two hundred and sixty toises,* and its smaller axis eighty.† Its periphery was encompassed with a row of seats, raised one above another; and on the western side ran vast galleries, which adorned the palace of Dioclesian, and which were supported by a row of arches, vestiges of which are still seen. These arches joined the gate to the triumphal arch of Constantine.

The Hippodrome of Thessalonica is celebrated by the horrible proscription of which we read in history.

* About 1560 feet, English.

† About 480 feet, English.

What

What the Castilian Jews, established here, call *Incantadas*, enchanted figures, and the Turks *Sureth-maleh*, is a fragment of a series of columns, of the Corinthian order, erected in the reign of Nero. This colonnade decorated the place where the games were celebrated, which was situated in the midst of that noble Roman street, which reached from the gate of Rome to that of Cassandria; and it supported two rows of statues, of a most exquisite taste. Those figures, which have escaped the united ravages of time and barbarians, are very fine. They are of a natural size, and represent the most voluptuous subjects of antiquity. Eight of these are still remaining, which have their backs against the upper colonnade, similar to Caryatides.

The first groupe is a Ganymede and a Leda. Ganymede is carried away by Jupiter, metamorphosed into an eagle, who is lightly touching the lips of the child with his beak, and appears to be caressing him after the manner of the Greeks. Leda is herself caressed by a swan, who is nestling against her left breast, and covers with his wings the most glaring nudities.

The second groupe is a Paris and a Helen. Paris is represented as a shepherd, with a bull by his side. Helen is clad in a drapery, floating in the wind; her bosom is half naked, and her looks are dying with voluptuousness.

The third groupe is a Bacchus and an Ariadne. Bacchus is holding a bunch of grapes in his hand, and is looking at Ariadne, whose veil is open, and is floating at the pleasure of the winds. This veil appears to fall on her shoulders in the form of an arch.

The fourth groupe represents, on one side a Victory, who is about to fly away, and on the other a woman half naked, who is in the attitude best adapted to display every beauty of the human frame.

The monument of the *enchanted figures* consists of two rows of columns, one above another. The figures, which were on the upper columns, are no longer remaining. From an image on a medal, and the disposition of the figures still remaining, it appears that this colonnade formed, in the midst of the place, a gallery, under which were seated the presidents of the games. The people were ranged all round the amphitheatre; and the figures were grouped together two and two, in order that, from every point of the circumference, the people might distinguish at least one figure of every groupe. The searches I caused to be made prove, that the lower columns are buried eighteen feet in the earth; they are at present no more than six and a half above the ground. Their diameter is three feet and a half; which shews their natural

natural proportion, if we suppose them to be from twenty-four to twenty-five feet. The height of the upper columns, against which the figures have their backs, is six feet; and the height of the two colonnades together twenty-three. It must have been forty-one feet when the monument was erected. I caused a plan and design of it to be taken, and I request you to procure it to be engraven for the amateurs. I wished much to take away the Ganymede and the Leda, which are the groupe in the best preservation; but I made offers to the pacha, to which he could not accede.

The monuments of the lower empire, still remaining, are the mosques of St. Sophia, of St. Dimitri, and that which the Turks call *Eski Djumma*.

Saint Sophia is erected on the plan of that of Constantinople. Its proportions are exactly the same, but it is less by one-third. The tradition prevails, that it was built in the time of Justinian, after the designs of the architect Anthemius, the same who had, some years before, built Saint Sophia at Constantinople. The forms of these two buildings are not of that pure taste, that noble simplicity, which gives so much pleasure in the Athenian monuments. We cannot but admire the bold idea of a circular plan, founded on arcades united or bound together by

pendentives;* a mode of building which has served as a model for every dome erected since.

It must be confessed, that *the whole* of the two mosques of Saint Sophia has an imposing appearance, but *their parts* are paltry: and, were it not for that multitude of columns of verd antique, which dazzle the eyes of Europeans, I am convinced that the beauties of the Saint Sophia of Constantinople would be no more admired than those of the Saint Sophia of Salonichi, unless we had rather believe that travellers bequeath each other their admiration.

The mosque of Saint Dimitri, or Demetrius,† was, before the conquest of Greece by the Turks, the metropolitan church. It is a Greek cross, with two lower sides, which support vast galleries. The middle aisle is a beautiful piece of workmanship, supported by two rows of columns of verd antique, on Ionian capitals. This

* This is another new word of the author's, which I have been under the disagreeable necessity of adopting, from my inability to find any adequate-corresponding English words.

† Demetrius succeeded to the Cabiri in the patronage of Thessalonica. I have a bronze medal, which is extremely rare, and on one side of which appears the bust of Constantine the Younger, and on the other that of the Saint, whose head is surrounded with rays, and who holds in his hand a lance, the instrument of his martyrdom, with the legend Ἅγιος ΔΙΜΙΤΡΙ.

building

building is of brick, but its interior was covered with marble. Its shape proves it to have been erected in an early period of the lower empire.

The mosque *Eski Djumma*, or of *Old Friday*, was originally a temple consecrated to Venus Thermæa. The Greeks have spoiled it by their endeavours to give it the form of a cross. It was a perfect parallelogram, seventy feet in length by thirty-five in breadth, and was supported, on two sides, by twelve columns of the Ionic order, of the most elegant shape. The six columns of its pediment are at present concealed in the plastered walls of the mosque. If this country were in the possession of a civilized people, the temple of Thermæan Venus would be stripped of the Gothic buildings, which disfigure it, and it would then be, next to the temple of Theseus, the best preserved monument in Greece; but, at present, it is only to be viewed through a thick covering of plaster, and I spent three years at Salonichi without even suspecting what it was.

These are the only monuments that merit any attention: the other buildings are nothing but wretched huts, which are most strikingly contrasted with the magnificent ruins of its former grandeur.

Salonichi is governed by a pacha of three tails, and by a mollah of the first rank, who,

in

in the heirarchy of U'lemas, is of equal dignity with the mollahs of Mekka and Damascus, and who, as they also are, is inferior only to the two Cazi-Askers, and the Sheick-Islam, who is the Grand Mouphti. The Mouphti of Salonichi receives investiture from the Mouphti of Constantinople, and presides over all the others, without exercising any particular jurisdiction over any of them. The pacha holds in his own hands every power, except that of the civil justice, delegated to the mollah. He is despotic in the right, and by the will, of the Sultan, whose supreme deputy he here is; but, in fact, he can freely exercise his despotic authority over the rayas; and his hand is arrested by the beys, whenever it is about to fall upon a Turk. The Othoman government is truly a military aristocracy: all, who do not carry arms, are condemned to live in slavery.

The territorial imposition, known under the name of *miri*, is paid in kind, and its quantum is settled, that is, a tenth. The duties on the consumption of commodities are new: the most ancient do not go farther back than the reign of Abdul-Ahmid. The others have been established in Greece, as well as over the whole empire, by the famous commission known under the name of Nisam Djedith; at the head of which is what we call here the *triumvirate*, which is composed of *Rachib-Effendi*, the most worthy

worthy person in the empire; of the crafty minister of war, *Tchelébi-Effendi*; and of a handsome Candian, named Youssouph-Aga, the steward and favourite of the Sultana-mother.

The miri is let to farm, in the Pachalik of Salonichi, for four hundred and fifty purses.* The new duties are not yet sufficiently well established to be able to calculate their product with accuracy. Every head of small cattle pays a para, a bull pays a piaster, wine two paras the oke, brandy four; and contracts are made with the receiver for the other consumptions.

The pacha has a tenth of twenty villages, which hold immediately from him: this he does not farm for less than from sixty to seventy thousand piasters; but he receives an equal sum for casual duties. He makes afterwards at least a hundred thousand piasters by *extortion*; and, when he is not humane, he makes two hundred thousand. If he is covetous and rapacious, in six months he devours the country.

Moustapha-Pacha, brother-in-law of the Grand Signior, who was pacha the last year (1796), allowed a pension to the Sultana, his wife, of fifteen thousand piasters a month.† His household consisted of five hundred men, and a hun-

* Nearly equivalent to £11,250 sterling.

† About £3000.

dred

dred and fifty horses; he must therefore expend at least fifteen thousand piasters a month on his own account. He drew from his Pachalik three hundred and sixty thousand piasters;* and this pacha passed for a disinterested man: for a Turk, indeed, he was; and I have had opportunities to observe it by my connections with him.

The local expenses are defrayed by the three Turkish, Greek, and Jewish, communities. The Turks are governed by a council of six *Ayans*,† who are the powerful beys. To this council are called, on affairs of importance, one or two elders of every *orta*, or troop of janisaries. The bey, who has the greatest influence in this council, is master of the city, and causes the pacha to tremble.

The Greeks are governed by the *Proesti*, or Greek Primates, as in all the countries subject to the Othoman empire; and the Jews are governed by council of Rabbins, the chief of whom, called the *Grand Kakam*, has a most unlimited authority.

This Grand Kakam is usually placed, by means of *a barath*, under the protection of

* About £94,000.

† Ayan signifies, in the Turkish language, an eye. The Ayans ought to be the eyes of the people, and to be the watchmen of the government; but they are little else than oppressors or accomplices, and represent well enough what we call, in the administration of our country, the Echévinage (Sheriffalty.)

France

France or of England; and, his person becoming thus inviolable by the Turks, he rules with regal authority over the Jews.

In the administration of justice, the Greeks and Jews are subject, as are the Turks, to the jurisdiction of the mollah; but they usually refer the matters in dispute, by arbitration, to the decision of the chiefs of their religion, who keep them in obedience to their authority by the rein of excommunication; so that the sentence of the bishop and of the rabbin, not by right, but in fact, is without appeal, and their anathemas produce here the same effect as they did among us in the time of Robert, and of Queen Bertha.* The last Chief Rabbin was under the protection of France; and, such was the terror inspired by his curses, that I have seen parents, abandoned by their children, and wives, forsaken by their husbands, come to implore my intercession against his terrible tyranny.

The *karatach*, being a capitation imposed upon the conquered, is only paid by the Greeks and Jews. The Jews are estimated at the sum of thirty-six thousand piasters.*

The rate of the *karatach* varies according to wealth: 1600 persons pay eleven piasters; 2500, six piasters; and 2000, two piasters and three quarters.

* Nearly equivalent to £7200.

The

The Greeks paid, last year, five thousand *karatachs*, which supposes a population of from fifteen to twenty thousand souls, if we reckon one out of four heads that is subject to the *karatach*. This calculation will be nearly just, when it is known that children pay in the city at the age of eight years, and in the country at the age of five. When the father of a young Greek attempts to commit a fraud, the receivers measure the head of the child with a cord, which serves them for that purpose; and, as they can shorten the cord at pleasure, the poor Greek is always tortured. These receivers are elderly men, whose eyes are so exercised, that they read the condition of a man on his countenance; not one single *raya* can escape them; but they never demand the karatach twice of the same person.

Every Turk is here a janisary, and every janisary is a soldier. In all countries, where every man is a soldier, they reckon one woman, two children, and a man. Seven thousand janisaries can be raised at Salonichi: these seven thousand janisaries give, then, a population of from twenty-eight to thirty thousand Turks. The register of the *ortas* have thirteen thousand written in them, which gives the same result; because, every janisary is obliged to enrol the name of his son as soon as he is born.

The

The population of the Jews cannot be computed with the same precision; the least imperfect calculations present me twelve thousand men.

The population of Salonichi may be estimated, then, at sixty thousand souls. This population is sufficiently great; but it is only on account of our mercantile situation. In this population are reckoned thirty thousand Turks, sixteen thousand Greeks, and twelve thousand Jews. The remainder of its population, which does not exceed two thousand souls, consists of Frank merchants; of *Mamins*, who are a race of men, half Turks and half Jews; of *Tchingénais*, who are the Bohemians of Turkey; and of black slaves, known here under the name of Arabs.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Salonichi, 25 Vendemaire, year 5.*

EXPORTS.

I SHALL commence this View of the Commerce of Greece with its exports, the chief article of which is cotton.

The COTTONS of SALONICHI.

The cottons, known under the name of the cottons of Salonichi, are gathered in the district of Sérès.

Sérès, or Serræ, is a city of Macedon, celebrated, through all European Turkey, for the richness of its market. It is situated fifteen leagues to the north-west of Salonichi, in the midst of a vast plain, watered and fertilized by the Strymon. The Strymon rises at the foot of Mount Scomius, and discharges itself into the Gulph of Amphipolis, after a course of twenty leagues. An impetuous torrent, or fordable stream, according to the difference of sea-

* October 16, 1797.

sons,

sons, it inundates the plain in the spring, and covers it with vegetable substances, separated from the neighbouring mountains: in summer, it appears to wind with difficulty through its deep and crooked channel. The valley, through which it flows, is open on all sides, except towards the south, where the river disembogues itself into the sea. The mountain on the east is one of the loftiest of that range, known under the name of Pangæus; Scomius is on the north; and on the west is Mount Cercina.

The whole of this valley is regularly cultivated with cotton, and it is covered with near three hundred villages; which, when beheld from the summit of Mount Cercina, present the delusive prospect of an immense city. These villages are distributed, by clusters of thirty or forty, into Agaliks. The Aga receives of the tenants a tenth part of the cotton, and is moreover obliged, in time of war, to contribute a certain number of men to the army. The most considerable of these Agaliks are those of Dramma, of Zigna, and of Sérès. The Aga of Sérès entertains five hundred men in his service, and passes for the most powerful Bey of Macedon.*

* The Agas assume the title of *Bey*, although that title is above them. The following are the gradations of titles among the Turks: viz. Aga, a mere military commander; Bey,

The Agas live in their *donjons*,* always surrounded by a guard of Albanians, and they make war upon each other, as our antient feudal lords used. The victor burns the plantations of the conquered, and carries away his women and cattle; nor does he intermit his ravages, unless at certain Mussulman feasts, where all hostilities are suspended by a kind of *God's truce*. These feudal customs, which are still found in the fine climate of Greece, confirm the opinion of those who assert, that they proceeded from the vast plains of Tartary.

The Othoman Porte secretly foments these dissensions among the Agas; and, when it is obliged to give a decisive sentence, it sends the *bow-string* to the weakest, and the *tails* to the strongest. Emboldened by impunity, the powerful Agas plunder the villages, and rapidly amass enormous fortunes. The divan then endeavours to entice them to the city, with the offer of some splendid employment; and, when it is assured that they cannot possibly escape, it demands,

Bey, a commander, with *one tail*; a Pacha of two tails; a Pacha of three tails, or *Vizir*; *Vizir-Azem*, or supreme commander, known among us under the name of *Grand Vizir*.

* The above is the French word, which I have adopted, not finding any English word equivalent to it. It literally means "a turret or close erected on the top of a house, or in "the midst of a castle."

mands, by a *Capidgi*, their heads or their purses.

It is thus that the extortions of the Agas are absorbed in the coffers of the Grand Signior. I shall often mention these Agas, when I speak to you respecting the Greeks, because, when I mention the sheep, it is necessary that I should also mention the wolves that devour them.

The CULTURE of COTTON.

The cotton,* which is cultivated in Macedonia, is an annual plant of the family of Malvacées, which rises to the height of three or four feet.

The stalk is herbaceous and cylindrical, the roots ramous, the leaves divided into five lobes, and supported by long petioles. The flower, which is of a pale red or of a pale yellow colour, is composed of five petals, in the shape of a heart, which form altogether a wide bottom.

The fruit, which succeeds to the flower, is a round capsule, with four partitions, which contain oval seeds, covered with a white and spotted down. This down is so firmly fixed in

* Gossypium. This plant is of the polyandria order, belongs to the monodelphia class, and is of the species called columnifera.

each partition, that, when it is once drawn out of its place, it would be impossible to replace it.

The seeds are of the size of a small pea, and are sown from the middle of Nivôse to the middle of Germinal.* They should be lightly sprinkled, and the soil destined to receive them ought to be opened by deep furrows. Into these furrows the seeds are thrown, and are smoothed over by the help of a thick plate, called *viridi*, which is affixed to a yoke as a plough is. The *viridi* serves at once for a rake and a harrow, and smooths the ground; but it is requisite that the ground should be well smoothed, lest the rays of the sun should absorb too quickly the moisture of the earth, which is necessary to the germination of the seed.

As soon as the plants have shot forth their first leaves, they are weeded and cleared, when a space of half a foot is left between each. The trunk is lopped, as soon as it begins to ramify, in order that the sap may be circulated among the side branches, which thus produce a great number of pods. Good cultivators also lop the longest and most exuberant shoots of the side branches, lest the sap should spread too widely, and none be reserved for the fruit.

Lopping and weeding are the only two operations performed here in the culture of cotton.

* From the middle of December to the end of March.

Nature

Nature does all the rest. Fine summer-days, a strong and continued heat, a brilliant sun, abundant dews, and moderate showers, render cotton thick, soft, and of a beautiful white colour. On the contrary, heavy rains, a tempestuous and windy autumn, render it poor, short, and spotted. The gathering is lost, when the north winds blow violently and continuedly, because those winds bend the trunks and destroy the pods.

Cotton blows in Thermidor,* and in Fructidor† its flowers are formed into spherical pods. These pods turn yellow and open in Vendemiaire,‡ which shews that they have arrived at their maturity. The *harvest* is then begun, and it continues until all the pods are ripened. If, however, near the time of the autumnal rains, there should yet remain any green pods, the cultivators do not omit to gather them; and, correcting nature by art, they expose them on a hurdle to the sun, or spread them out in an oven warmed with a gentle heat. The pods then open as if they had ripened on the plant; but the cotton drawn from them is liable to turn yellow and brittle, which renders it greatly inferior to the other.

The cotton is separated from the pods with the fingers. This is a task in which the women are employed in the evenings and at their

* July. † August. ‡ September.

 leisure

leisure hours. A frame of the most simple construction afterwards separates the cotton from the seed: it is composed of two cylinders, of about two inches in diameter, which are placed horizontally one above the other at the distance of some lines, and catch each other continually. These two cylinders are made of very durable wood, and are supported by two mounters, fixed on a small table, which the women hold on their knees or before them. With one hand they turn the handle of the machine, and with the other they draw off the cotton, which passes, as it unrolls itself, between the two cylinders, through which the seed cannot pass, because they are drawn too near each other.

When the cotton has passed through the mill, it is picked and cleaned. The second process is as simple as the first. The down is put into a sieve made of reeds, and constructed like a cage, round and oblong; it is beaten, shaken, and replaced in the sieve, and the heterogeneous particles escape through the interstices of the bars.

An arpent* of good land will produce annually from two to three hundred okes† of cotton, which, at the rate of a piaster per oke, yield a

* An arpent contains 400 square perches.

† See the table prefixed, or Letter XXIV. on the weights of Turkey.

return

return of from two to three hundred piasters.* This is superior to all other agricultural productions. An arpent of the best land, if sown with corn, yields only from five-and-twenty to thirty quintals of wheat,† or from a hundred to a hundred and fifty piasters‡ profit; so that the culture of cotton has been extended very widely, and, for some years, has engrossed the best land in Macedonia.

The cultivation of this plant is very profitable, and, I think, might be naturalized in the southern parts of France. Experiments have been made in Piedmont, which have succeeded, and I have myself seen at Nice many varieties of the cotton of Macedon, which have produced pods of a dazzling whiteness.

The same varieties are also cultivated in the high valleys of Asia Minor, which are situated between the branches of Mount Taurus;§ but, in these valleys, the climate must be much more cold than in our southern departments; and, from the report of travellers, it is much more so than in Provence.

* About £60.

† A quintal is one hundred weight.

‡ About £25.

§ The branches of this mountain are covered with snow during eight months in the year.

This, at least, is certain, that the climate of that province is more mild and more temperate than that of Macedon. Whatever difference there may be in the latitude of those two places, the vicinity of the mountains Athos, Pangæus, and Olympus, occasions here frequent variations in the temperature of the climate. The air, which descends from those lofty mountains, and which circulates in the valleys of Macedon, renders the atmosphere there very cold; and I have seen the thermometer of Réaumur fall several degrees at Salonichi, whereas I had never seen it fall at Marseilles.

It is true that the plain of Sérès, where the most extensive plantations are, is surrounded by a circle of mountains, and is sheltered on every side; but there are places which are equally sheltered, and plots of ground better calculated for the cultivation of cotton, in the country that reaches from Nice to Marseilles, and from Nismes to Perpignan. There can be no reason, then, for hesitating why cotton should not be regularly cultivated in our southern departments.

The labour required by the cultivation of this plant would not divert the farmer from his ordinary occupations; it would be separating his women, and succeed to the care they bestow on the rearing of silk-worms.

The

The DIFFERENT SPECIES of COTTON.

The cotton of the Levant is generally held in less esteem than that of the Antilles: it is less pure, less silky, of a grosser substance, and more uneven and difficult to be spun. The cottons of the Levant are distinguished into three sorts: the cotton of Cyprus, which is the finest; that of Smyrna; and the cotton of Salonichi. It appears, that the finest cotton-shrub diminishes in its quality in Turkey, in proportion as it approaches to the north; which gives some degree of probability to the opinion of those, who attribute to cotton a degeneration, the greater or the less, according as it is more or less remote from the equator. I cannot go so far as to assert, with some naturalists, that the Macedonian cotton-plant, which is only from three to four feet in height, was formerly, in India, a great tree, similar to the elm: we might as well declare that the roebuck was formerly a stag.

The Macedonian cottons are distinguished into five sorts: the *Tchezmé*, the *Ouchour*, the *Cantar*, the *Taxili*, and the *Cira*.

The *tchezmé* is the cotton that is taken out of the heart of the pod: it is the best.

The

The *ouchour* is the cotton selected for the tenth. It is chosen by the Aga out of all the cottons which the peasant cultivates. Next to the tchezmé, the ouchour composes the finest species.

The *cantar* is the cotton which the Agas gather on their own lands. It is nearly as good as the ouchour, because the ground, which produces it, belonging to proprietors in easy circumstances, is cultivated with more diligence, and the cotton is prepared with more care.

The *taxili* is the cotton so called, because it proceeds from the contributions made by the whole village, in order to discharge the debts it has contracted with the Aga. This cotton is deposited in a public magazine, and is sold for the benefit of the community.

All the other species of cottons are confounded together, under the name of *cira*, or common.

The SALE and CONSUMPTION of COTTON.

These various kinds of cotton are all sold by *tops*, which are bundles tied together by long ligatures, which cross each other, and contain from seven to eight hundred drachms of cotton. The bundle ought to weigh only twenty drachms; but by a fraud, which prevails at the

the formation of the *tops*, it often weighs from thirty to forty drachms. The city of Sérès is the common market, to which the peasants repair every Sunday, during the winter, out of the whole valley. Some come to offer cottons, the growth of their own fields. Others, obscure monopolists, known under the name of *Matrapas*, come to seek dupes for the cottons, which they have purchased in small quantities, and which they want to sell again by wholesale, after having made them up into bundles, after *their* manner. The buyers are commercial factors, settled at Sérès, or factors sent by the Frank merchants resident at Salonichi. These factors must be well provided with money, because they are obliged to pay, before delivery of the goods, three-fourths of the cottons in advance. They purchase the commodities without seeing them, and go into the villages only for the purpose of packing and carrying them away. It is thus that immense transactions are commenced, which are concluded without broker, without writing, without contracts to make good the purchases, but solely by verbal agreements, always faithfully performed. Should any difference arise between buyer and seller, the Bey of Sérès sends for the parties before him, and decides without any appeal. The present Bey is a Tartar; but he unites so much integrity with his ruggedness, that, through the whole

extent

extent of his Agalik, dishonesty is restrained by fear.

The duties of the Grand Signior upon cotton are confined to a bédéat of an asper per oke, which is paid at Sérès, and to a duty of an asper and a half,* which is paid, at Salonichi, at the time of exporting them by sea. Those cottons, which are conveyed by land into Germany or Dalmatia, pay only the bédéat.

The annual *harvest* of cotton, in the valley of Sérès, may be estimated at seventy thousand bales. The bale is composed of two *tengs*, of sixty *tops* each, and contains, upon the whole, about one hundred okes of nett cotton.

The price varies from eighty to one hundred and sixty aspers the oke. If we take the mean rate of one hundred and twenty aspers, which make a piaster, we shall see that the culture *alóné* of cotton is worth, to Macedonia, about seven millions of piasters.† This produce is equal to that of one of the richest colonies of the Antilles, and it forms the basis of the returns in the commerce of Europe. It is this commerce that disperses the cottons of Macedon over every part of Europe. The Germans alone export annually thirty thousand bales of them, the French twelve thousand; four thou-

* See the Table of Money, &c. annexed.

† Nearly equivalent to £1,750,000.

sand

sand are exported to Venice, fifteen hundred to Leghorn, and as many to Genoa; two ladings are made for London, and one for Amsterdam. Upon the whole, then, there are exported fifty thousand bales, or to the value of five millions of piasters.*

The consumption of Greece may be estimated at ten thousand bales. This calculation will appear large; but we must recollect that the Turks stuff all their cushions with cotton; that they furnish their sofas and their counterpanes with it; and that they make use of a great quantity of it in their funerals, conformably to one of their religious usages, which prescribes that they should close all the openings and natural passages of the dead of both sexes with cotton.

All the other species of cotton are spun. They spin also all those that are collected out of the district of Sérès, and which the Greek peasants cultivate merely to satisfy the demands of their own families. These cottons are less fine than the others, but they are much longer, and better calculated for spinning. The plains, which produce these latter species, are those of Panomi, of Vasilica in the ancient Chalcis, and those of Pharsalia and Larissa, in Thessaly.

* About £1,250,000.

The

The total aggregate of spun cottons may amount to twenty thousand bales.

Salonichi makes use of two thousand bales in her manufactures of coarse linens; as many are consumed at Kara-Veria, or the antient Berea, in the manufacture of *pestemals*, or linen cloths for the bath, of which the Turks make great use, both in the public baths and in their private ablutions. From twelve to fifteen thousand bales are used in the cotton manufactories of Drama; and from ten to twelve hundred in the coarse printed calicoes, which are wrought at Sérès, and which serve for the ordinary covering of the Turkish sofas. But the greatest consumption of spun cotton is at Tournavos, a small village of Thessaly, distant about three leagues to the north-west from Larissa.

The manufactories of Tournavos are celebrated, through all Roumelia, on account of the beauty of their *aladjiats*, which are light stuffs, woven of cotton and silk, and known, in the European commerce, under the name of *bours de la Grèce*. These *bours* are in great request for the apparel of the Greek ladies, and may annually consume from three to four thousand bales of spun cotton.

Ten thousand bales are dyed red in the manufactories of Thessaly, and are exported into Germany, Switzerland, and Poland, and even

even into Russia. As the processes of the Greek dyers may contribute to the improvement and perfection of our own, I will do myself the honour of transmitting an exact description of them to you, as soon as I shall have a little more leisure.

The PROFITS of SPINNING.

Experience teaches us, that cotton, when in its raw state it is worth fifty, is, when manufactured into thread, worth a hundred. There can only be a waste of a tenth, whence it follows, that every country that spins its own produce gains eighty for every hundred by the workmanship.

Thessaly and Macedon spin twenty thousand bales of cotton, and dye ten thousand. The profits of dying may be computed at twenty per cent. at least; but these profits ought to be reckoned somewhat less than those of spinning, because the former enrich only some individuals, who possess large capitals, whereas the latter contribute very considerably to the comforts of the people.

The great advantage of spinning is, that the same hand which sows and cultivates the cotton is able to add a new price to that natural production, by giving it, by means of a simple art, a

new

new form. This work is not very lucrative to an individual, but it is always in hand, and fills up every vacant moment: it is laid aside whenever there is any thing more beneficial to do, and is resumed again at leisure. Spinning employs all those moments of life which would be otherwise lost; it makes them profitable to old men and children, and affords subsistence to the whole world; lastly, it preserves a country from idleness, and all its attendant train of evils.

In a country less oppressed than Macedon, the peasant might be happy; because, the profits of his spinning would serve to augment the capital of his cultivation, and consequently his profits; the earth would also become in consequence better and more richly cultivated. But, in its present state, the peasant receives no other advantage from it than that of not being so wretched as he would be without spinning, and that of furnishing the Agas with a fresh opportunity to fleece him, without reducing him to die absolutely with hunger.

LETTER III.

Salonichi, 8 Brumaire, year 5.*

The TOBACCOES of MACEDONIA.

TOBACCO constitutes, next to cotton, the richest branch of Greek exports.

There are two species of tobacco cultivated in Macedon, which are known under the name of *nicotiana latifolia* and *nicotiana rustica*. The cultivation of this plant occupies an eighth part of the ploughed lands, and supports a population of twenty thousand families.

The tobacco is sown here in Germinal,† in lands recently watered, prepared by being ploughed twice, and manured with sheep's dung. The seed in the greatest request is the smallest and finest grown. It ought to be small, of a dark yellow colour, and of an acid taste. This seed is sown in small compartments, drawn at equal distances: each compartment is six inches broad, and three deep, and is intended to receive from ten to twelve seeds. The seed shoots up some days after it is sown; and, as soon as its stalk grows, and becomes strong,

* October 29, 1797. † March.

another soil is prepared, into which, in Floréal, all the young plants are transposed, which are ranged in order, on parallel lines, at the distance of a square foot. This is the second soil, which is proper for tobacco; the first serving only as a nursery. In dry seasons it is necessary to water the tobacco. As soon as the plants have attained about half their growth, and begin to shoot forth leaves, the earth which separates them is opened with a hoe, in order to raise it up in mounds round each plant: this operation is called *shoeing* the stalks. As tobacco is an absorbent plant, it should be weeded with care, and not be suffered to be near the parasite plant.

In Messidor,* when the plant has got all its leaves, the cultivators *castrate* it; that is to say, they cut the top of the stalk, on which they leave more or fewer leaves, according to its strength. By this process the leaves thrive more, and ripen more uniformly.

Tobacco arrives at maturity in Fructidor.† The leaves then turn yellow, incline towards the earth, and are separated from the plant without difficulty. The gathering, which is the task of women, is made in the morning, after the leaves have been moistened with the dew. They gather the finest and most ripe, one after another, and

* June. † August,

run

run them by the ends into long needles. They form thus bundles, from ten to twelve feet in length, which they set on end on pillars of wood, fixed into the earth, in a place much exposed to the free air and the rays of the sun. The leaves take on the *drier* the last degree of siccity, and at length become of a golden yellow colour. The bundles, when dried, are carried away on carts, on which they continue till the gathering is finished: they are then taken off, the leaves are unrolled, and formed into small parcels, at the top and bottom of which they place, for the beauty of the sight, those leaves which are in the best preservation and of the finest appearance. These parcels are ranged in piles from four to six feet high, which are pressed down with large broad stones: the parcels continue in this state until the tobacco is packed up.

The field, which produces the tobacco, continues, after the gathering is finished, covered with an infinite number of naked stalks, which present in the autumn the appearance of a forest of reeds, which the least wind agitates, and whose thundering murmur resembles that of an angry sea. These stalks dry up at the foot, and are an excellent manure for the ground, on account of the sharp salt which they deposit there.

ADVANTAGES

ARISING FROM THE

CULTIVATION of this PLANT.

It has been asked, whether it was more profitable to the Macedonians to cultivate tobacco than corn? for, it is to be observed, that the soil, which is adapted to the cultivation of tobacco, is also adapted to that of corn.

In the latter years of the last century, when the scarcity of corn was the pretext for the frequent revolts that ravaged Constantinople, Moustapha II. wished to make Macedonia one of the granaries of his empire, and his council defended the tobacco-plantations. Their pertinacious defence afterwards became a heavy duty, and the affair has continued in this state ever since.

If it was not a question of a Turkish *Divan*, in the disposal of the affair I have mentioned, one might suppose the council to have been persons of the most eminent skill in agriculture. In fact, the culture of tobacco prospers only in the best soils; but it soon exhausts them, if it is not manured excessively. The culture of it has another disadvantage: besides that it occupies the most valuable lands, it deprives, by its

its excessive absorption, the surrounding soil of its share in the distribution of manure.

Notwithstanding, however, the enormous duties with which the culture of tobacco is overwhelmed, the Macedonian peasants have continued their plantations: they think that they have doubled their corn, when, by their mode of cultivation, they have doubled the profits of their fields. These peasants are in the right: they are guided by the impulse of interest, which is rarely mistaken. But, it must be added, that they inhabit a soil calculated only for that species of culture which they have embraced.

Of all the countries in the universe, Macedonia is, perhaps, best calculated for the planting of tobacco. Its soil, which is too rich, requires to be absorbed by voracious plants, as persons of sanguine temperaments require to be blooded. The thick nitrous quality of the air, the situation of the soil, at the foot of Pangæus, Olympus, and other lofty mountains, which surround this country with an eternal circle of vapours, the perpetual inundations of the sea, of the Strymon, of the Axius, and a thousand other particular accidents, give to the animal and vegetable kingdom a luxury and abundance of food, unknown everywhere else. Nature has here too much power; the plants here are too full of sap, and the animals too full of vigour.

Land planted with tobacco yields a clear annual profit, generally double that of land sown with corn; but the cultivation and manipulation of tobacco require attentions, which greatly diminish the profits of the planter. A circumstance that struck me, as I was passing over the different plantations, is, that the peasants, who cultivate them, appear to be by no means comfortable, and it is known that they pay with much more difficulty the taxes imposed upon them, than those who cultivate corn. This circumstance is not calculated to conciliate their prejudices. What, however, proves that it is not connected with their system of cultivation is, that they generally prefer plantation-lands to corn-lands; and hence it happens that the Turks almost universally reserve the former to themselves, and abandon the latter to the Greeks. The plantation-lands sell every where very dear: they must therefore necessarily be more productive than lands sown with corn, Prejudice does not always prevail against interest. If they are more productive, we ought to seek for the difference of the condition of peasants-planters and peasants-labourers in their personal industry. The Greeks are much better farmers than the Turks, and they are Greeks who cultivate the corn-lands, whereas by far the greater part of the plantations are in the hands of the Turks.

From

From these remarks it appears, that the plantations turn to good account in Macedon, and that the Turkish government, far from prohibiting them, ought to encourage them.

One thing, however, lessens them in my opinion; and that is, that in general we meet with fewer instance of longevity in those villages in which tobacco is cultivated than in the others. Do the effluvia of that plant shorten the vital principle? or, rather, does the cultivation of tobacco so much exhaust every source, that it leaves no rest to the poor peasants who are employed about it?

The PLACES of PRODUCTION.

The different qualities, or species, of tobacco are derived from the districts in which they are cultivated.

These districts, from their geographical situation, form, on the north of Salonichi, a semi-circle, which may be about twenty-five leagues in its greatest length. This semi-circle extends from west to east, from the river Verdar to that of *Mesto*, beyond La Cavale.

The first district that occurs in the west, at the commencement of the semi-circle, is that of Jénidgé, which is so called from the small town of that name, situated near the ruins of

Pella.* The district of Jénidgé may be about ten leagues in extent, and is peopled by twelve villages, in which tobacco is cultivated with the greatest success. This tobacco is known in the commerce under the denomination of *Jénidgé-Verdar*. The leaf of the Jénidgé-Verdar is small, and similar in its contexture to that of the walnut-tree; it is of a golden-yellow colour, of a pleasant perfume, and of an agreeable taste. This tobacco is usually sold from seventy to eighty aspers an oke. The annual produce of the district of *Jénidgé* may be estimated at fifty thousand bales, of a hundred okes each.

Next to Jénidgé, in the circumference of the semi-circle, we meet with the town of *Kara-Dâgh*, which has, in its surrounding territory, thirty hamlets, whose inhabitants cultivate tobacco in the grass-lands lying around their cottages. The *Kara-Dâgh* is not in equal esteem with the Jénidgé; it sells from fifty to sixty aspers the oke, and there are gathered of it from twelve to fifteen thousand bales.

The city of *Jolbachi* is situated on the side of Kara-Dâgh, and has only four or five sorry

* There are only some trifling ruins of Pella at present remaining; but the circumference of its magnificent port is still to be seen, as are also the traces of the canal which joined the port to the sea. The mosques of Jénidgé have been built with the ruins of the palaces of the kings of Macedon.

villages

villages dependant on it, where four or five thousand bales of tobacco are gathered. The *Jolbachi* resembles so much the Kara-Dâgh, that it sells at the same price, although its quality is not so good; but a person must be a connoisseur not to be deceived in them.

The country of Pétrich, which borders on the district of Jolbachi, contains fifteen large villages, which are agreeably situated on the hills, which are commanded by high mountains, and which render its situation singularly favourable to the culture of tobacco. Several springs, which descend from the mountains down to the bottoms of the hills, facilitate the watering of the ground, and maintain in its bosom a perpetual coolness. That district is, therefore, not liable to the droughts, which often do great damage here, and the tobacco-plants have there a vigour, a strength of sap, unknown in the neighbouring districts which gives the leaves of the Pétrich a form and flavour different from the other tobaccoes of Macedon. The price of the Pétrich is from thirty-five to forty aspers the oke, and the amount of the gathering is from eighteen to twenty thousand bales.

Strumzza is a small city, situated twenty-four leagues to the north of Salonichi, at the extremity of the circle I have described. This district contains twelve villages, in which tobacco

is

is cultivated. This species of it is common; but as it varies from one village to another, so the price of it varies from twenty to fifty aspers the oke. The quantity gathered annually is twenty thousand bales.

By following the course of the semi-circle, we arrive in the eastern part, at the plantations which are nearer to La Cavale than to Salonichi. These plantations are in the districts of *Negrocowp*, *Prava*, *Moustégna*, *Démirli*, *La Cavale*, and *Jénidgé-Kara-Sou*. *Jénidgé-Verdar* commences at the western point of the semi-circle, and Jénidgé-Kara-Sou terminates it on the east. This city is situated on the Mesto, at the foot of the eastern branch of the Pangæus, four leagues to the north of the ancient Abdera, vestiges of which are still discernible. The heights that surround Jénidgé are wholly covered, during the spring, with tobacco-plants. These plants grow then very rapidly; and their deep green colour, which affords a strong contrast with the naked rocks of the Pangæus, and the muddy waters of the Mesto, present to the traveller a most picturesque scene.

The tobaccoes of the district of La Cavale sell from sixty to eighty aspers the oke, and the annual amount of the gathering may be computed at forty thousand bales. Among these species of tobacco, which are all celebrated for their goodness, we must distinguish the Jénidgé-Kara-Sou.

Sou. In quality it is superior to all others; its leaf is very small, and it has a balsamic smell, and an agreeable flavour. When mixed with the leaves of another species of tobacco, which grows in the neighbourhood, and which is called *Ptisi*, it exhales a perfume similar to that of violets; on which account it is reserved for the use of the harems. Connoisseurs prefer the Jénidgé-Kara-Sou even to the tobacco of *Lattakia*, because, with the same perfume, and with the same sweetness, it is more moist and fragrant. The price, at which this tobacco is sold, is a sufficient demonstration of the value in which the Turks hold it; it fetches from five to six piasters the oke. The Jénidgé-Kara-Sou differs between one field and another as much as Tokay wine differs from that of some districts of Bourgogne. On the side of the fields which produce the most exquisite tobacco, are plantations of the most common tobacco. But it is generally remarked, that the fine tobacco degenerates in proportion as it is removed from Jénidgé; and that valuable branch of agriculture is thus circumscribed, by the defects of its own soil, in the small compass of a square league and a half.

The Jénidgé-Kara-Sou is almost wholly conveyed to Constantinople, where it is set apart for the use of the great men and of the seraglio.

To

To resume: It appears that the different species of tobacco, produced in Macedon, ought to be arranged under three general denominations, viz. the Pétrich, the Jénidgé, and the Kara-Dâgh. These three denominations are the only ones known in the European commerce.

The Pétrich has great leaves, and is the most common. The Jénidgé has very small and irregular leaves, and is the mildest and best. The Kara-Dâgh, by the size and quality of its leaves, holds a medium between both extremes. The other districts yield intermediate qualities, which are only to be distinguished by slight gradations of colours.

If we take the total aggregate of every production, we shall see that the annual gathering, or harvest, of tobacco, in Macedon, may be estimated nearly at one hundred thousand bales. These tobaccoes pay, on being exported, a duty of twelve aspers per oke. The mean price of the oke may be valued at thirty-six aspers; whence it follows, that the cultivation of tobacco yields annually to Macedonia a revenue of four millions of piasters, one-third of which enters into the coffers of the sultan.

MODE

MODE of PURCHASING TOBACCO.

There are two modes of purchasing tobacco: it is either bought up in the magazines of Salonichi, or factors are sent into the plantations. The factors treat directly with the planters, and make them bundle up their tobaccoes as they please. This last method yields a profit of ten per cent.; but it is exposed to risks. They must pay down, before delivery of the tobaccoes, three-fourths of their cost in advance, and they run the hazard of losing their earnest-money, in a country where the feudal system reigns in all its rigour, and where the unfortunate peasants are often exposed to the extortions of the beys.

A singular custom prevails here; and that is, the buyer and seller treat together only for the *quantity*: it is the receiver of the customs of Salonichi who regulates the price. This receiver goes every year, at the commencement of Brumaire,* to the great market of *Doglia*, a town situated in the vicinity of Pétrich, whither the deputies of all the plantation-districts repair to him; and, after having heard their reasons, and sometimes even without hearing them, he arbi-

* October 22 or 23.

trarily

trarily fixes the prices, which he writes with his own hand on a wooden pillar, fixed in the market-place, in the same manner as Adrian formerly, in his voyage to Athens, inscribed the prices of oil on a column in the temple of Augustus.

The factors afterwards send the tobacco to Salonichi, packed up in horse-hair, or in a coarse cloth, known under the name of *abats*. They take care to keep the bales dry in the magazines; and, when the fermentation is finished, they embark them for the places of their destination. The tobaccoes, when kept dry, are not liable to become mouldy.

Upon the whole, European Turkey consumes twenty thousand bales of Macedonian tobacco; Egypt fifty thousand; Barbary ten thousand. Twenty thousand bales are exported into Italy, and from ten to twenty thousand passed lately into the eastern parts of Germany; but, since plantations have been formed in Hungary, the exportations into Germany have ceased, and those into Italy have been diminished by the importation of Hungarian tobacco.

This is the place to examine to what degree these tobaccoes may surpass those of Macedon, and whether any reasonable expectations can be entertained, that those will supplant these in the commerce of Europe, as the cabinet of Vienna seems to flatter itself they will.

Will

Will the TOBACCOES of HUNGARY supplant, in the Commerce of Europe, those of MACEDON?

The hereditary estates were formerly provided with tobaccoes from Macedon. Hungary beheld, by this means, the little money that was in circulation pass into the Othoman states by numberless channels. Joseph II. thought to remedy this inconvenience, by introducing into Hungary the cultivation of tobacco. He considered, in the introduction of that culture, two other advantages; that of diminishing the profits of the Turks, and that of bringing forwards the commerce of Hungary, by presenting it materials proper for exportation.

The well-established reputation of the tobacco of Salonichi made it a general desire in Hungary to have Macedonian seeds and planters. The Imperial Court wrote on this subject, in 1780, to the Chevalier de Gamera, its consul in Macedon, who succeeded at length, by the aid of money and promises, in procuring several Greek families to pass into Hungary. Those families had lands assigned them in the Bannat and Temeswar, and formed a small colony, which has increased with time. The plantations have prospered, and they are considerably extended;

extended; because, every magnat, (or noble,) whether in order to gratify their sovereign, or from a principle of rural economy, has shewn himself eager to introduce the culture of tobacco into his domains, and particularly M. de Merci, who has met with the greatest success.

It is known that Hungary is a fertile country, that nature there is vigorous, and produces with facility. To these advantages, arising from the soil, and those of a climate continually fertilized by mists, which descend from the mountains Krapaks, and you will not be surprised that so many things have concurred to give the Hungarian tobacco a vigour comparable to the finest tobaccoes of Macedonia. But the goodness of the leaves has not answered their beauty; and, whether it be the quality of the waters, or that of the soils, nature has refused to these tobaccoes the sweet *fragrance* of those of Macedon; and it has been found throughout, that the tobaccoes of Hungary were too rough and of a flavour too sharp.

It was thought at first, in Germany, that the qualities of the tobacco might be ameliorated by mixing the seeds. Seeds of the Jénidgé and the finest tobaccoes were then sent for to Salonichi. But these seeds not experiencing, in the soils of Hungary, the same varieties as in those of Macedon, they have all yielded the same

same qualities or species; a phænomenon which has appeared of sufficient importance to be remarked. Were we to judge of the tobacco-plant by the form of its leaves, by their colour, and their flavour, one would believe that each variety must proceed from a different seed. We are persuaded with difficulty, that the small leaf of the Jénidgé can be produced from the same seed as the Pétrich. But daily experience demonstrates it to us; and we can only explain this phænomenon by saying, that the quality of the air, and that of the water and the soil, give, by their various properties, a different vegetation to the plants, and that on this vegetation depends the quality of the tobacco.

The Imperial Court, however, apparently, cannot give credit to this phænomenon, or at least it does not despair of naturalizing in Hungary the same qualities or species of tobacco as are found in Macedon; as every year orders are dispatched to its consul to send a complete assortment of every kind of seed. But the expectations of the Austrian government will be crushed, and the tobaccoes of Hungary will continue, as they are, very common tobaccoes, and much inferior to those of Virginia.

The Emperor has not even been able to succeed in introducing these tobaccoes wholly into his hereditary estates. Austria and Lombardy have continued to supply themselves with fine

tobaccoes from Macedon; and those of Hungary have supplanted, in the markets of Milan and Trieste, only the most common tobaccoes.

In the mean time, what endeavours has not the Court of Vienna made to introduce this two-fold branch of industry, arising from agriculture and manufactures, into its estates! It has created a port at Fiume, and declared it to be a port of Hungary, notwithstanding its great distance from that country, and Fiume has been always included in the district of Trieste. A company has been erected at Fiume, whose chief destination is to exchange the commodities of the country for the sugars of America; but which is also to be essentially occupied in introducing into foreign countries the tobaccoes of Hungary. This company has established, for this purpose, in the vicinity of Fiume, large manufactories of *carrots*.*

It is with a view to encourage the commerce of Fiume, that the court of Vienna has been amused with the most absurd projects. It has been proposed to open noble roads across the deserts of Sclavonia; to dig canals from the Upper Save to the Danube; to unite the Adriatic Sea to Austria and Hungary by a canal,

* Carrots are pieces of tobacco about one foot long, and ready for rasping.

which

which was to cross the mountains of Morlachia, and to join, on the back of those mountains, Porto-Ré to the Koulpa, the Koulpa to the Drave, the Drave to the Raab, and the Raab to the Danube. This canal was to have an infinite number of ramifications: it was to intersect the whole of Croatia and Hungary, and to join the port of Trieste with the Laybach, and the Laybach with the Save, by which people could ascend to Crainbourg. I have seen the designs of these magnificent plans. I will not contest the possibility of executing them, because I know that with time and prudence men accomplish every thing; but I see, by the nature of the places, that incredible expenses must be incurred, in order to level a steep and mountainous soil more than two hundred square leagues.

Nevertheless, the only work really useful, that has been performed to open ways to Hungary, is the constructing of tolerable roads into Croatia, which is the only way through which easy communications can be procured with Macedonia, the richest scene of Austrian commerce. The route of the Danube presents too circuitous a way, and it opens into a sea, the navigation of which is very much impeded, and very dangerous.

Staples or marts have been latterly established on the road from Temeswar to Carlstad; vast

magazines have been constructed from Sissek to Gradisca; roads have been opened across the mountains: all this is doubtless very noble. But we cannot help regretting that such immense expenses have been occasioned, when we consider that they have been incurred for the *carrots* of Fiume, which will never be tasted by a stranger, on account of the inferiority of the leaves; and, even if the tobacco of Hungary were not inferior to that of Virginia, it never would be able to contend with the latter for the best markets, on account of the difficulty of transporting it. We may believe, then, that the Hungarian tobacco will never have a great sale, unless among the German peasants, and that it will supplant, in the commerce of Italy, only the most common Macedonian tobaccoes.

The OBSTACLES attendant on the EXPORTATION of the MACEDONIAN TOBACCOES.

The French commerce did not extend to the Macedonian tobaccoes, while the privilege of a farm-general subsisted: but it might now participate with the merchants of other nations in this branch of Greek commerce, and even perform it with more profit. It belongs

longs to the government to encourage this attempt.

The entrance of the Macedonian tobacco, and, in general, that of the Levant, into our territories, ought to be more favoured than the tobaccoes of Virginia. The reason of this is clear: there would not enter into the port of Marseilles one piece of Levantine tobacco, which would not be a representation or equivalent for a piece of our cloth, or some other production of our industry: whence it follows, that if the quantum of the duty imposed on Turkish tobaccoes diminishes the consumption of them among us, it will be to the advantage of the American tobaccoes, for which we pay in cash; and then, from the nature of our commerce in the Levant and in the United States, it will appear, that we shall have a relative loss in our commercial transactions.

Some attempts have been made at Salonichi, and under my direction; but no person has embarked in them, because we could only convey our adventure to France by the destructive and circuitous route of Italy, and because we have experienced, at the customs of Marseilles, difficulties, which it is my duty to make known to government.

The Constituent Assembly, at the time it established an uniform duty on the importation

of foreign tobaccoes, subjected all these tobaccoes to be put into hogsheads, apparently to facilitate the receiving of the duty. But this subjection, which may appear unimportant to those concerned in making tariffs, undermines, by its consequences, the commerce of Macedonian tobaccoes.

In the first place, the custom of putting tobaccoes into hogsheads was not known here: they were always packed up in bales, covered with horse-hair. But the country people will never be induced to change their method, so long as they find a ready sale among the Italian merchants.

Secondly, the putting of it into hogsheads is too expensive. It is impossible to procure hogsheads at Salonichi; they must come from Marseilles. The transportation of them would at least triple the freight. Such is the incumbrance of putting tobacco into hogsheads, that it is evident, that, by putting the bales into large barrels, a vessel, which might contain twelve hundred bales, will only carry six hundred, and, beside this, the vessel must come loaded only with ballast.

Lastly, the mode prescribed is dangerous; because the Macedonian tobaccoes are so fine and so delicate, that they ought continually to receive the impression of the air. Pack them into

into hogsheads, and you render them liable to ferment and grow mouldy.

It is therefore essential to the French commerce of Greece, that the Macedonian tobaccoes should be imported in bales to Marseilles.

LETTER IV.

Salonichi, 26 Brumaire, year 5.*

BY this view of our commerce in corn, I answer your queries respecting the population of Macedon. That province is one of the least depopulated of Turkey, on account of the richness of its soil. You may judge, then, by the weakness of its population, of the present state of the Othoman empire. The comparative view I present you is not in the least flattering; but it may serve to rectify false ideas concerning the commerce of Turkey.

CORN of THESSALY and MACEDONIA.

Macedonia forms a noble plain. It is situated at the foot of Mount Pangæus, of Scomius, and other mountains, which bound it on the north; on the east it is surrounded by Athos; and on the west by Olympus. The sea washes it on the south, and encroaches upon it, so that it appears to have given it the form of a semicircle. Thus formed into the shape of a horse-

* November 17, 1797.

shoe

shoe extremely curved, this country is divided into three parts singularly adapted to vegetation, viz. the part of the semicircle, that is bounded on the north, which is Macedonia Proper; the eastern part formerly called Chalcis, and which I shall designate under the name of the side or declivity of Athos; and, lastly, the western part, which is the side or declivity of Olympus. These three parts are superior in fertility to the rich plains of Sicily; but the side or declivity of Athos is still more fruitful than the two others. The soils, though scarcely touched with the plough-share, yield, in the plains of Panomi, a product more rich than our best lands of La Beauce. The corn has here even too much sap, and it dies actually from a superabundance of vigour, if the precaution is not taken of cutting the tops of it or causing them to be nibbled off by sheep.

These three districts are divided into Agaliks. The aga receives a rent, the greater or the less, from the lands sown with corn, and the Grand Signior has a stated tenth, which is presumed to be the tenth part of the nett produce. The Turkish officer, who is charged with the receiving of the imperial duty, is nominated every year by the Porte, and is called *Istiradgi*. The name of *Istira* designates the nature of his employment.

The

The Istira of Salonichi comprehends all the country contained between the Verdar and the Strymon; it extends even beyond the Verdar through the whole district of Jénidgé, and to Kara-Veria. This country was granted in the year of the *Hegira* 830,* by Mourad II. to Gazi-Ghâvrinos, one of his generals. Ghâvrinos had subdued, in one campaign, all Macedonia, and had carried by assault Salonichi, its metropolis. Macedonia had been the country of Alexander. Mourad attached to his conquest ideas of glory, and he wished generously to reward its conqueror. He gave him all the land through which he could ride on horseback from one morning to another. Ghâvrinos was then at Jénidgé: he departed from that point, directed his course to the south, and, returning to the north, he drew a circle, and stopped at *Colakia*, a small town situate on the left bank of the Verdar, four leagues distant from Salonichi. There he threw down his *toupous*,† to fix

* 1452 of our computation.

† The *toupous* is a small species of club which the Turks carry at their saddle as a mark of distinction: on one side is the sabre, on the other the *toupous*.

The extract I here insert of the lives of Gazi and Ali Ghâvrinos is taken from the Turkish history of those two conquerors, the manuscript of which was communicated to me by Abdouraman

fix the boundaries of his new possessions. He had already traversed ninety-six villages, and the tradition prevails, that he would have pushed forwards much farther; that Salonichi itself would have belonged to him, had he not been deceived by the crowing of a cock, which announced the morning before its time. This grant was acquitted of every duty, except that of the Istira, and it has been transmitted with these exemptions to the family of Ghâvrinos, which is one of the most illustrious of Greece. The persons who belong to it cannot die by the bow-string;* and, in case of a heinous crime, they have the same privileges as that of the mouphtis, that of being pounded to death in a mortar.

Ghâvrinos holds in the Macedonian traditions the same rank as Scander-bey† in the Albanian traditions, and as our *Roland* or *Orlando* in the ancient romances. The Mussulman general with only his squires challenged a battalion con-

Abdouraman Bey, chief of the illustrious family of Ghâvrinos. This extract may serve to give an idea of the *manner* of the Turkish historians. Few Oriental histories appear to me of better composition than that of the Ghâvrinos.

* This is only a popular opinion, but it is still credited by the provincial Turks.

† The *Bey Alexander*: so the Turks called *George Caſtriot, despot* of Albania.

sisting

sisting of two thousand Greeks, gained ten battles in person, and *cut in two* two thousand men with his own hand. He possessed the strength of Hercules; he knocked down an ox with one blow of his fist, and carried it away on his shoulders. He had a son, who was still more celebrated than himself in the Turkish tales, whose name was Ali-Bey. Lovely as Fathmé, and valiant as Omar, Ali conquered with one detachment only Upper Macedonia, and gained all hearts by his moderation and favours. He was still in the flower of his age, when, mounting a fiery horse in a djérid, (which is a species of Turkish tournament,) he imprudently ran against Mourad II. The provoked sultan charged Ghâvrinos with the execution of his vengeance. The unhappy father loved his son:—not being able to support the sight of his perishing before his own eyes, he caused his son to be conducted to a bath, whither he sent him a subtle poison disguised in a delicious drink. Ali took the poisoned cup, drank the liquor, and did not die. He went afterwards and threw himself at his father's knees, who raised him up, wept over him, and caused him to be beheaded in his presence. The bloody head of the son was presented at a feast to the terrible Mourad, who received it as an agreeable present, but complained that the sacrifice of the father had been too great. *The offence*, replied

plied Ghâvrinos, *was very great, and death alone could expiate it.* The tomb of Ali is still seen at Jénidgé in the principal mosque, and the Turks visit it as that of one of their *santons*. They speak still with the same veneration and the same enthusiasm both of the father and of the son; and so much respect is still preserved in the Turkish divan for the Ghâvrinos, that the istiradgi of Salonichi is almost always chosen out of that family.

The Istira of Volo commences in the west where that of Salonichi terminates. It contains all the side of Olympus, the district of Zagora, which is the ancient Magnesia, the Gulph of Volo, that of Zeitoun, and, in general, all that part of Thessaly which is within the Moussemlik of Larissa. That Moussemlik extends through all the country known anciently under the names of Phthiotis, of Pelasgiotis, and comprehended between Macedonia, the sea, Mount Æta, and a line from the south to the north, drawn from the ancient Hypate, passing to Pharsalia, and terminating at Oloosson. This is the most fertile district of Thessaly.

The Istira of Orphano contains all the eastern part of the side of Athos, and extends, on the sea-coast, from the promontory of that mountain to the Island of Thasus, some leagues beyond La Cavale. On the continent it forms a semicircle, the centre of which is at Orphano, near

the

the ruins of Amphipolis, and which may extend from ten to twelve leagues into the country.

The duty of the Istira is settled in the districts of Volo and of Salonichi. It is regulated according to the amount of the harvest in the district of Orphano. In those three departments it is supposed to be the tenth part of the annual produce, but, in fact, it is only the twelfth. The corn is measured here by quilots, which are called *Quilots of Stamboul*. The quilot weighs twenty-two okes, and four quilots are nearly equivalent to the septier of Paris.*

The istiradgi, at the time of taking the corn, pays the proprietor twenty paras the quilot, and he is repaid the same price by the Grand Signior. The profit which he makes is, therefore, not on the price, but on the measure. It is full for the corn which he receives, and is false for the corn which he sends into the magazines of Constantinople. The istiradgi receives, besides this, twenty thousand quilots for his profit, which cost at the rate of twenty paras the quilot, and are sold at the rate of two piasters, which creates him a new profit of thirty thousand piasters.†

The district of Salonichi sends annually into the granaries destined for the Istira one hundred and twenty thousand quilots of corn :‡ that of Volo furnishes only eighty thousand.§ In these

* Nearly equal to one quarter of our measure. † £6000.

‡ About 23,000 quarters. § About 14,000 quarters.

two

two districts the duty is assessed on the articles subject to contribution, according to an ancient register, and it varies neither in plentiful nor in scanty years. The duty of the district of Orphano experiences, on the contrary, all the variations of the harvest, but it may be estimated, at an annual medium, at sixty thousand quilots.*

It is easy to calculate, according to these notes, which were extracted from the registers of the Istira, the annual produce in corn of all that part of Thessaly and Macedon which is subject to the imperial tenth. The hundred and twenty thousand quilots of Salonichi, the eighty thousand of Volo, and the sixty thousand quilots of Orphano, give two hundred and sixty thousand quilots, which, being only the supposed tenth, and the actual twelfth, part, or nearly that, of the annual produce, present a total of three millions one hundred and twenty thousand quilots, or about eight hundred thousand septiers of Paris.†

The quantity exported can only be determined by the registers of the duty, which are ill kept, and deserve no reliance on them; but they are the only notices that can be collected in a country where no exchange is established in the principal cities of Europe. Besides, when a question arises respecting the articles exported for the Othoman ports, we have no

* 11,000 quarters. † Nearly equivalent to 800,000 quarters.

reason

reason to suppose any voluntary or wilful falsifications; and, on this supposition, the registers of the customs always prove well what they do prove; and, indeed, they usually prove a little more, because it is natural to suppose that some of these articles escape or are clandestinely withdrawn from the officers.

But the registers of the customs, which make no mention of the corn that is disposed of through the medium of the Istira, give, upon the whole, on an annual average, thirty ladings exported from the three sea-port towns of Volo, Salonichi, and Orphano, for the port of Constantinople; and forty ladings which are destined for the other Othoman ports. We must suppose that ten ladings are fraudulently exported either to the Gulph of Zeitoun or to that of Cassandria, where there is no officer of the customs, and where interlopers are sometimes protected even by the armed vessels of the Grand Signior. The total, therefore, amounts to eighty ladings.

It is not so easy to determine the quantity of corn exported annually to the different ports of Europe. As exportation to non-Othoman ports is severely prohibited by the Turkish laws, we can go upon sure grounds on this point only by approximations. The accounts of European commerce usually conceal these ladings under the name of *remittances* for France or Italy; but,

but, according to the returns made in the chanceries of France and Italy, it appears that these remittances cannot, at an annual medium, exceed two hundred thousand piasters for France,* and six hundred thousand for Italy,† which, according to the market-price of corn, gives about forty ladings, which, being added to the eighty ladings for the Othoman ports, make a general total of one hundred and twenty ladings.

Every lading may be computed at ten thousand quilots. These one hundred and twenty ladings give then an exportation of one million two hundred thousand quilots. The total produce of the harvest is three millions one hundred and twenty thousand quilots. There are consumed in that part of Thessaly and Macedon, which is subject to the Istira, one million nine hundred and twenty thousand quilots, or about five hundred thousand septiers of Paris.

The annual consumption is usually estimated at a septier and a half per head; but it does not exceed a septier in a country where the peasants live during one part of the year on maize and barley, and where in general they are not so *voracious* as our northern peasants. Besides, in a country of slaves, the masters only *have* (to

* £40,000. † £100,000.

use a trite expression) *their bellies full:* the husbandmen sow; but they suffer. — They *feed* a negro with *lashes of a whip*, and a Greek peasant *with blows of the jatagan.*

We shall therefore approach as near to the truth as it is possible in these kinds of calculations, by estimating the annual consumption at a septier per head, which gives a population of five hundred thousand souls. This is only a conjecture, but every thing concurs to prove the justness of it.

In general, it is not possible to give to calculations of the population of Turkey the same accuracy as in Europe, because the civil state of the citizens is not proved by registers, as among us. The infidel or non-mussulman subjects can only be ascertained by the tickets or notes of the Karatach which they are obliged to pay; but, as the majority of the Greek communities are compounded for with the receiver or *Karathgi*, and as they pay annually the same quantity of notes, there can be no certain calculation founded on this basis. The number of notes which was fixed at the time of the Conquest has not even been altered in some districts since that event: the price of them only has varied from two to ten piasters, because the same sum must always enter into the imperial treasury, whether the number of men subject to that capitation augment or decrease. Hence it happens

pens that the Karatach amounts to twelve piasters in Cyprus, whereas only one hundred paras are paid in certain districts of Thessaly, because those two countries present the two extremes of the Othoman population.

Ten thousand notes are delivered at Salonichi both to the Greeks and Jews; and, upon the whole, the Karatach produces in the Pachalik of Macedonia three hundred thousand piasters* to the Grand Signior, and one hundred thousand to his sub-delegates.† It may produce one hundred thousand piasters in the Moussemlik of Larissa both to the treasury and to the officers of the port. If we compute this tribute at its mean rate, which appears to be six piasters per head, it will give a population of eighty thousand persons subject to the Karatach. But, when we consider that it is paid only by adult males, we shall find that the heads subject to the Karatach are to the population of non-mussulman families as one is to four. The Karatach yields therefore a population of three hundred and twenty thousand souls. According to the five hundred thousand souls given by the consumption of corn, there must be a population of one hundred and eighty thousand Turks.

This computation appears somewhat similar to military recruiting-rolls, which is the only

* £60,000. † £20,000.

basis we have to estimate, with any accuracy, the mussulman population. The Pachalik of Salonichi, and the Moussemlik of Larissa, usually furnish fifteen thousand men in the European wars. The mean proportion of the families dependent on military bodies, as, for instance, on the *Ortas* of Janisaries, or on the companies of Spahis, is nearly that of one to ten, which yields a population of one hundred and fifty thousand Turks. The number of mussulmen, who do not belong to any military corps, and who are denominated *Bélédis*, does not exceed thirty thousand men, which, consequently, yields a Turkish population of one hundred and eighty thousand souls, which is precisely the proportion sought.

One hundred and eighty thousand mussulmen on one side, and on the other three hundred and twenty thousand non-mussulmen, give in the whole five hundred thousand souls, which is the population every where presented by the annual consumption of corn, by the Karatach, and by the recruiting for soldiers. These three data, taken separately, present only approximations; but, when all three give the same results, then the calculations of population assume such a degree of authority as could be at least contradicted only by positive facts. It is therefore certain, that the population of that part of Thessaly and Macedon, which is subject

ject to the Istira, does not exceed five hundred thousand souls. The Pachalik of Salonichi, which comprehends all Lower Macedonia, contains seven hundred square leagues; the Moussemlik of Larissa contains three hundred; which yields five hundred individuals to each square league in those two governments. It is to be observed, that I speak here only of the most populous part of Macedonia; for, the upper part of Macedon and Epirus are deserts.*

This population is distributed in the following manner:

	Souls.
Salonichi	60,000
Sérès	30,000
Larissa	20,000
Vodina, or the ancient Edessa,	12,000
Kara-Veria, or Berœa	8,000
Jénidgé	6,000
Tournavos	6,000
Pharsalia	5,000
Zéïtoun	4,000
La Cavale	3,000
Le Volo	3,000

The total of the population of the cities is 157,000 souls.

* If we join the population of Upper with Lower Macedon, we shall find only three hundred and seventy individuals to each square league.

The population of the country is, therefore, 343,000 souls, which gives only a proportion of one to three.

This distribution is detestable. In our parts of Europe, where the people are overcharged with indirect impositions, where the governments shut up so many of the soldiers whom they keep in pay in the cities, the population of the citizens is usually to that of the whole as one is to five; and certainly the country, where the inhabitants of the cities formed only a sixth or a seventh part of the total aggregate of the inhabitants, must be more populous, because a good distribution of the population is one of the greatest means to augment it. Men, who are huddled together, corrupt each other's morals, and naturally they devour each other as the fishes of the sea. We can, therefore, form some judgement of the miserable state of this country by the manner in which its population is distributed. The ardent desire of lodging in the cities has caused here, as it has among us, the country to be deserted; but with this difference, that our countrymen go to the cities in search of profits and easy pleasures, whereas the Greek peasants flee to a distance from their villages in order to avoid the insatiable desires and depredations of their beys.

When we consider Macedonia under the aspect of its natural advantages, we find that there

there is no country of Europe where the individuals have received a greater aptitude to happiness; but, when we view it under its political aspect, we find that all the scourges of a barbarous government seem to have concurred to desolate a country, which, for the richness and variety of its productions, is one of the finest in the world.

One half of Macedon lies uncultivated. The absurd system of keeping the land fallow is the reason why the third quarter produces nothing, or at least very little; and so trifling is the Greek cultivation, that the fourth part does not produce one-third of what it might.

Notwithstanding these disadvantages, this country, in its present wretched state, produces eight hundred thousand septiers of corn, one hundred thousand bales of tobacco, and eighty thousand of cotton; and it exports in value more than half its rich productions.

Were we to behold this immense quantity of exportations, we should be tempted to judge favourably of the state of the husbandmen; but we should be deceived. This superabundance of productions is no proof of their happiness, because it does not exceed what is necessary. In states where the peasants fully enjoy their civil rights, as in the greatest part of Europe, nothing is sold, unless they have at least provided a competency; what is exported is then

really superfluous. But, in countries, which approach the state of those, where a multitude of negroes is put in action by the blows of some whites, the exportation is never proportioned exactly to the abundance. Here thousands of individuals toil to produce for a very small number. There petty tyrants amass together the labour of a whole district for themselves alone to devour it. They leave to the wretched cultivator not even the most scanty necessaries; and they sell what they do not devour to gratify their capricious whims. In Macedonia, as in Poland, the peasants die with hunger, while their lords abound with gold.

On comparing the accounts of the ancients, it appears that the part of Greece now in question supported, in the time of Alexander, more than a million of inhabitants; it does not at present support more than five hundred thousand; and one is astonished at so great a population, when one considers the wretched abandoned state of the country and the enormous mass of exportations which leave the people such weak means of subsistence. But nature here combats incessantly the vices of the government. The climate of Greece is admirable, and has a powerful influence on the human species, by giving it more vigour and more fruitfulness; and it acts with equal power on the animal and vegetable kingdom, by rendering both more productive.

ductive. It must be a great error in governments to diminish the human species on the northern parts of the globe, while the most insensible of governments cannot suppress the population of the southern countries without its incessantly increasing. The victories of Charles XII. have desolated Sweden; but neither the follies of government nor the ravings of superstition have been able to depopulate the smiling valleys of Sicily and Macedon. We are here in the country of Pyrrha and Deucalion; men grow like the trees of the forest, and the stones that are thrown upon the ground are metamorphosed into men.

When we have been speaking of the noble provinces of which the Othoman empire consists, we always conclude with the same thought: Nature has done every thing in these countries, and the government has spoiled all.

LETTER V.

Salonichi, 15 Nivôse, year 5.*

I PROCEED now to answer your letter on the wool of Macedon. Agriculture can flourish only under a good government, and there is none in this country. The branch of rural economy that is the least neglected is the rearing of cattle, because the soil, in order to produce pasturage, requires no cultivation. Greece has returned to its heroic times. We meet here with nothing but shepherds and robbers, and, unfortunately for us, there is now neither a Theseus nor a Hercules.

The WOOLS of MACEDON and ALBANY.

Greece supports many herds of cattle, because three-fourths of its lands are uncultivated. Ignorance and barbarity may put a stop to that fertility which arises from cultivation, but never that which is the gift of nature. A good soil, although neglected, will always produce pastures, and pastures will always support cattle.

* January 3, 1797.

There

There is no country of the globe more agreeably diversified than Greece; it is the compendium of every climate. Plants which grow between the tropics flourish in its plains and on its hills; and those of the most northern countries accustom themselves to its climate on the mountains. Olympus, Pindus, Parnassus, and the lofty mountains of Arcadia, nourish on their sides an eternal cold, while the valleys situated at their feet enjoy perpetual spring. Those lands, which will not admit of cultivation, admit of vegetation: they produce spontaneously thyme, creeping or wild thyme, sweet marjoram, and aromatic plants. Such a country as this must be singularly well adapted to the support of cattle, and there are numerous herds of them here. It supports also, during six months in the year, all those of the neighbouring regions. When the severity of the winter drives the Albanian shepherds from their mountains, they come to the mild climate of Greece in quest of more substantial and more plentiful pastures. They enjoy the privilege of going from place to place into all the uncultivated lands; and, notwithstanding the tyranny of the beys, who plunder them without pity, their *winterings* cost them generally but little.

Under the reign of the Greek emperors, the mixture of African and Asiatic sheep had enriched the Greek breeds. They have decreased since, as no measures have been taken to augment

ment them. Notwithstanding, however, the neglect in which they have been left, they have not yet wholly lost their beauty.

The usual length of the Greek sheep is from thirty to thirty-six inches, its height from fifteen to eighteen, and its weight from thirty to fifty pounds. Its body is much thicker and shorter than ours; it has also larger limbs and a broader back; its tail is long; its head is large; its legs are small; its eyes are large; its temples project; its eyes are sunk; its complexion is healthy; and it appears to belong to the Barbary sheep, whose manners it has. Such is the species in general in Greece, but it presents varieties which are produced by the difference of districts.

The sheep of Livadia is still finer than that of Thessaly and Macedon. It is larger, stronger, and its stature better pitched; its wool is extremely curled, but thick and soft.

The appearance of the country of Livadia is charming, from the diversity of hills and valleys, of lakes and streams. The pimpernel and saint-foin grow to the very borders of the sea, and all the hills are covered with odoriferous plants. Cattle meet every where with the best herbage and the most temperate climate.

The pastures of Œta and Parnassus are still more valuable than those of the neighbouring districts. The sheep which graze on those mountains

mountains give the most delicate flesh and the finest fleeces.

The sheep of Attica is the most degenerated of all: this country is that of goats and heroes; but the sheep appears to have preserved all its beauty in the mountains of Arcadia.

The Arcadian sheep, if properly taken care of, re-unites still, in its actual state, all the perfections of the neighbouring breeds, without having any of their defects. A free and firm gait, a lively look, the part of its body which extends from the shoulders to the hips well-proportioned in every part, a skin generally white, and without any other mixture, are at this day the characteristic traits of these fine cattle, which were as celebrated in antiquity as the shepherds who tended them.

In general, the Morea is the best adapted to the feeding of cattle; but, what is singular, is, that in that peninsula there are veins of land where the sheep thrive, while they languish in the neighbouring districts. On the banks of the Alpheus and the Pamisus graze noble sheep; the banks of the Eurotas, and the rivers of Argolis, support only degenerated goats. The revolution of Albania has occasioned irreparable loss to the Morea; husbandry, in particular, will never rise again. The Albanians kill the men, and carry away the women and cattle. One scourge generally brings on another. The war

war was followed by long famines, which reduced the shepherds to the necessity of feeding on flesh instead of bread. The productions of the land having diminished with the number of hands, the beys determined to repay themselves with the woods, and they have no more now to cut for sale. The excessive blows they received have had disastrous effects: droughts have become more frequent, pastures more rare, and sheep have found no shelter against the summer heats. The heads of these animals are extremely weak; and the rays of a scorching sun, falling directly on them, have occasioned vertigoes and giddinesses. The consequence has been the ruin of the species: the Morea has not preserved one quarter of its cattle.

Whether it be the effect of barbarity, or a mechanical attachment to ancient customs and to a pastoral life, the sole employment of the Tartars, (for, war cannot be one,) the rearing of cattle is a branch of rural economy by no means neglected in Turkey. Their mode of performing their transmigrations here has preserved the fineness of the wool, and that of *parcage** here has prevented the degeneration of the breeds.

In Greece, as in Spain, the cattle are made to travel, in order to keep them, during the

* That is, the time that sheep remain upon a field.

whole

whole year, in an equal temperature; they pass the winter in the plains, and the summer on the mountains. There is, however, this advantage in Greece, that the transmigrations are less long, and attended with less trouble, because the country is every where crossed by high mountains.

The sheep are not huddled together here in narrow folds, as if nature had not given them a clothing capable of protecting their bodies from the intemperature of the seasons. The moisture, and the sharp, and almost mephitic, air, which circulate in these obscure corners, afflict those animals with putrid and inflammatory disorders, from which those of Greece are exempt.

The *parcage* has another great advantage, and that is, that the great current of air, the dews, the showers, the clearness and brightness of the sun, whiten and make supple the wool, and give it a superior quality both in fineness and substance. Our shepherds, deaf to the advice of the school of Montbard and of the sage Daubenton, are always apprehensive of the extreme cold: what ought to re-assure them is, that the cattle are folded, during the whole winter, in the midst of frost and snow, on the summits of Olympus and Athos.

The mode of transmigrations and *parcage* pursued here leave to the climate all its influ-

ence;

ence; and it is the influence of the climate alone that supports the beauty of the breeds here, notwithstanding the miserable keeping of the cattle. They have wholly forgotten the crossing of the breeds introduced under the Greek emperors; they do not even take the easy precaution of making use, in coupling them, of the finest animals. It is, however, only by following this method, that the wool can be beautified and the species ameliorated. It is by crossing the breeds incessantly by vigorous rams, and sheep with long fleeces, that, in England, they have been able to procure fleeces twenty-two inches in length.

The Greek fleeces are in general very ill-treated, because the cattle are conducted into rugged places, which mangle the wool on the back of the animal.

It is well known that white wool alone will take delicate and brilliant colours; and here the fleeces are often party-coloured, because the sheep are sent indifferently to the slaughter.

The first of these defects is owing to carelessness, and may be rectified; but the second is owing to the barbarity of the country, and will continue as long as that does.

Another defect common to all the wool, but more particularly to that of Greece, is, that it abounds with *jarre*, which is a nap that grows among

among the wool, and which cannot be united with it. The more *jarre* there is in the wool, the less valuable it is.

In the Frank commerce, which is of the most importance to us, the Greek wool is divided into different species, the chief of which are the *surge* and the *pelade*. The former is that which is shorn in Germinal.* There are various degrees of fineness, which are distinguished under the names of *fine*, of *coarse*, and of *baja*. This assortment consists of these three species or qualities, to which is added a tenth part of black wool, which is picked. The *fine* is composed of fleeces which yield a thick, silky, and light, wool. The fleeces which yield a coarse wool, that does not adhere together, but is separated into long flocks, are set apart for the *coarse*; and the *baja* is the wool of the thighs and tails which have been cleaned. The combination of these three degrees, which are, according to the age of the animals, more or less fine, or more or less coarse, forms the characteristic of the good or bad quality of the *surge* or shorn wool which is sold in the ports of Greece.

The wool denominated *pélade* comes from those sheep which die of the distemper or are killed. In Spain and France the skins are

* The latter end of March or the beginning of April.

moistened with water and heaped together, in order that they may ferment, and thus acquire a slight degree of putrefaction, which facilitates the separation of the wool. But here the Turks content themselves with throwing the skins into a lime-kiln; and they take off the wool by drawing the skin over a piece of iron, armed with teeth, which is fixed on a board, and made like a comb. The wool obtained by this process is short, dry, and detached; and, although it is washed as soon as it is separated from the skin, it never can be wholly cleared of the particles of lime which are impregnated with it and augment its weight.

The *bastard* wool is that which falls naturally from the animal; it is short, coarse, destitute of that oily substance which adheres to wool before it is washed, and unfit for use. The shepherds mix it with the *surge* or shorn wool; but, on examination, it is thrown aside among the coarse. This quality in the wool has occasioned in the commerce a fraud which by no means becomes the probity of the French. The *pélade*, or wool of sheep which die of the distemper, and which is exported to Marseilles, passes there under the name of *bastard*, which gives a saving on the entrance-duties and on the freight much less on the latter than on the former. The chief merchants ought not to connive at this fraud.

The

The wool denominated *tresquille*, or *cassap*, is purchased of the butchers; it is that of the sheep they kill. The wool called *gun*, or washed, is that which is cut off after the sheep have been washed, by passing them repeatedly through a stream of running water; it is long and fine, but is not plentiful. This wool is sold at a double price, because half of it is lost by the washing. The waste is less when the wool is washed on the back of the animal.

The greatest part of the *surge*, or shorn wool, and the best, comes from Albany and the plains of Larissa. There come to Salonichi from four to five hundred thousand okes. The shearing yields a quantity much stronger; but there remain two hundred thousand okes at Mayada to serve for the weaving of seventy thousand abats* which are annually manufactured in that city. The rest passes to Venice through the ports of Dalmatia. All the wool that is shorn beyond the Strymon and to the east of Macedon takes the route of La Cavale or of Adrianople. Fifty thousand okes are computed to be annually consumed at Philippolis in a manufactory of abats, from which proceed annually fifteen thousand pieces. These abats are exported to Smyrna, and thence distributed into Anadoulia, Syria, and Arabia.

* Coarse cloths manufactured in Macedon.

All the wool that comes from Livadia, as well that which is shorn as that of the sheep that die of the distemper, is used in the manufacture of the capots of Zagora. The Morea consumes almost all its own wool. The total produce of that peninsula does not exceed twelve thousand cantaars, and there are exported from it one or two ladings to the port of Patras or to that of Coron.

The grand mart of the Greek wool is the city of Salonichi. It is brought to that place from Jénidgé, from Doiram, from Strumzza, and from Sérès. The total aggregates of those districts may be about three hundred thousand okes. The fine plains that surround Salonichi alone contribute two hundred thousand in the Frank commerce.

The wools of Macedon are subject to the duty of the *hums*; and there is a farm called *Beylik* which is under the direction of a Jew who takes the name of *Beylikgi*. The Beylikgi, by virtue of the firman which constitutes his office, has the privilege of deducting one-fifth of all the wool for the trifling consideration of four paras the oke. This privilege is a species of tribute paid to the industry of the Jews by Othoman ignorance. It was granted to the Jewish nation, when, expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella, it arrived at Salonichi, under the reign of Bayazid II. to seek an asylum,

lum, new masters, and the free exercise of its religion. The manufactures of Castile were at that time brought to greater perfection than all the rest of Europe: the Jews, who directed them, were acquainted with all the processes. They offered their industry to the sultan, and engaged to manufacture the cloths necessary to habit the janisaries of which his guard was composed. They are taxed at twelve hundred pieces annually, one thousand of a blue and two hundred of a red colour. These cloths are conveyed to Constantinople on carriages provided by the pacha at the expense of the government. The quantity varies not; but, by an abuse which the weakness of the ministry tolerates, its quality degenerates every day. The Beylikgi receives twenty thousand piasters* for the expense of manufacturing it; and it is inspected by a Turkish overseer, called *Tchoah-tchaoux*, who blushes not at being the accomplice of Jewish avarice.

This duty of hums produced to the Beylikgi at first only thirty thousand okes. He caused it to be understood that that quantity was not sufficient, and he was permitted to make a deduction, to the amount of fifty thousand okes, by extending the limits of his district. At this day, by virtue of this new extension of his privilege, he exercises over every species of wool indiscri-

* £4000.

minately an odious monopoly. Under the pretence that he never has the necessary quantity, he is always buying wool, because he is certain of selling it again with profit to the French merchants; and, whenever they wish to treat with the *Moutafs*, who are a company of Turks engaged in this branch of commerce under the name of *Managers*, or directly with the *chobans* or shepherds, he exacts of the purchasers a particular duty as the price of his desisting. This arbitrary duty is treated between him and them as an object of exchange, and varies from five to twelve aspers the oke, according as the demand is more or less strong, or the merchandize more or less rare. The wool purchased of the butcher was not subject to this duty till within these thirty years. It is subject to it at present by the mistake of a French merchant, who, thinking that he owed the Beylik for this wool as well as the rest, treated with the Beylikgi for the duty. He afterwards wished to evade the payment of it, but the consul at that time yielded, and the custom has become a law.

The wool is sold from fifteen to twenty-five paras the oke. One lading is made for Venice, another for Ancona, and sometimes two or three are divided between Genoa and Leghorn. Three thousand bales of a hundred okes are exported to Marseilles, and pass thence into Languedoc, where they supply our manufactures of woollen

woollen cloths. The wools of Salonichi are held in the greatest estimation in the Levant. When mixed with those of Bearn and Rousillon, they serve for the manufacture of the cloths called *Londrins premiers*. The finest may also be used with Spanish wool, because they work up less on the length and breadth; but we must mix them with caution, if we would not wish to have cavities and inequalities formed in the stuff by their disproportion, which would injure the quality of the cloth. One inestimable advantage which we derive from our wool-trade in Greece is, that we buy the raw merchandize of the Turks, and sell it to them again when manufactured.

Every lading may be valued at six hundred bales of a hundred okes, and the mean-price of the oke may be computed at twenty paras. The article of wool alone causes a considerable influx of money into this place. Venice sends thirty-five thousand piasters;* Ancona, twenty-five thousand;† Leghorn and Genoa, sixty thousand;‡ and Marseilles, one hundred and fifty thousand.§ Upon the whole, the wool-trade brings into Macedon two hundred and seventy thousand piasters.‖ The English and Dutch have nothing to do with the Greek wool.

* Nearly equivalent to £7000 sterling. † About £5000.

‡ About £12,000. § About £30,000. ‖ About £54,000.

The French, before the year 1789, had always bought in common, which is what they call *uniting together*.* Two of them, under the name of commissioners, treated alone with the sellers, and charged themselves with that painful and unpleasing execution of the article, the dividing of the wool, in proportion as a divisible quantity came to hand. The advantage of the *union* was, that of presenting only one buyer to the venders, and consequently of not raising the price by agreement. But it had this defect, that every commercial house, receiving an equal part, was often obliged to buy without having any occasion, or to buy not enough for its wants. This was a defect which ought to have been corrected, but a remediless abuse (because it proceeded from that avarice so incidental to merchants, and which will never be extinguished) was, that some members of the society united together and made use of a foreign name to thwart the operations of the company, and to make clandestine purchases. For one or both of these reasons, or perhaps also from that fickleness or spirit of contradiction inherent in the pride of man in every state of life, the *French nation*† was, in 1789, divided in opi-

* *Se liguer.*

† They call, in the ports of the Levant, the *French nation* the body of French merchants.

nion

nion on this subject. Out of seven establishments, of which it consisted, four voted for the union and three against it. As it was impossible to find in these votes the majority of three-fourths required by the Ordonnance, the ministry was consulted. The answer was such as those who opposed the union wished; their reasons prevailed, and freedom was established; but experience has proved, by a diminution of the demands, that the union was the most advantageous to the purchase of wool. The exportation to Marseilles amounted that same year only to five or six hundred bales, and only to one thousand eight hundred in 1790; and, if it was more considerable in 1791, it was on account of the sudden influx of capital into the manufactures. It has decreased since every year. The war is doubtless the principal cause of this diminution; but the mode newly adopted, in making purchases, has not a little contributed to it. A company or confederacy presents the only means of combating, by an union wisely combined, the competition of strangers, the pretensions of sellers, and the tyranny of the Beylikgi; and experienced merchants should concur in concerting this.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Athens, 1 Germinal, year 5.*

The BEES and HONEY of MOUNT HYMETTUS.

HONEY and oil constitute the two principal articles of the Athenian exports. The modes followed in the culture of the olive and bees have here few processes that are unknown to us; but, as these processes are more simple than ours, and as they approach nearer to the ancient times, I thought that you would be well pleased to have some idea of them.

Attica is a country well adapted to the rearing of bees. Thyme, sweet marjoram, and wild or creeping thyme, cover all its hills, and its valleys are strewed with sage, broom, and rosemary; but you know that these aromatic plants afford the bees a sustenance both plentiful and delicious.

But you may not, perhaps, know that the Athenians have bee-hives which are peculiar to them. The substance of which these hives are made is burnt earth; their form is cylindrical;

* March 21, 1797.

they are three feet high, one foot in diameter, and have a moveable cover. The outward part and the bottom of the internal part are laid over with a varnish; the upper part is never varnished, because the bees would have great difficulty to erect their honeycombs there.

The hives are exposed as much to the east and west as is possible. The exposing of them to the north is pernicious to the bees in winter, on account of the violence of the winds that descend from Mount Parnes; and the exposing of them to the south is not less pernicious in summer, on account of the intense heats. In certain months, as Messidor and Thermidor,* it becomes necessary to cover the hives with leaves, in order to protect them from the power of the sun.

In Attica the people are unacquainted with repositories for the hives, which are dispersed through the country. The only precaution they take is to place the backs of them against a hedge or a wall, or to shelter them under an arbour. They place them indifferently on a hill or in a valley; but good breeders usually seek them a shelter under a rising ground.

The most quiet and least populous places, such as the environs of monasteries, are those in which the bees assemble most. These insects delight in a warm climate, as this is, in solitary

* From June 19 to August 18.

places, and shady valleys. I have seen numberless swarms placed in trunks of old trees in the midst of the firs of Parnassus. They delight also in the vicinity of heaths and waters. The Greeks take care to dig, near springs, small ponds, which serve them for watering-places; they throw there pieces of wood or light stones, in order that the bees may alight there, without running the risk of drowning.

These insects are multiplied by a very simple method. The peasants take an empty hive, which they stock with some honeycombs, and rub over with some green balm-leaves; and, while the bees of an old hive are out, the new one is substituted in the place of the old one. Deceived by the similitude, the bees, on their return from the fields, enter the strange habitation destined for them; and, by means of this mistake, two bee-hives are obtained instead of one.

This method of forming swarms, by the mere displacing of the hives, is one of those of M. de Schirach. Our agricultural lawgivers have thought that it must come to us from the extremity of Lusace: it comes to us very evidently from Mount Hymettus; and the modern Greeks have received it from the ancients, as may be inferred from many passages of Pliny and Columella.

But

But it sometimes happens, that a young swarm escapes, unless there are some hopes that it will enter, of its own accord, into the new hive destined for its reception. In order to collect the bees there, a broom is made use of, with which the bees are made to pass over a branch of sage or some other light plant. This branch is afterwards put into a linen bag, which is opened by means of a sheath affixed to the mouth of it. When a swarm is placed in a bad situation, and is difficult to get off, the branch, on which it is wished to settle, is rubbed with a little honey or balm, with a view to allure the bees, or else they are obliged to quit their situation by the smoke of straw, which is burned beneath them.

In order to people and fortify the hives well, the swarms that are weak and small in number are joined together. This union is advantageous. Experience teaches, that a hive composed of four thousand bees produces six pounds of honey, and that it yields twenty-four pounds of honey when it consists of eight thousand bees. In other words, a hive, which has a double number of bees, produces four times as much honey.

In Greece the bees swarm two, three, and even four, times in a year, on account of the beauty and mild temperature of the climate; but only the first swarms succeed; the others

perish

perish often by sudden colds or from want of sustenance. Thus the latter or autumnal swarms are sold at a much less price than the spring swarms. A swarm sold before Messidor* is worth from three to four piasters; those that come in Fructidor† are not worth two, and very often meet with no purchaser at all.

The hives are cut in Floréal,‡ and Vendemiaire,§ and sometimes also in Fructidor,‖ when the summer is rainy. In order to cut them, the combs of the two extremities are raised up, while those of the middle are left. The rule is, to leave four honeycombs, and to gather all the rest. These four combs suffice the bees for their winter-provision, on account of the shortness of its duration; but care must be taken, in performing the cutting, not to drop any honey on the combs that remain, as the bees might entangle themselves there and die. This inconvenience is, however, provided for, by throwing into the hive some dry fern, which is taken away when the bees have drawn the honey out of it.

* From July 19 to August 18.

† From August 18 to September 17.

‡ From April 20 to May 20.

§ From September 22 to October 22.

‖ From August 18 to September 18.

The

The pernicious, I will even call it cruel, method of killing the swarms, in order to get a *crop* of the hives, is a barbarous custom, which has come to us from the northern nations, and which was never known in Greece, although some travellers have asserted that it was. It was introduced into Italy by the Goths, and requires at least a penal law of a Grand Duke to abolish it in Tuscany.

As the bees often die in winter for want of provisions, those who rear them follow, in some districts of Greece, and particularly at Damala, which is the ancient Trezæne, the mode observed in Mesopotamia, of carrying the hives into dark recesses, and which are far distant from all noise. There, the insects, in the midst of a gloomy tranquillity, suffer themselves to be benumbed by the cold, and plunge themselves into a state of torpitude, which delivers them from hunger, and which suspends all their wants. In this state they consume very little food, and in the spring find themselves provided with provisions sufficient for them to commence their first laying of eggs, and to support their first swarms.

The mode of extracting the honey from the combs pursued here has nothing interesting in it. The sole circumstance to be remarked is, that those who rear bees do not, as we do, make use of presses. The same hand that

breaks

breaks the honeycomb compresses them, and the same vessel receives indiscriminately all the honey. Some amateurs alone have pursued a different method; but they are very few, and are secluded in cloisters. I have seen some *Caloyers*, of Pentelichi, who pick the combs, reserve the finest, and receive the *virgin* honey in particular vessels. I have tasted this honey, and it is most exquisite.

In general the honey of Attica, and that of Mount Hymettus in particular, have preserved their ancient reputation, and they merit it. The honey of Mahon and Narbonne, which is the best we know of, cannot be compared to them either for perfume or sweetness. Notwithstanding it is red, the Athenian honey is of the finest transparency: what distinguishes it from our honeys is, that it is *thick*, without being either clotted or congealed.

But the Athenian wax is not so good as ours, and it is much less purified, because no care is taken to disengage it, when at the bottom of the copper, from all the heterogeneous substances that are mixed with it.

The four principal convents of Hymettus may support three thousand bee-hives. The grand convent of Pentelichi alone rears twelve hundred of them. These convents have *métokis*, or farms, which are cultivated by their monks. I compute the number of hives, raised in these métokis,

métokis, at two thousand, which amounts, in the whole, to six thousand two hundred. The peasants of Attica can rear as many: we may therefore calculate that Attica rears twelve thousand hives. Each hive produces, at an annual medium, thirty pounds of honey and two pounds of wax. The produce of Attica may therefore be estimated at three hundred and sixty thousand pounds of honey, and at twenty-four thousand pounds of wax. This estimation is conformable to that of the merchants, who compute the quantity of honey gathered to be, in prosperous years, three thousand Turkish *cantaars*, and that of wax to be two hundred *cantaars*.* The cantaar is equivalent to forty-four okes, and the oke is forty ounces, which gives nearly the same result.

The honey is sold from eight to ten paras the pound, and the wax at a piaster, which therefore produces to Attica one hundred and fourteen thousand piasters.† Athens consumes three hundred and fifty cantaars of honey, and twenty cantaars of wax, that is to say, a little more than one-tenth of its produce: we must therefore deduct, from the sum mentioned, nearly from eleven to twelve thousand piasters.‡ There

* See the Table of Weights, &c. annexed.

† About £22,800. ‡ About £2400.

remain then one hundred thousand piasters* which must be thrown into the balance of exportations.

Attica imports, at an annual medium, one-fourth part of the corn it consumes; and I have computed that the exportation of its honey alone would cover that importation. The Athenian honey, it is well known, bears so high a value, that it constitutes, on that account, an article of luxury in the commerce of Greece. This article is exported almost wholly to Constantinople, where it is consumed in the imperial palace, and in the seraglios of the great. Of all the European cities, London and Marseilles are the only ones that receive some trifling quantities, which the merchants of those two places distribute, by way of presents, to their friends.

This branch of rural economy is, as we see, very profitable to the small country of Attica, whose population is only twenty thousand souls, and whose surface consists of ninety square leagues, of a soil extremely unequal, and consequently little adapted to the cultivation of corn. The rearing of bees has therefore been always encouraged. Under the reigns of the Palæologi, there was a regulation which granted a premium to every Greek peasant who should raise a hive; and Joseph II. who has,

* About £20,000.

in

in our days, renewed this regulation in his hereditary estates, took it from the old Italian codes, which borrowed it from the regulations of the lower empire. The German emperor has only added a new arrangement to it; and that is, that the bounty should be paid only in the spring, a period when no one who rears bees can derive any profit from killing them, in order to procure their honey.

In Greece, the rearing of bees has retained its privileges to this day; and, by a regulation of Suleyman II. which is in force in many provinces of the Othoman empire, and especially in Attica, bee-hives cannot be confiscated for the payment of duties any more than implements of agriculture are in other countries. This regulation is wise, if it be true that, among us, the decrease of bees proceeds from excessive taxes, for the payment of which the hives are taken away from those that rear them.

If we compare in Attica the cultivation of fruit-trees and that of corn together, we shall find, that an arpent of land,* sown with corn, produces one hundred piasters;† and that it yields from one hundred and sixty to one hundred and eighty piastres‡ when it is planted

* An arpent contains 100 square poles or perches.

† Nearly equivalent to £20. ‡ About £34 or £35.

with fruit-trees and sown with flowers that suit the palate of the bees. The culture of orchards and of bees, it is true, requires every day renewed attention; but that cultivation furnishes the husbandmen with fruits,* which save them other consumptions, and which support their children during one part of the year. Whence it follows, that the rearing of bees and fruit-trees is of more real profit than all the other productions of Attica, except that of the olive.

* The Athenians have a taste similar to their soil. They are very fond of fruits and of little meat. In this respect their tables resemble those of the inhabitants of Provence; they are poor in dishes, but rich in deserts.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Athens, 10 Germinal, year 5.*

The OLIVES and OIL of ATTICA.

THE olive is supposed to have come originally from Saïs in Egypt; but if it is not indigenous in Greece, it was introduced there in the most ancient times. It appears to have been imported there by Cecrops. That Egyptian paid honour to the gods for his own profit. He gave out, that Minerva and Neptune pretended both to give a name to the new city that had been erected, and that the goddess, to merit that honour, had caused, with her lance, an olive-tree to spring out of the earth, in full blossom, while the god caused a horse to arise, by a blow of his trident. This fable, which has been traced back to all the Athenian monuments, both on marble and brass, proves that the tree of Minerva is also, from its excellence, the tree of Attica.

The culture of the olive has, therefore, been always a favourite employment of the Athenians. Under Cecrops and his successors, there

* March 29, 1797.

was a premium granted to the planters of it ;* and, during the whole continuance of the republic, it was prohibited, under great penalties, to cut down an olive-tree in another man's field ; and no person was allowed to pluck up more than two out of his own field, unless it was for some purpose authorized by the gods. It was under favour of these laws, that the hills of Attica were covered with olive-trees, shoots of which are still subsisting. They form, towards the declivities of the hills, vast *curtains* of a pale green, which create an agreeable contrast with the deep green of the meadows and the black grey of the rocks.

There are in Attica two species of olive-trees ; the wild and the domestic. The wild olive grows on the mountains, as the pine and holm trees do : the domestic olive is cultivated in the vicinity of villages, as the fig and the pomgranate trees are. The former, being cast among wild plants, which deprive it of its sustenance, is small in its stature ; it presents irregular thickets, and the wild appearance of a bush. The other, brought up in the neighbourhood of man, and caressed by his hands, offers a round and regular appearance : it does not,

* It was a drachma for every plant ; about fifteen sous. A sou is equivalent to a halfpenny English.

however,

however, differ materially enough from the wild olive to create a *botanic species*, it forms only a *variety*. The wild olive is the type, the primitive species : it is the work of nature ; whereas the domestic olive is the produce of art.

Art enlarges and multiplies the fruit, but it does not ameliorate the quality. The oil of the wild olive, on the contrary, looks better, and is much more light, more sweet, and more odoriferous. The perfection of that substance consisting in its perfect homogeneity, the culture, which introduces into the olive heterogeneous particles, alters the substance of the fruit, far from ameliorating it, as the substance of other fruits is. The cultivation of it offers always, however, this advantage, that one domestic olive-tree yields more than ten wild ones.

The wild olive is multiplied by seeds ; the domestic, or tame olive, by plants and slips.

In Greece the use of nurseries is unknown. When a person wishes to plant an olive, he goes into an uncultivated field, in quest of a young shoot, or else he contents himself with replanting an old trunk. The old trunks seem to grow young again in a new soil, and they yield fruit after the sixteenth year ; whereas young plants yield only after the twelfth. The new plants are laid out by square at equal distances. Those olive-trees, that are planted in

the form of a quincunx, should be separated five toises from each other. Those which are planted in borders, may be placed at less distances, but they must not be planted too near; they could not extend their branches laterally, and they would rise like a pyramid. This direction is the reason why, when the sap rises to the top, the olive-tree produces less fruit in its circumference, and why the fruit, that is produced on the uppermost branches, fall before they attain to maturity, because they are blown about by the winds. It then becomes necessary to lop the tree, in order to *lower it*; and this cruel mutilation, by weakening its strength, throws it into a marasmus.

The olive-tree succeeds in every soil; but it requires a mild temperature and a favourable shelter. In all countries where it freezes, it is the situation that has the most powerful influence on the existence and duration of the tree. The olive-tree, were it not for the severity of the cold, would perhaps be immortal; and the tale of Pausanias, who would have us believe that the plant, that sprung out of the earth in flower at the voice of Minerva, was still existing in his time, behind the Parthenon, was only ridiculous, without being improbable. In the time of Pliny, there were seen, at Linternum, the olive-trees planted by the first of the Scipios; and

and the finest olive-trees, still subsisting in Palestine, are dated at the times of the crusades.

In the north of Greece, the olive must be planted on the hills, because the inclination of the soil, by increasing the rays of the sun, augments the heat; but, in the mild climate of Attica, the olive-tree rises with more majesty in the valleys, where it is nourished by the vegetable soils, that are detached from the neighbouring mountains. I have seen, in the plains of Marathon, olive-trees, which, for verdure and height, were comparable to the finest walnut-trees. But these noble trees were less productive than those which were planted in light soils, on the declivity of the Icarius or of the Hymettus; which is a proof that the olive does not so much delight in an abundant nourishment, and that it prefers, to a rich soil, a fine shelter, a free air, and a noble situation.

The olive undergoes only two operations in the course of the year; one with the plough, and the other with the hoe; the former in winter, and the latter in spring. There are some Athenian peasants, who only plough them, unless they wish to sow their orchards with spring grass.

In winter they heap earth round the trunk, in order to keep the olive-tree warm; and they make it cool in summer, by digging a cavity round

round the same trunk, through which they turn water, by means of a trench. The practice of irrigating the olive-tree prevails wherever a canal can be levelled, but that of manuring, which would so well agree with that of irrigating them, is universally neglected. The olive-trees are never manured in Attica, unless some flocks of sheep should fortunately arrive by chance in the fields where they are planted. These trees are then remarkable for the vigour of their shoots and for the luxuriance of their branches.

The inhabitants of the Morea and the other Greeks prune the olive, and never cut it; but the Athenians both cut and prune it, as the inhabitants of Provence do. A circumstance that gives me reason to suspect that they have borrowed that practice of us is, that it is peculiar to them. However that be, lopping is not of less utility to the tree than pruning it is. By pruning, all the dead and stunted wood is taken away; and, by lopping, all the superfluous wood. A sickly tree is pruned, and one that is too luxuriant is lopped. The operation of pruning may be performed at any time, without inconvenience; but that of lopping can only take place when the winter is past, towards the vernal equinox. In winter, lopping renders the olive too sensible of the impression of the cold, and it would be much more dangerous in spring, when the flowers just appear: if at that time you

you pass the pruning-knife across the tree, you interrupt nature in her operations.

Those olive-trees that are irrigated may be lopped with much more severity, because water is favorable to their vegetation; but those that are planted in dry soils should be treated with extreme attention.

Lopping gives to the olive-tree a thousand various forms. Here it is cut in the form of a straight cone, turned upside down, into a pyramid, a thicket, a ball, or a fan. There it is cut internally, in order to expose its branches the better to the power of the sun. Almost every where it is mutilated without principle, without rule, at the pleasure of every fancy and every taste. But the tree insensibly retains its pristine form, and all these capricious mutilations, which it undergoes, prove to man, that, in this, as in all other respects, nature always terminates in the triumph of her efforts.

The spherical form appears to be always the best that can be given to the olive-tree, because it is the most natural. This form also preserves the trunk better from the intemperature of the air, and give the branches more room to spread themselves out.

The Athenians, although they borrowed the practice from the inhabitants of the west, have never been very lavish of it; nor do they seem to me to be much inclined to give credit to that oracle,

oracle, which the inhabitants of Provence have, and which addresses the olive-tree thus: "*Make "me poor in wood, and I will make you rich in "oil.*"

The olive-tree varies in proportion to the lopping it undergoes. But this is not always the case, in the districts of the Morea; which appears to be a proof, that the olive is not naturally biennial, but that it becomes good by lopping and by art. It is the man, perpetually speculating, who, in certain countries, sacrifices a small produce one year, in order to have a greater the next year.

In severe winters the branches freeze, but it seldom happens that the trunk dies. It puts forth, in the following spring, new shoots. Leave none, if you wish it to become a fruitful one: you will then have only a trunk; and the olive-tree, that is upon one trunk, has a much more agreeable appearance, and is cultivated better; but you deprive yourself of one great advantage, and that is, that a trunk, which has many shoots, would serve you as a nursery for your new plantations.

Grafting is here little known, and is practised only on wild olive-trees or on young plants. The graft is placed on the straightest and smoothest branch; and, when it is knit, all the surrounding branches are cut down. The smallest branches

branches are engrafted by incision, and the largest between the bark and the tree.

The olive-tree yields fruit in Greece from the twelfth year, but it does not yield its utmost produce till the twentieth. The flower, or bud, appears in Germinal,* opens itself in Floréal,† and *knits* in Prairial.‡ The olive that appears in Messidor§ can be compared only to a pea, but it enlarges and unfolds itself during the two succeeding months; being at first of a green colour, it becomes successively of a citron, red, and purple colour. This is the last gradation in its colour, and announces its maturity, which takes place in Brumaire.‖ If it is not gathered in the autumn, it continues affixed to the tree during the whole winter, till the spring, when it falls.

Care must be taken not to gather the fruit when it is mellow; for, a late gathering is, together with lopping, the true cause of alternate, or periodical, gatherings. While the olive hangs on the tree, the sap, or juice employed in nourishing the fruit, is refused to the trunk, which does not shoot forth any branches; but it is on these new branches that the olives come.

The olive-tree is beaten with rods, or switches, here, in the same manner as the walnut-tree is.

* March. † April. ‡ May.
§ June. ‖ October.

This

This practice is pernicious, inasmuch as beating them damages the branches, kills the olive, and causes the pulp to become mouldy, by tearing off the rind. But it is not the cause of alternate, or periodical, gatherings, as Pliny and Varro have thought; for, the olives vary at Aix, and the olives are all gathered there.

The olive-tree in Attica is scarcely subject to any disorder, if you except a thick fog, which sometimes rises from the Archipelago in Floréal,* and diffuses itself over the trees as a dew. This foggy dew penetrates every where, and infects the very roots and sap; the leaves grow yellow, and the flowers fall, and those that knit, yield a diminutive, wrinkled, small, and gray, olive. This is mentioned by Theophrastus, which proves it to be ancient.

Among the insects, the greatest enemy of the olive-tree is the *kermès*, which attaches itself to the trees, but never to the fruit. It does not injure the tree, as some have thought, by drawing up the sap, by attraction, for its support, but by sucking it, in order to give it room to extravasate. This artificial transpiration is not perceptible during the day, because it is absorbed by the heat of the atmosphere, but it is so profuse during the summer nights, that all the leaves of the tree are wetted with it. The

* April.

olive-

olive-trees infested by the kermès appear vigorous at a distance, because those insects give to the branches a blackish colour, that seems to belong to the green foliage and to its beauty; but this is only a mark, which disappears when the olive-tree is closely inspected. The tree, when in this state, seems itself to shew its disorder by the appearance of its branches, which incline towards the earth, in a similar manner to those of a weeping willow.

The branches of the olive-tree, when in health, are more straight, and its foliage is less speckled. That tree has an agreeable appearance, a charming verdure, and a foliage of pale green, which gives a soft rest to the sight. It is not absolutely beautiful, but it is always green; and its leaves seem to be eternal, because they renew themselves imperceptibly.

There is an infinite variety in the olives of Greece. I will mention three of them, to which all the rest may be referred; and, to give you a better idea of them, I will select, from among the olives most known, the terms of comparison.

The three principal varieties are the *cotreïkes*, or *colymbades*, the *raphas*, and the *coroneïdes*. The colymbades are spheroïds, the great axis of which, in olives of a middle size, may be about six lines, and the smaller axis from seven

to

to eight. The raphas are the smallest, and the coroneïdes hold a medium between both.

The colymbades* are the variety that is most pulpous. Their delicacy corresponds with their size. They are all pickled, and set apart for the tables of the great. They are, perhaps, the *pausians* of Pliny, and they resemble the *royal olive*, and the large Luccese, or great species of Lucca.

The raphas† are firm in flesh, and are related, by their round form, to the *cominians* of Rome, to the *razzi* of Tuscany, to the *nimoises* or *mourettes* of Nimes, and to the *vençoises* or *cayounes* of Vence. They may be, for their diminutive size, compared to capers; but they yield a fine oil, although it be not plentiful.

The coroneïdes, which are the variety between both,‡ have many olives like them. These are found among the *licinian* of Varro, the *néricie* of Calabria, the *tagliasco* of Genoa; and, among the olives of Provence, they may be compared to the *salonaise* or *moureau* of Salon, and to the *callasian* or *ribiès* of Callas. The coroneïde is the most productive va-

* *Olea major, oblonga, carne crassâ et pulposiore.*

† *Ole minor, sub-rotunda, rubro-nigricans.*

‡ *Olea media, oblonga, atro-rubens.*

riety,

riety, and that which contains the most oily substance. The tree that yields it prospers on the first ascents of the highest mountains; it delights, in Attica, on the hills of Pentélichi, as the ribiès delights, in Provence, in the sub-Alpine hills that surround Callas. The coroneïdes are gathered intermissively; regularly, when the tree is young, but irregularly when it is old. The plant is very lively, and ought to be lopped very severely, if we would not wish the sap to circulate through the branches too freely, and thus suffocate the flowers.

The Athenians excel in the art of pickling olives. The olive has a bitter taste, which they extract from it with salt, dissolved in water: this is what they call the *brine*. They throw here into the brine, fennel, cummin, and coriander seeds; mint and other odoriferous leaves; and sometimes also rose-wood, when they wish to give the olives a sweet perfume.

But they are unacquainted with that celebrated preparation, that constitutes the principal merit of the olives of Marseilles, and which consists in steeping these olives in common lye-water, or quick-lime is thrown in, in order to render the water more caustic, and the better to unite together all the substantial parts of the fruit without altering them. This is what is called the preparation *à la picholine*. The olives, by this preparation, become dainties

when, by a spiral incision made in them, the stone has been dexterously taken out, and a piece of anchovy or caper substituted in its place.

The culture of the olive is one of those that is best adapted to Attica. An arpent of land, planted with olive-trees, yields a produce of one-third more than one that is cultivated differently, as may be proved by the following analysis.

Supposing the distance from the trunk of one tree to another to be five toises,* and the arpent to be nine hundred square toises,† an arpent could support one hundred and eighty olive-trees. I know that every spot is never exactly filled, and indeed that they cannot be, on account of the inequality of the soil. But let us reduce the loss to one-third, we should then have, for one arpent, one hundred and twenty olive-trees. One olive-tree, that is tolerably fruitful, produces, in prosperous years, a measure of olives, which yields twenty pounds of oil. But, as the gathering of the olives is accidental, we must reduce the annual and mean produce to ten pounds. The arpent will then produce twelve hundred pounds of oil. The oil is sold from six to eight paras the pound, which, at the present rate of exchange, is nearly

* Thirty feet, or three fathoms. † 5400 feet.

equivalent to five sous.* We may therefore estimate the gross produce of an arpent of land, planted with olive-trees, at three hundred francs.† An arpent of the best land, if sown with corn, produces from fifteen to twenty quintals of wheat, which is scarcely worth two hundred francs,‡ at the current price of the country. It is to be observed, however, that the culture of the olive is not more expensive than that of wheat.

I have transformed the olive-yard into a vineyard, and I have not obtained a greater produce. But since even I have supposed the vine-dresser and the olive-planter to be upon a par, the one will still preserve this advantage over the other, that wine cannot be kept for any length of time without spoiling, whereas the oil does not waste perceptibly.

The culture of the olive does not only suit the soil of Attica, but also the political situation of the country. If you abandon a vineyard for any length of time, you may rest assured of its being lost; but an olive-yard, if neglected, suffers less loss, and recovers it more easily; but it is here an inestimable advantage to the Greek peasants, who, being often obliged to save themselves by flight from the vengeance

* About 2½*d.* sterling. † Nearly equal to £105 sterling. ‡ £70.

or caprice of a Turk, can return to their fields, after having appeased their tormentors, and still find there the means of supporting a wretched family.

The olive, like all other agricultural productions, pays the territorial impost, which is one-tenth. Sultan Selim III. wished to lay an additional para on every foot of the olive-yard; but I have seen Greek peasants who would rather cut down the tree than pay the tax. The Athenian peasant is oppressed in so many ways, his property is so precarious, that I have seen some wretched husbandmen sell their olive-trees at two piasters a piece, that is to say, at a less price than the annual produce would yield.

As soon as the gathering is finished, the olives ought to be taken to the mill; but the peasants here have the same prejudices as they had at Rome in the time of Cato; they think plainly, that the olives yield more oil when they are suffered to be squeezed on a floor; which is as possible, Cato would say, as that corn should grow on a threshing-floor. What has always procured this error to be credited is, that the olive, when squeezed, loses its watery substance, and diminishes in size; but, though it be thus diminished, it is in reality more productive than when it is fresh. But, when we consider that a measure of new or fresh olives is, by being *squeezed*, reduced to one-half, we shall

shall perceive that the profit of the Athenian peasant is apparent only, while his loss is real; because olives, when heaped up together on a floor, ferment, and the oil evaporates in that fermentation. The best oil is extracted from the green olive: this is the *summer-oil* so celebrated among the ancients: but the olive, when green, is by no means productive, and the husbandman must necessarily indemnify himself for the quantity by the quality. In general the more mellow an olive is, the thicker the oil is, and the less agreeable it is to eat; whereas, the more fresh and green the olive, the more delicate is the oil, and it has more of the flavour of the fruit, a flavour in the greatest request among amateurs.

The modern Athenians appear to have retained the simple practice of the ancients in their mode of extracting the oil from the olives. It is known to have been Aristæus, one of their ancestors, who invented mill-stones to grind the olives, and presses to extract the oil from them. It may be said, indeed, that the form of these ancient mills has been but little varied. Those still to be seen in the environs of Athens are sorry edifices not more than fifteen feet high; they are *covered with thatch* and *paved with marble*, a contrast which often strikes us in this country. Their whole mechanism consists of a bason and a press. The bason is hollowed cir-

cularly, and resembles a sea-shell. In the midst of the shell rises a marble mill-stone,* fixed, by masonry-work, to a pillar of wood, which serves at the same time for its axle-tree and to move it. The mill-stone turns vertically on the axle-tree or on its centre, and, as it goes round, it crushes to pieces the olives that are within the reach of its power. A wheel, which is more or less large, according to the size of the mill-stone, turns it; and, in those districts where there is no rivulet or water, the wheel is turned by men or horses; but, in every village where there is a spring or rivulet, they make use, to turn the wheel, of a running water, the fall of which is managed mechanically.

When the olive is crushed to pieces, and reduced into a pulp, it is carried in circular *cabas*† from the bason to the presses. These presses resemble our own in every respect, except that the *mounting-stones* are of wood. These cabas, or rush baskets, are piled up together, and the vice or spindle of the press descends upon them by means of a lever, which is more or less long. Four men are employed in the operation of pressing; and they perform,

* The *tambours* of the columns of the *Parthenon* are usually employed for this purpose.

† These cabas are baskets made of that species of rush called *typha phalustris*.

with

with difficulty, by the strength of their arms, what one man might do, without any extraordinary exertions, with a simple wheel.

The oil that is obtained by the mere effect of pressing is the most limpid and pure; this is the *virgin oil*. The common oil is that which is procured from the pulp, when it is expressed by water. The water gives the oil a slight degree of adulteration; and, when we wish to preserve it in all its purity, we ought never to put virgin oil in the same vessel with the common oil.

The water that is made use of, to separate the oleaginous particles from the pulp, ought to be boiling. It is then drawn out of a copper, which is heated by a continual fire; and, in order afterwards to separate the oil from the water, those two liquids, being mixed together, are poured into a tub, to the top of which the oil rises, on account of the smallness of its specific gravity. Great care must be taken, lest the oil should be blended in the press or in the tub with any extraneous substances, and, for this purpose, the engines should be kept with the utmost cleanliness.

The Greeks are utterly unacquainted with heavy or loaden presses, in which we have substituted stone for timber-work, and in which the cabas undergo the greatest pressure beneath an immovable arch. Nor are they acquainted

with mills which have *two axletrees*; and, if the Athenian mode represents that of the ancients, those learned men, who have thought that they perceived in the antique mill of *Stabia*, or in the description of Columella and of Cato, an art superior to our own, could most certainly have no idea of the mills of Provence.

The practice of stirring and of saturating the husks of the olives, in order to *prove* it again, that is, to extract what remains of the oil by washing them, is equally unknown to, or is neglected by, the Greeks.

Upon the whole, the Greek mills appear to me to be very imperfect. I have calculated that there must be at least one-twelfth part of the oil remaining in the husk, and that the cost of making it must be one-third more than ours, and almost double that of the Genoese mode, which is the most economical of any that I know.

When the oils come from the press, they are deposited in urns of burnt earth, which are ranged in long rows in arched vaults constructed beneath the houses. These are what are called *piles*. These piles are deposited in cool places, because the heat of the atmosphere causes the oil to ferment, and the most subtle particles evaporate in the fermentation. The urns are therefore carefully closed up, and at the bottom of each of them is a piece of sponge

sponge which has the virtue of attracting the most thick and watery particles of the oil.

The oil of Attica is the best in Greece; it is also that which is made with the greatest care. One part of that oil passes to Constantinople, to Salonichi, and to Smyrna, where it is consumed in the seraglios. The other part is sent to Marseilles, whence, after being mixed with the oil of Provence, it is exported to the Antilles to be served at the tables of the planters. The other oils of Greece are made use of in the soap-manufactories.

Oil is sold in small measures of twelve pounds. Attica produces annually two hundred thousand Athenian measures, the mean price of one of which is two piasters. There are consumed in Attica thirty thousand measures of oil for the table, and twenty thousand for the manufactories; in all, fifty thousand measures. There are, therefore, exported one hundred and fifty thousand measures, which produce three hundred thousand piasters, or five hundred thousand francs at the present course of exchange.* This is the greatest sum that enters into the account of the Athenian exports.

This branch of commerce is in the hands of a Paduan doctor, who says, that he was originally of Normandy, and who is most certainly of the

* Nearly equivalent to £60,000.

family

family of *Turcaret*. I was pleased with the doctor, because he had rather be employed in getting money than in killing men; but I could not pardon him in my capacity of consul, because he monopolized this trade, and because he injured a true and honest Frenchman, who traded in oils jointly with him.

The oil is exported in casks; and, as they are not made in Greece, the casks are brought from Marseilles, which puts the merchant to a considerable freight, because the vessel that brings the casks, being incumbered with them, must necessarily come loaded with ballast. The oil is laden here in all seasons; but, as it never congeals, on account of the mild temperature of the climate, the casks must be cemented to prevent their leaking.

Merchants ought never to buy oil on promise, as they sometimes do; for, the modern Athenians, in regard to cheating, are as cunning as their forefathers were. I have known some to have adulterated their oil, by mixing it with a decoction of cucumbers, which unites easily with all the oleaginous substances: but this fraud is not sufficiently general to affix any guilt on the nation.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Corinth, 5 Floréal, year 5.*

The GRAPES of CORINTH.

THE Corinthian vine, *vitis Corinthiaca*, or *apyrena*, which Wheeler has mentioned in his Travels to the Levant, is a shrub which rises to the height of from four to five feet. This vine is consequently lower than ours, but is thicker and more woody. It puts forth also more roots and more shoots; its leaves are still larger, more obtuse, less deeply cut, of a more delicate green at the top, and more pale at the bottom. The fruit which it yields, and which Linnæus has denominated the *small Corinthian grape*, *uva passa minima*, or *passula Corinthiaca*, has berries similar to those of the gooseberry or elder. At first it is green, then of a deep red, and, when it is ripe, it becomes of a dark purple colour; it is sweet to the taste, and, at the same time, as tart as the Muscadine grape when it is dry or too mellow; but, when it is fresh, it has an agreeable acidity. As it has fewer stones, and is more juicy than the com-

* April 24, 1797.

mon

mon grape, it is in great request among the amateurs, who eat it by bunches, and crush the stones between their teeth.

The first grapes of Corinth that appeared at Marseilles and the other great marts of Europe were brought there, towards the commencement of the last century, from the road of Corinth, and for that reason were called *Corinthian grapes*. They were cultivated at that time on all the hills, which, from the centre of the isthmus, sunk gradually towards the two seas, and which, out of all the ancient cultivations, have retained only those fine clusters of cypress, in the midst of which Diogenes was basking, in the finest sun that ever shone, when Alexander came to disturb him.

Is the Corinthian the common grape degenerated, or, if you please, ameliorated and brought to perfection by being cultivated, or does it constitute a distinct species? This is a circumstance which my endeavours have not yet permitted me to ascertain. What I know is, that this kind of fruit is not indigenous in the Morea. No writer before the seventeenth century has mentioned it; and it appears, from the researches which I have made, both in Greece and in the Ionian isles, that the Corinthian grape arrived from Naxia,* in the Morea,

* The ancient Naxos.

towards

towards the year 1580. There is no plant, it is true, to be found at this day in that island of the Archipelago; but it has also disappeared from the territory of Corinth, although it is very certain that it was cultivated in that place when in the possession of the Venetians.

It is cultivated in our days in the territories of Vostitza and of Patras. It succeeds on the whole coast of Achaia, and on some parts of the opposite coast of Œtolia, and Locris. It has disappeared on the shore of Elis, and it has succeeded on the opposite shore of Zante, and in the islands of Ithaca and Cephalonia.

The soil best adapted to the Corinthian grape is a dry, light, and flinty soil. It does not delight in a thick, moist, and close earth; whence it follows, that the elements, requisite to yield the best vineyards, are flints mixed with a sufficient quantity of clay.

The analysis I have made on different soils, and in various parts of the Morea, produces to me, on eight parts, five parts of flinty earth, two and a half of clay, and one half of calcareous earth.

Our vines delight in situations that turn to the south and to the east; they prefer the hills to the plains. The Corinthian vine, on the contrary, prefers the plains to the hills; and, although it delights, as ours does, in being sheltered

tered on the south, yet it prefers a westerly situation to every other.

It prefers the vicinity of the sea, and avoids mountains and wild prospects, and never could grow on Mount Cyllene; and, although the banks of the Alpheus are delightful, yet, as they run between high mountains which intercept the salt air of the sea, this is the reason assigned why the vineyards situated on the banks of that river languish. What renders this conjecture probable is, that they succeed better on the neighbouring plains of the ancient Elis.

The culture of the Corinthian grape is, however, confined to the territories of the Morea and the Ionian islands; but I think that it might be introduced with success into the other countries of the south of Europe. Of all those, through which I have passed, there is none, in my opinion, better adapted to the culture of it than the soils of Syracuse and Cadiz. There, the same temperature and the same climate as in the Morea; the same vicinity to the sea; the same soil, light, friable, and flinty; all, to the very prospects, to the agreement of and to the colours of nature, appear to be the same on those different coasts.

A country that might also be equally well calculated for the same culture would be, perhaps,

haps, Provence, or at least that part of the eastern division of that department which extends, as it were, gradually to the foot of the sub-Alpine mountains, and the prospect of which, beheld from the sea, presents the most magnificent amphitheatre in the whole world. That district of France enjoys the finest sky and the mildest temperature. It presents shelters every where and happy situations. The olive-tree, the fig-tree, and the pomegranate-tree, grow there, as in the Morea, by the side of the vine. The wines of *La Gaude*, which are gotten there, and which are so sweet, and those of *La Malgue*, which are so generous, resemble those of Argolis and Laconia, so celebrated among the ancients, and the *Cassis* is preferable to the *Malmsey*. When we pass successively through those two countries, we think that we have changed neither climate nor place. The same perfume of orange-trees embalms you at Nice as at Corinth: you meet again with the orchards of Sycione in those of Grasse; the gardens of Patras in those of Hières; and the vale of Tempé in that of Solliez.

The cultivation of the Corinthian vine has some processes in common with the culture of our vine, and it has others which are peculiar to itself. Re-peruse Columella, and you will find that these processes, after the lapse of two thousand years, still resemble those of the ancients.

When

When a person wishes to lay out a spot of ground for a *Corinthian* vineyard, he prepares in Autumn the soil destined for that plantation. He must first break it up, then dig it up with a mattock, in order to root out ill weeds, and, lastly, level and smooth it.

He is next employed in the choice of plants or *slips*, which are called *maglioli* here. The slips are both cut and planted in Nivôse.* They are usually taken during the time of cutting from the finest vines and from the vineyard of some neighbouring district; for, those that are taken from the adjoining vines never succeed.

Those vines, which have the fewest leaves in autumn, yield the best plants, because those plants shoot forward most rapidly in the spring. The inhabitants of the Morea say, to express the property of those plants, that they are *too ripe*. The epidermis, or outward skin, ought to be somewhat black, and to emit a liquid when they are cut. If they are dry and of a faded green, they are thrown aside.

The Corinthian vine may be planted in autumn and in winter, but it is usually planted in this latter season: it is moreover requisite that a dry season should be selected for the planting of it. When it is rainy, the plants that have been

* December.

procured

procured are laid up; and, for that purpose, they are put together in bundles, and buried in the earth, care being taken to water them, lest they should die.

When the time of planting them arrives, there are dug, in parallel lines, along a cord, which regulates the laying out, and the length of the line, trenches, which, being four feet and a half in depth, and one foot and a half in breadth, ought to be six feet in length. Between each trench and line there is a distance of six feet, so that, when the shoots first appear, the plantation resembles a superb chess-board, in which the green, proceeding from the young plants, rising uniformly among the lines that intersect each other at right angles, forms a most agreeable prospect.

The slips ought to be dry when they are planted. Four of them are put in each trench, and are ranged at the two extremities two and two, the *head* and *tail* corresponding together at equal distances, or forming together angles more or less acute, according to the nature of the soil or the degree of curvature given to the slip. By the *head*, the inhabitants of the Morea understand the foot of the plant, and by the *tail* the smallest end. This end ought to be long enough to come out of the trench with two eyes at least and three at most. The slips which are of the preceding year's growth are

the best, but those also are made use of which are of that year's growth. Among us, we call these *hens* and the others *capons*.

When there is reason to apprehend that any plant has not succeeded, three are put, instead of two, at the extremity of the trench; but, in this case, care must be taken to cut the third when the two others have shot forth. With this attention, we may be certain that there will be no vacant spots, and that the lines will be well stocked.

The trenches are then filled up with the earth that had been taken away; and, when the whole of the vineyard-plot is thus filled up and planted, it is levelled, then dug very deeply with a mattock, and the earth is divided, in order that it may thoroughly imbibe all the vapours of the atmosphere. The vapour exhaled from the fig and the pomegranate tree is, it is said, favourable to the Corinthian vine, and that is the reason why it delights in the vicinity of those trees.

The practice of planting the vine by *slips* is most generally followed in the Morea, but that of planting it by layers is utterly unknown. A fine slip of an old stock is selected, which, lest it should be broken, is deposited gently in a hole, fifteen inches deep, care being taken that the end, which is not buried in the earth, appears with one eye. When the slip has taken root,

root, it is separated from the stock. It is thus that I have seen, in Provence, old vine-stocks cut into layers, and set in the ground, to fill up the void spaces in the *filagnes*. In the same manner, in many other provinces of France, are treated the muscadine, the chasselas, and other valuable grapes.

The practice of *provining*, which consists in interring an old vine-stock with its finest shoots, in order that it may grow young again in the bosom of the earth, is not known, and will never be adopted.

As soon as a field is laid out into a vineyard-plot, the plough enters it no more: all the operations are performed with the hoe.*

The first and most necessary operation is performed in Pluviôse.† The roots of the Corinthian vine delight in spreading over a friable soil, and which easily gives way; but this friability is owing to those salutary operations performed in Pluviôse, which separate the surrounding earth, and which procure also a free filtration to the rain-water, which the stock absorbs eagerly, and which cannot penetrate to its roots, when the earth has been much hardened by the winter frosts.

* The Greeks are unacquainted with the use of the spade: the hoe is made use of for every operation.

† From January 20 to February 19.

The other operations are performed in spring and autumn, and must be repeated, if a young shoot is wished to shoot forth vigorously. The second operation is usually performed before the vine is in flower, and the third when the *verjus** is formed, and which is nearly of a red colour.

The vineyards, that are planted with Corinthian grapes, demand, in their youth, extreme attention.

When the plant puts forth, in the first year, young shoots, they must be wholly cut off, because they would only exhaust the stalk, which requires then to be strengthened.

Only one should be left the second year, in order that that shoot may receive its full growth.

The third year the operation of lopping commences, which is absolutely necessary, in order that the vine may not shoot forth too much wood, and that it may not give to the branches the sap or juice destined for the fruits. The operation of lopping must be performed only on the finest shoots, and the others must be cut off.

During the first year of lopping, only one single eye is left. The following years it is

* This is another French word, which I have been under the necessity of adopting, from the inadequacy of our language to give a proper expression. It signifies a species of sour grapes unfit for wine.

lopped

lopped with more or less rigour, in proportion as the vine has more or less strength. To the strongest are left three eyes, and two to the others.

The time of lopping is the month of Pluviôse.* That operation is performed sooner or later, according to the situation and climate. The general rule is to perform it fifteen days after the vine has budded. A too early or too late lopping is attended with inconveniences: when it is performed too early, the vine is liable to freeze, and, when too late, the vine shoots forth before the wound is closed, and it then exhausts itself in tears.

In order to perform the operation of lopping well, two fingers breadth of wood must be left above the upper eye, and be done so that the notch may be on the side opposite that eye, lest the tears that proceed from that wound should injure it.

It is the fourth year in which the branches begin to be laden with fruit, which must be suppressed, lest it should exhaust the sap: they must also be suppressed during the two succeeding years. The stock, during that interval, receives all its growth, and only requires afterwards to be strengthened. The vine-dressers then begin to prune and underlay it.

* From January 20 to February 19.

They prune, or, as it is called, they nip off, the needless buds of the Corinthian vine, by cutting away the worst shoots. They then leave it a greater or less number, according to its vigour. If you leave it too many, the tree would exhaust itself in an unprofitable luxuriance; if you leave it too few, the stock would die from a superabundance of life. Three or four shoots are left to the finest and most vigorous vines, and two or three to the rest.

When the vine has shot forth, and has been nipped by the frost, hopes may be entertained that it will shoot forth after-buds. Particular care must be then taken not to touch the wood that is to bear these buds; but, when the vine appears to be entirely frozen, all the old and new wood should be cut off, without any regard being had to the stock. This operation renews the plant, and gives it a new existence.

After the lopping, and pruning of the needless buds, the vine is here put in *perches*. That operation is performed by bowing down the shoot, and by attaching it, thus bent, to the vine-prop; but, in the greater part of the vineyards of Greece, the vines are suffered to creep, unrestrained, upon the ground, and to make use of each other for a support.

The practice of *earthing* the vine is also followed here. The *genius* of the vine being to extend

extend its roots along the surface of the soil, it soon exhausts the ground, which surrounds the stock, of all its nutritive salts: by putting dung to that stock, the tree is restored to its pristine vigour.

They engraft under ground in the Morea, as we do in Bourgogne, in order that the graft, adhering to the root of the stock, may at the same time take root in the neck of it. The best time for engrafting the vine is when it is in sap.

The processes I am about to mention are the most generally followed in the Morea. They are followed also, with some variations, in all the places where the Corinthian vine is cultivated. I will not say that these processes are the best: all that I can assert is, that I have followed them myself in my country retreat at Pella, and that my Corinthian vines have taken very well. I know not whether the soil will be favourable to them; but I hope that it will. I shall thus enrich, after my way, the country that produced Alexander; and, if I do not myself eat all my grapes, I shall at least have the pleasure of seeing them taken away by the grandsons of Antiochus and Selucus, who certainly never have any idea of the *wonderful fortune* of their sires, when, covered with tatters, and with naked feet, they come to sport and play in my fields.

The use of manure is utterly unknown here; but it is used at Zante, where the Corinthian vine is better cultivated than in the Morea. The vine must be manured when it is exhausted, and that is known by its turning yellow. It must not, however, be manured too much; for, that would give the vine too much vigour, and it would produce grapes, which, in order to be forward, should continue green.

I knew two husbandmen of Zante, who used to dig, in the autumn, at the foot of every vine-stock, a small trench, which they filled, the one, with the husks of grapes, after they had undergone the last pressing; the other, with salt mixed with ashes: and those two husbandmen constantly had, to my knowledge, the finest grapes and the most plentiful crops.

The Corinthian vines bear from the seventh year, but their chief produce does not commence till the twelfth. They usually last eighty years, and will last a hundred, when they are well kept. The troops of Morousini and of Schulembourg have eaten grapes, which are still in full produce.

These vineyards have only one enemy among all the destructive insects: and that is a small worm named *scatari*, which is five lines in length and two in diameter. It is somewhat black, and is provided with a double saw and strong nippers. During the winter, it continues under-

underground, and attacks the roots, which causes the vine-stock to dry up. It ascends the branches in the spring, and consumes the young buds; and, unless it is killed or removed, in eight days it will have devoured all, and the mischief it occasions is irreparable. But this insect, that thus preys upon the vine, multiplies itself very little, because it is born and dies the same year. During its short life, it undergoes various metamorphoses. At first, destitute of wings, it pushes them forward in the spring, in order to run with more rapidity over the vines: it consumes every thing, leaves and flowers, and at length dies from being extremely bloated and swelled up. The inhabitants of the Morea have a proverb, which says, that *gluttons die of the dropsy, as the scatari does.*

The Corinthian grape arrives at maturity, and is eaten, in Thermidor;* but the vintage does not commence till Fructidor,† when it has changed its red into a purple colour. The gathering of them is performed by women or children, and is done by small knives, bent at the point. The clusters are put into baskets, and are carried to the floor, which is always placed in the midst or at one of the extremities of the vineyard.

* From July 19 to August 18.

† From August 18 to September 17.

The

The floor has the form of a long square, but somewhat inclined, in order that the rain-water may run freely off. This water is received in small canals, which carry it out of the vineyard. The bottom of the floor is of earth; but it is so well beaten, that it presents a surface smooth, hard as flint, and glittering. This consistency and this polish are given it by means of cow-dung, mixed with bullock's blood and blades of straw, the whole of which is tempered in water. The amalgam of all these substances yields a thick viscous liquor, which, being poured over the surface of the floor, and warmed by the heat of the sun, forms a thick, but compact and smooth, mastic, which has the cleanliness and appearance of a varnish. This varnish serves for a double purpose: in the first place, it prevents the earth from mixing with the grapes; and, secondly, it causes the grape to dry the sooner, because it attracts and preserves the heat.

The grapes are spread over the floor, bunch by bunch. They are left there night and day; but care is taken to turn them every twenty-four hours.

In a fine season, the grapes dry in eight or ten days: but they require twenty or thirty in a rainy season. When the rains are of any duration, the gathering is lost; and, should the grapes be preserved, they lose their quality, and fall considerably in price. The Corinthian grapes, on

on the contrary, in the best years, are sold for as great a price as the wines of the consulate of Opimius were.

When the grapes are dried, the stones are separated from them by small rakes, made of the stalks of the *lixium Africum* of Linnæus: they are properly cleansed, by being extricated from all the extraneous substances which have been mixed with them, and are put into baskets, to be conveyed to the magazine. These magazines, which are called *serails*, are buildings of a peculiar construction; they are opened hermetically, and have only one opening above and one entrance below. This door is opened only at the time of sale, and it is by the opening constructed on the top that the grapes are thrown in, and heaped up till the magazine is full. The grapes, thus pressed by their own weight, and also by extraneous bodies, emit a viscous liquor, by the aid of which they unite so closely together, that it afterwards becomes necessary to make use of a shovel, with an iron point, to detach pieces from this mass, when the Corinthian grapes are to be put into casks. They are then stamped upon with naked feet, in order that they may occupy less room, and that, being deprived of the external air, they may be preserved better in their passage. With these precautions, they may be carried all over the world.

There

There is a pleasant wine extracted from the Corinthian grape, which is as strong and sharp as brandy; but the quantity it yields is so small, that no vineholder is willing to send his grapes to the press. Besides, that wine is liable to turn sour, and will not bear exporting. The Corinthian grapes are exported, in their natural state, to the north of Europe, where they are made use of in *puddings*. The English, in particular, consume a prodigious quantity of them. In France they are made use of only in preparing medicines, and in Italy they are used only in ragouts.

The Corinthian grape was formerly considered, in the English commerce, only as an article of luxury; it is now an article of economy. I have been assured that it is made use of in the distilling of brandy, and also, in many manufactures, to cleanse wool and silk. If this be true, the culture of the Corinthian grape has been brought to greater perfection; and we ought to desire it for ourselves, because that article might open a new branch of commerce, of very great importance to our establishments in the Morea.

I know not for what reason the Marseillais have never wished to meddle with this branch of merchandize, notwithstanding the advice of friends, and at of interest, more powerful still. It is the Leghornese and the Triestois who buy up

up the Corinthian grapes by commission, upon the spot, on account, for London, Amsterdam, or Hamburgh. Why should not the French endeavour to take this commission out of the hands of the Italians? I have always thought, and written, that we acted very wrong in not supporting our establishments in the Morea. But we are here only an imperceptible point, and that point has escaped the eyes of the government. It is, however, by neglecting trivial things, that the wisest establishments are ruined. All our factories at Patras, Modon, and Navarin, have disappeared, and those, which still subsist at Naples and at Coron, are brokers rather than traders.

The gathering of the Corinthian grapes, in the Morea, may be estimated, at a medium, at ten millions of pounds. Patras and its territory produce four millions; the district of Vostitza yields two millions; and the four other millions are gathered on the coasts of Achaia and Ætolia; as at Xilocastro, Anotolico, and Messalongi. The country consumes a small quantity only of these grapes, and the sale of them may amount, at an annual medium, to eight millions, which makes the eight-tenths of the produce. England contracts for five-eighths; Holland, the United States, and Denmark, for two; the other eighth is divided between France and Italy.

The

The Corinthian grapes have been sold these latter years at the rate of eighty piasters* the *millier*, or thousand pounds, including every expense. These expenses are enormous, and almost double the price of the first purchase. As there is no settled tariff in the Turkish custom, you are at the mercy of a receiver, whose profession is to plunder you. The duty on re-exportation must be calculated at least at the rate of six per cent.; and it rises to ten when he oppresses, and extorts money from the traders. I will set before you a table of other charges to which you are subject, and place by the side of it the table of those that are paid at Zante, to afford you a term of comparison.

* Nearly equivalent to £16.

DUTIES PAID AT ZANTE.	*Piasters.*
Duty on exportation	6 p.%
Provision	3
Trimming of the vessel*	2
Charge on barrels,	4
Primage of the captain	1
Expense of carrying	1
Weighing and treading	1½
Brocage	1½
Dritto novo, ditto della camera; at the rate of two sequins the millier, (1000 lbs.) which amounts, at the present rate, to	7
Dritto novissimo, at the rate of four sequins	7
Dritto degli consiglieri	1
Dritto del provedi-tore	1
Total	†35 p.%

* *Estivage.*

† Nearly equivalent to £7 sterling.

DUTIES PAID IN THE MOREA.	*Piasters.*
Duty on exportation	6 p.%
Provision	3
Trimming of the vessel*	2
Charge on barrels,	4
Primage of the captain	1
Expense of carrying	1
Weighing and treading	1½
Brocage	1½
Expense of boats or carriage into the roads where the vessels are laden,	4
Extortions of the vaivode, or receiver of the customs	2
Consul's dues,	2
Total	†35 p.%

* *Estivage.*

† Nearly equivalent to £5 : 8 : 0.

In

In casting your eyes over this table, you will see, that when the *millier* (1000 lbs.) is worth fifty piasters, at the first purchase, it costs eighty. You will perhaps think, after this high price, that it would be better for you to go and load in the Ionian isles, and particularly at Zante, where the Corinthian grapes equal those of the Morea in weight and cleanness: but you deceive yourself. Cast your eyes, I beg you, over the parallel table, and you will find that you pay there nearly the same duties as in the Morea, and that you must pay, in addition, a duty of two sequins the *millier*, and a new duty, in farther addition to those two sequins, and which the custom-house officers of Saint Mark call, in their jargon, the *drogana nova* and the *novissima*.

Patras is the chief mart of the Morea for Corinthian grapes; but, as the receiver of the customs at that port of the Mediterranean treats most unmercifully the vessels that come to load there, a resolution was taken, some time since, of causing these vessels to stop in the road of *Anatolico*, situate at the mouth of the *Achelous*. Anatolico is founded on piles, in the midst of small lakes, and is Venice in miniature. Its road, formed by the islands *Echinades*, is ample and safe, but it is strewed with mud, which is deposited there by the river, and is not more than three or four feet in depth. On this account,

count, it can be navigated only by small boats, that draw but little water; and, in order to convey the grapes on board the vessel, small boats are made use of, called *monoxylons*, which consist of only one trunk of a tree, similar to that of the first navigator. Their cut, shapeless as it is, is slender and long, and they fly across the water with great rapidity. When the sea is calm, you can see all these boats passing with the rapidity of lightning from one lake to another, and sometimes they adventure even into the middle of the gulph. But, when the wind begins to blow strongly, they disappear as suddenly as a swarm of bees. The vessels that take in their lading at Anatolico are mostly Danish. Their ample size and beautiful appearance form a most striking contrast with the monoxylons; and this contrast presents to the observer the two opposite extremes of the art of ship-building; that of the infancy of societies, and that of bringing them to perfection; a faithful representation of the civilization of Turkey and of Europe.

LETTER IX.

Livadia, 25 Floréal, year 5.*

The ALY-ZARI of BŒOTIA.

IN the Frank commerce, madder is designated under the name of *ali-zari*. The madder of the Levant is only a variety from ours; it differs only in having a stalk more slender, leaves more smooth, and in having roots covered with a more tender parenchyme. It may be called the *rubia sylvestris*, a little ameliorated by culture.

This plant grows indifferently in every soil; but it succeeds better in soils substantial and somewhat close, and which are seated on a clayey or sandy bottom. Humid marshy soils agree with it as well as with hemp. This is the reason why the best madder of Bœotia is that gathered on the borders of the lake Copaïs. *Capréna* or Chœronea, *Scrivo* or Orchomenus, the muddy Oncheste, and the principal villages on the plain of Thebes, have at this day as fine madder as that which grows on the banks of the Hermus, in the plain of Sardis.

* May 15, 1797.

When

When a person wishes to form a plantation of madder, he makes choice of a level soil, which is prepared as if it were destined for the reception of corn. We set shoots or plants that have proceeded from seed; but, in Greece, the practice of sowing in a nursery is unknown. The pure seed is thrown at random, and in furrows or on beds. The beds are separated from each other by paths or unoccupied borders, which divide the soil symmetrically, and present an agreeable prospect.

I ought to have mentioned, that the Levantines infuse their seed in horse-dung, before they commit it to the earth. It would be perhaps of greater utility to infuse the seed in quick lime, because it would accelerate the germination. All these preparations resemble the mixtures so much boasted of for corn, and which, when they have been well analyzed, are reduced to nothing.

The madder is sown here in Pluviôse* and in Ventôse;† and, as soon as it arrives at the height of three or four feet, it has a bank of earth erected round its root. That operation consists in laying the stalk across the bed, and in covering it with earth, taken from the two

* From January 20 to February 19.

† From February 19 to March 21.

lateral, or side, paths, and is repeated every year, until the plant has shot forth new stalks: care is also taken every time to take the earth from the contiguous paths, which at length become trenches, while the beds become little banks.

The madder is not gathered here till the fourth or fifth year, which is the reason why the plant has time to enlarge itself, and be laden with fine and numerous roots, in which all the value of the madder consists.

The roots must be picked by hand, and carefully disengaged from the soil with which they are mixed. The practice of washing them, in order to cleanse them, is pernicious; because, the washing of them carries off part of the principal colouring substances.

As soon as the roots have been picked, they are deposited under shelter, and dried in the shade by the sole action of the air. The Greeks think that the rays of the sun would diminish the colouring substance; but this opinion is not probable, since we see, that the red colour of the madder, when applied on stuff, resists, without fading, the united action of the air and sun. Their practice has, in other respects, advantages, of which they have no suspicion. First, the colouring substance does not imbibe, in a free air, those fuliginous particles, which would tarnish it in a stove: secondly, the root diminishes,

diminishes, in drying, only six-sevenths, whereas, in a stove, it is reduced seven-eighths. These advantages are sufficiently real, without seeking any imaginary ones: they are also sufficiently great, and therefore the Greek practice ought to be adopted in all countries where the dryness of the air permits it.

The Levantines will never be persuaded to make use of fresh madder; which would give them an opportunity of saving half the roots, without diminishing their dying properties. But there are some cultivators, who reduce their madder, in drying, only five-sixths of its weight. That reduction is not sufficient: the root thus dried pounds badly, and clots together instead of being pounded. It is known to be sufficiently dry, when, on being rubbed in one's hands, it crumbles to pieces.

An arpent of land, sown with madder, yields, at the end of four years, four thousand okes of fresh roots; which, according to my calculation, must be reduced nearly to six hundred okes, when they are dried. The madder, when dried, sells from thirty to forty paras the oke, which produces about six hundred piasters, or one hundred and sixty piasters per annum, which produce is equal to that of corn. It is to be observed, that madder requires fewer advances, and occupies lands which could not be sown with corn.

The cultivation of this plant is therefore advantageous in every respect. It may agree with the southern provinces of France, whose climate is similar to that of Greece. It might be adopted in Provence, particularly, with success, and we should exonerate ourselves of the tribute which we are paying to Smyrna and Bœotia for the commerce of madder.

That plant is of the greatest utility to our dyers. It yields a solid red colour, which resists the operations of the air and the sun upon it, and which fixes the compound colours. But this red is not pure: it is altered by the fallow, a colour peculiar to the woody parts of all roots. The fallow is destroyed by lye, and by being rubbed; and the red is beautified by being impregnated with sassari.

There are gathered, in the large plain of Bœotia, twelve hundred sacks of aly-zari: of these, seven hundred are consumed in Greece in dying spun cotton; the remaining five hundred sacks are exported to Leghorn, to Trieste, and Marseilles. The sack is a hundred okes, and the oke is worth from twenty to twenty-five paras.

In the commerce of Rotterdam, two species of madder are distinguished; that in *branches* and that in *clusters*; but, in the commerce of the Levant, all the aly-zari is sold in the *branch*, or,

or, as it is called, in *sorte*. This last mode is subject to a thousand impositions.

The Greek brokers, however, pretend to know the quality of the madder by two certain signs: it is good, say they, when it becomes red on being broken; and it is excellent, when, being wetted, it stains paper. I wished to make these experiments myself, and I declare, that if a person has no distinctive marks more certain than these, he will be deceived. A person will be less imposed upon, if he will take the trouble of sending factors into the villages to purchase the merchandize; but, if he is obliged to purchase it in the market of Livadia, he must be extremely careful.

M L LETTE

LETTER X.

Livadia, 2 Prairial, year 5.*

The VERMILION of LIVADIA.

WHAT we call in the commerce of the Mediterranean *vermilion* is the kermès, which is a gall-insect, that grows on a small oak, denominated the *ilex coccigera*, as cochineal grows on the nopal.† The *ilex coccigera* is dispersed with astonishing profusion over the whole coast of Bœotia and Phocis, which is washed by the sea of Crissa; and, when we are seeking for ruins on the small hills on the south, which lead to Helicon and Parnassus, we every where meet with clumps of this shrub. As it delights in stony barren soils, it constitutes, together with some wretched plots of ground laid out into vineyards, almost the whole wealth of all the villages which are scattered over those places that were once occupied by Delphos, Crissa, Cyparissus, Daulis, Ambryssus, Anticyra, Bulis,‡ and Thespis. Thisbe, Ascra, the country

* May 21, 1797. † Or *nopalleca, Indian fig-tree.*

‡ The ancients used to say, that on the shores of Bulis were collected the shell-fish which served to make the purple dye. The truth is, these shores are covered with kermès, which was the chief colour made use of in the dies of Bulis.

of

of Hesiod, the Hippocrene, the grotto and the wood, consecrated to the Muses, are now concealed under clumps or thickets of kermès. The kermès issues from an egg, becomes a nymph, and, after having pierced a species of shell, with which it is enveloped, it assumes a spherical form, nearly similar to that of a small millipes, and perfectly resembling a ball, of which a segment has been cut off. It does not support itself, as the caterpillars do, by eating the leaves, but by sucking them with a proboscis, which is situated beneath its throat.

The male is smaller than the female, and is also more active. It has two wings, and leaps with as much velocity as a flea. The female traverses, during the spring, all the branches; but, as soon as the summer arrives, she fixes herself on a point of the shrub from which she never removes; and, in this state of immobility, she receives the caresses of the male. She then lays eggs, swells excessively, and dies. Her shapeless dead body does not retain, like the cochineal, the external animal form: all traces of it are effaced, they disappear, and shortly after no object is perceptible, except a species of gall-nut, the sorry receptacle of the eggs that are about to be hatched. These eggs are of a pale red colour, and, when viewed through a microscope, they appear to be strewed with an infinite number of glittering points of the colour of gold.

The

The *harvest* of the kermès is gathered in the spring, and is more or less abundant in proportion as the winter has been more or less mild. These little animals are extremely averse to the cold; and the finest of them grow on the *ilices* nearest the sea. They are collected by women, who separate them from the branches with their nails. As the dew, by softening the prickly leaves of the shrub, renders the gathering more easy, the women have the precaution to perform it before sun-rise. As soon as the harvest is finished, they sprinkle the kermès with vinegar, in order to destroy the males contained in the eggs. Without this precaution they would fly away, and would carry with them the colour. The kermès are afterwards dried and beaten in a bag, in order to give them a gloss. The insect then assumes the figure of a shell. The shells most particularly sought after in this branch of commerce are those which yield the greatest quantity of that red powder, which is separated from the insect under the form of grain, and which is usually denominated *grain of scarlet*. From this grain is extracted that fine red colour, so much esteemed before the use of cochineal.

The district of Livadia, which may be from six to seven leagues in circumference round the city of that name, produces, at an annual medium, about six thousand okes of vermilion. Of

Of these, two thousand okes are consumed on the spot in the manufactures of fine and coarse cloths, and there are four thousand okes exported into France* and Italy. The oke fetches from six to seven paras; according to which calculation vermilion produces annually from twenty-five to thirty thousand piasters.†

* The Marseillais sell the vermilion again to the Tunisines, who make use of it to dye the fez, or Tunisine caps, the colour of which is fine and durable, a circumstance which makes it regretted that our dyers have abandoned the use of vermilion.

† About £6000 sterling.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

Pella, 1 Messidor, year 5.*

THE other raw articles of exportation are silks, wax, hare-skins, yellow seed, opium, and gum adragant, or gum dragon.

SILKS.

Thessaly produces the greatest part of the silks that come to the commerce of Salonichi, and Zagora is that district of Thessaly which yields the greatest quantity of them. That country, which is the ancient Magnesia, consists of twenty-four villages, belonging to the Sultaness Validé, which are all governed uniformly, and distributed in charming situations over the declivity of Pelion and of Ossa. The climate of that district is so mild, the air so pure, and the sky so fine, that the silk-worms spin in places open on every side. The silk they yield would be remarkable for its beauty, if the Zagoriots would adopt the practice of *grafting*, and if they would select with greater care the

* June 19, 1797.

leaves destined for the support of the worms. Zagora produces twenty-five thousand okes of silk, of which five thousand are consumed in that country in the manufacture of handkerchiefs, which are, for lustre, equal to those of Lyons, but which are neither so fine nor so strong. Five thousand okes are sent to the manufactories of Tournavos; six thousand okes go to supply those of Chios; as much is exported into Germany through the interior of the country; and between two and three thousand okes are exported to Venice through the ports of Dalmatia. A part of these silks was formerly offered to the French houses, but they cannot engage in that article, since it has risen to an extravagant price. It fetches from fifteen to eighteen piasters the oke. The silks of Zagora are, besides, too coarse, and might be advantageously replaced in our gauze-manufactories by the silks of Sicily and Calabria.

WAX.

Chalcis produces annually from thirty to forty thousand okes of wax. The Isle of Thasos produces twenty-five thousand okes; ninety thousand come from the Othoman provinces bordering on the Danube. Wax is sold from sixty to eighty paras the oke. Fifteen thousand okes

okes are exported to Marseilles and forty thousand to Venice. The remainder is divided among various places in Italy. Our returns in wax were more considerable when we had a commercial house established at La Cavale. All the wax that was collected in the Isle of Thasos was, at that time, offered to our factory. The English have endeavoured to supplant us in that small port, but there is reason to presume that they will not succeed, because the commerce of La Cavale has been turned into Adrianople since the opening of a port at Enos and Marizza.

HARE-SKINS.

There are collected in Albany, Thessaly, and Macedonia, about ten thousand okes of hare-skins; one-half of which is exported by the Greeks to Trieste and Venice, and the other half is purchased at Salonichi by the French houses. The French export to Marseilles from eight to nine hundred okes. The winter-skins are the best; they have longer, thicker, and more silky, hair. Nine or ten skins make an oke, and fetch from ten to twelve paras the pair. It is not, however, an object of very great importance. Latterly, indeed, hare-skins have been charged with a particular duty,

ty, which a Jew has succeeded, by ridiculous intrigues, in causing the administration to adopt, in order that he might be constituted the farmer of it. We have done justice to this intriguer, and the Macedonian hare-skins can still be exported to Marseilles to supply our hat-manufactories. The English have, for some time past, turned their attention towards this article of exportation; and the success of their first attempts seems to offer a continuance to their exports; but they can never confer a degree of importance on this article of which it is not susceptible.

YELLOW SEED.

Albany and Thessaly provide Salonichi with the yellow seed denominated by us *graine d'Avignon.* This seed is the berry of the small *buckthorn,** or *rhamnus minor*; it is of the size of a pepper-corn, of an astringent and bitter taste, and of a green colour, bordering upon a yellow. The shrub, that produces it, has yellow woody roots; its bark is somewhat black; its branches are long and prickly; its leaves small, thick, of a brilliant green, resembling those of the box, and indented like those of the

* *Nerprun,*

myrtle.

myrtle. This shrub was known to the ancients under the name of *pixacantha*, or *prickly box*: the modern Greeks call it still by a name expressive of the same thing. The *graine d'Avignon* is made use of in dying yellow, and gives a colour called technically *stil de graine*; but, notwithstanding the best preparations, that colour will not hold long, and it soon passes away. What, however, will always make the yellow seed in request for common colours is its good sale. It is worth here fifteen paras the oke. The French have never attended much to this article, but the English appear to consider it as of great importance. The quantity exported by the former may amount to ten thousand piasters,* and that by the latter to fifteen thousand.†

O P I U M.

The French take from Salonichi to the value of twelve thousand piasters‡ of opium, and the Italians to the value of eighteen thousand.§ The most common is gotten in Greece, but the purest comes from Anadoulia. The Turks reserve for their own use that which flows natu-

* £2000 † £3000 ‡ About £2400.

§ About £3600.

rally from the head of the poppy, and they sell to the French the condensed liquor, which is extracted from the plant by incision or expression.

Opium is made use of here as a soporific or as an *incentive*. Those Turks, who are continually using it, are called *Theriakis*. The greater part of them take it, in order to procure them a kind of sweet lethargy, which seems to place them between life and death. That state, which lulls all thought asleep without excluding the sensations, has such charms for them, that it is by no means uncommon to meet with *Theriakis*, who spend their life in drinking coffee, in smoking their pipe, and in swallowing opium. One of my drogmans is acquainted with an *effendi*, who takes every day thirty cups of coffee, smokes sixty pipes, swallows three drachms of opium, and whose sole food is *four ounces* of rice. I wished to see this singular personage, and a species of mummy was presented to me, whose muscles seemed glued to his skin.*

Other Turks take the juice concreted, in order to excite in them the pleasures of love, or to procure themselves an agreeable intoxication. The janisaries, when they are going to battle, take opium as the German soldiers take brandy.

* The characteristic of the *Theriakis* is, their having their back-bone extremely bent.

The Turkish opium sooths or excites the senses, according to the preparation it undergoes. That which is mixed with nutmeg or saffron becomes aphrodysiac, and inspires amorous thoughts. It is made up into small pills, of which the wealthy Turks know how to make a skilful use, in order to allure and *inflame* young Greeks.

In commerce, good opium ought to be hard and viscous when it is new or fresh, and glittering when it is dry. It is often mixed with gum or with meal, but it is easy to detect the fraud. Adulterated opium never hardens well, and does not thread when broken. What is sold in the *bazars* is never pure.

GUM ADRAGANT.

Gum adragant flows naturally, or is extracted by incision, from the *tagracantha*, a shrub of the family of *astragales*, which we call *barbe de rénard*.* That shrub covers all the little valleys of Greece. The fibres of its stalk and branches are woven; they exude a slimy juice, which congeals into long strings, and appears in the Frank commerce under the form of small balls or twisted ribbons. When this juice is wanted to be used, it is pulverized in a hot

* Fox's beard.

mortar, in order to dissipate the watery moisture which it has imbibed.

In pharmacy, gum adragant connects clammy compositions and gives them a body. Miniature-painters make use of it in their workshops to smooth and varnish their vellum; and dyers use it to give consistency and lustre to gauze and silk work.

The Frank commerce exports annually five thousand okes of gum adragant. The price of the oke is from seventy to eighty paras. This article may be worth about ten thousand piasters.*

* £2000.

LETTER XII.

Larissa, 5 Thermidor, year 5.*

MANUFACTURED ARTICLES.

THE manufactured articles which enter into the view of Greek exports are, red-cotton thread, Morocco leather, carpets, silk vests, and some coarse cloths known under the name of *capots* and *abats*.

The RED-COTTON THREADS of GREECE.

The fine red dye that is given to cotton in the Othoman empire is known in Europe under the name of *rouge du Levant* and *rouge d'Adrianople*. As it is believed among us that this colour arises principally from the process of dying, I will give you some account of these processes as they are now practised in Greece. It is to be observed, that they usually work here on a mass of skeins weighing thirty-five okes.

The first process is that of preparing the thread for dying. To effect this, an oke and a half

* July 24, 1797.

half of kali are dissolved in twenty okes of water. In this *bath*, the cotton is made to boil from five to six hours, when it is washed in pure water.

The second *bathing* which the cotton undergoes consists of kali and sheep's dung, the whole of which is diluted in water. In order to facilitate the dilution, the kali and the sheep's dung are pounded with a pestle. The proportions, of which the mixture of these ingredients consists, are, one oke of dung, six okes of kali, and forty okes of water. When the mixture is completed, the liquor that is expressed from it is poured through a sieve; and, that being poured into a tub, there are also poured in six okes of oil of olives, which care is taken to stir, until the whole is become as white as milk. The cotton is afterwards washed with this water; and, when the skeins are thoroughly impregnated with it, they are wrung, pressed, and dried. The same steeping or bathing must be repeated three or four times, because it is that process which renders the cotton more or less fit for dying. Each of these bathings or steepings is composed of the same water, and ought to continue from five to six hours. It is to be observed, that the cotton ought to be always dried as it is, without washing; nor ought it to be rinsed till after the last washing. The cot-

ton is then as white as if it had been bleached on a meadow.

The bathing or steeping of cotton in sheep's dung is unknown to our dyers. It is a practice peculiar to the Levant. One would think that that species of dung is of no utility in fixing colours; but it is known that sheep's dung contains a great quantity of volatile alkali, entirely developed, which has the property of giving a deep colour to red. It is, therefore, probably owing to this ingredient that the red colours of the Levant owe their brightness and celebrity. This, however, is certain, that the Morocco leathers of the Levant are dressed with dog's dung, because that dung has been found to be calculated to heighten the dying of the colour called lake. The steeping of cotton in sheep's dung is followed by the *engalage*.

That process is performed by plunging the cotton into a bath of luke-warm water, in which five okes of pulverized gall-nuts have been boiled. That operation adapts the cotton better for saturation with colours, and gives the dying a greater body and more solidity.

After undergoing this operation, the cotton is dipped in alum-water, which process is repeated twice within the space of two days, and which consists in steeping the cotton in a water in which have been infused five okes of alum and

and five okes of water alkalized by a lye made of kali. The process of steeping it in alum-water ought to be performed with care, because it is that operation which unites the colouring particles best with the cotton, and which protects them partially from the destructive action of the air upon them. When the cotton has been steeped in alum-water the second time, it is wrung out, and pressed, and is put to cleanse in running water, after having been enclosed in a bag of clear linen cloth.

The next process is that of dying. In order to compose the colours, there are put into a cauldron or copper one hundred okes of water and thirty-five okes of a root denominated by the Greeks *aly-zari*, and by us madder, which is pulverized, and is moistened with bulls' or sheep's blood. The blood strengthens the colour; and, according to the degree of lightness or darkness which the dye is wished to receive, a greater or less quantity is mixed. Beneath the copper a good, but not too large, fire is kept; and, when the liquor ferments and begins to grow hot, the skeins are dipped in it gradually, lest the fire should surprise them. They are afterwards bound with cords to *lizoirs*, or small sticks laid cross-wise for that purpose over the cauldon; and, when the liquor boils well and uniformly, the switches, which held the skins suspended perpendicularly, are taken

away, and the skeins fall into the water, where they ought to remain until two-thirds of it are consumed. When there is only one-third of the water remaining, the cotton is taken out and washed in pure water.

The dying is afterwards perfected by the cotton being steeped in water alkalized by kali. This last operation is the most difficult and the most delicate, because it is that which gives the *agreement* to the colour. The cotton is thrown into this new bath, and is made to boil there over a continual fire, till the colour becomes such as was desired. All the art consists in knowing the *right moment*. A careful workman therefore watches, with scrupulous attention, the instant when he must take the cotton off the fire; and he would rather burn his hand than lose that moment.

It appears that this last steeping, which the Greeks judge to be of such importance, might be supplied by a lye made of soap; and it is probable, that water, impregnated with soap, would give the colour a greater degree of fineness and clearness.

When the colour is not strong enough, the Levantines know how to strengthen and increase it; and, when they wish to make it bright and beautiful, they make use of a root named *sassari*, some samples of which I have sent into France.

The

The aly-zari, which is the chief colour used by the Greek dyers, is collected in Anadoulia, and comes from Smyrna into Greece. It is also gotten in Bœotia. The superiority of that plant of the Levant over the European madder is acknowledged by all artists, and may proceed from two causes; the manner in which it is cultivated, and the mode pursued in drying it.

As the aly-zari appears to be of a weaker nature than the common madder, and its branches are more delicate, its leaves more thin and tender, and its stalk more slender; the Levantines set up sticks to support it as we do French beans. The stalk, being better supported, grows more quickly, and shoots forth more roots; but they are the woody parts of the roots which yield the greatest quantity of colouring particles.

Besides this, the aly-zari is not gathered here till the fifth and even the sixth year, that is to say, when it is in its full strength; whereas, in France and Zealand, where the lands are more valuable than in the Levant, we wish to possess it too soon; and the madder is gathered before it attains its full maturity.

The mode pursued in drying it contributes to the goodness of the aly-zari. The Levantines dry it in a free air, and that operation is easy to be performed in a country where the air is extremely dry; while, in our damp climates, we

are

are obliged to dry the madder in stoves; whence it happens, that the smoke, which mixes with the hot air, and which penetrates the roots, loads those roots with fuliginous particles, which adulterate the colouring substance, an accident which does not happen when the madder is dried without fire.

Perhaps, nevertheless, the aly-zari and madder will never, notwithstanding all the pains taken in dying and cultivating them, produce the same agreement of colour; because there may be found between those two plants, which resemble each other so much, the same difference that subsists between the goats of France and those of Angora.

Perhaps, also, the superiority of the aly-zari over the madder arises only from its stalks being more tender, and being therefore more inclined to transform themselves into succulent plants. If this were the case, most of our indigenous plants, of the family of *rubiacées*, might be substituted for it with advantage; and then we must class among the *rubiacées* the *gallium luteum*, the *gallium flore albo*, which is found in abundance on the coasts of Poitou, and the madder that grows on both sides of the Alps, and which has been designated under the name of *rubia lævis Taurinensium*. All these plants yield a red colour as beautiful and as pure as that of the best madder.

The

The principal manufactories of red spun cotton, established in Greece, are in Thessaly, at Baba, Rapsani, Tournavos, Larissa, Pharsalia, and in all the villages situated on the declivity of Ossa and Pelion. Those two mountains may be considered as the *alembics*, which distil those eternal vapours with which Olympus is crowned, and which distribute them through the fine valleys situated at their feet. Among these valleys that of Tempé has been always distinguished, on account of the beauty of its shades and its waters, which, by reason of their limpidity, are well calculated for the purposes of dying, and which supply an infinite number of manufactories, the chief of which are those of *Ambélakia*.

Ambélakia,* by the activity of its inhabitants, resembles rather a city of Holland than a Turkish village. That village diffuses, by its industry, motion and life through all the country around it, and gives birth to an immense commerce that connects Germany to Greece by a thousand threads. Its population, which has been tripled within these last thirty years, amounts to four thousand souls; and all this population lives in the dying-houses as a swarm of

* Ambélakia is situated on the declivity of Ossa and Pelion, and on the right bank of the Peneus, between Larissa and the sea, near the site formerly occupied by *Homolis*.

bees

bees lives in a hive. The inhabitants of this village are strangers to the vices and cares arising from idleness. The hearts of the Ambélakians are pure, and their countenances content. The slavery, that disgraces at their feet the plains watered by the Peneus, has not ascended their hills. No Turk can either dwell or sojourn among them, and they are governed, as their ancestors were, by their *protoyeros* and by their own magistrates. Twice have the ferocious mussulmen of Larissa, jealous of their freedom and their happiness, attempted to scale their mountains and to plunder their houses; and twice were they repelled by hands which suddenly quitted the shuttle to arm themselves with a musquet.

All arms, even those of children, are employed in the dyes of Ambélakia, and, while the men are dying the cotton, the women are spinning and preparing it. The use of spinning-wheels is unknown in this district of Greece. All the spinning is performed by the spindle. The thread is, certainly, less strong, less round, and less equal; but it is more soft, more silky, and more tenacious. It breaks less, and lasts longer; it bleaches better, and is better calculated for dying. It is a pleasure to see the women of Ambélakia armed each with a spindle, and chattering together before the doors of their houses. But they can only enjoy that pleasure

pleasure for a moment; for, as soon as a stranger appears, they fly away, exhibiting, however, as Galatea did, in their precipitate flight, their desire of being seen:

Et fugit ad salices, et se cupit antè videri.

The eye can only then rapidly survey some of their forms; but it still recognises, with surprise, those ancient Greek waists, slender and forward, which have served as models to the finest statues in the world.

There are at Ambélakia twenty-four manufactories; where are dyed every year two thousand bales of cotton, containing one hundred okes in each bale. These two thousand five hundred bales are exported wholly to Germany, and are distributed to Pest, Vienna, Leipsic, Dresden, Anspach, and Bareuth. The merchants of Ambélakia have factories in all those cities, and they sell the cotton there to the German manufacturers. All these factories were, in the beginning, governed by societies, each of which had its peculiar interests; but, these societies injuring each other by their competition, a plan was formed of uniting them all, and forming only one. The plan of a great *commandite** was formed twenty years ago, and

* This word literally means an agreement between two partners, one of whom finds the money, and the other attends on the business,

was

was executed the following year. The regulations of the new company were compiled by wise men. Each proprietor, or principal, of a manufactory, was to contribute a sum proportionate to his means. The smallest quotas were fixed at five thousand piasters,* and the largest were fixed at twenty thousand piasters,† in order that the rich might have no opportunity of engrossing to themselves all the profits. The workmen were to unite the stock they had saved by their industry, and they were to form together common quotas, which were, in a manner, small *commandites*, incorporated in the great one. These workmen, exclusive of their money, were to give still farther their labour and their attention; and the salary of their labour, added to that of their capitals, very soon diffused ease through every house. The profits of the dividend were fixed at ten per cent. per annum; and the surplus was set apart to enlarge the original capital, which, in the space of two years, arose from six hundred thousand piasters‡ to one million.§

At the head of the company were placed three principal directors, who formed, at Ambélakia, a commercial firm, under an ideal name,

* £1000. † £4000.

‡ £120,000. § £200,000.

of

of which they alone reserved the signature; but they committed that same signature to three other of their associates at Vienna, which was the seat of their returns, as Ambélakia was that of their exports. The two firms of Ambélakia and of Vienna had inferior correspondents at Pest, Trieste, and Leipsic, in Germany, and at Salonichi, Constantinople, and Smyrna, in Turkey. These correspondents were charged with the receipt of the exports, with making the returns, frequenting the markets, and thus with opening, to the cotton thread of Greece, a ready sale into all Germany. They were also charged with the circulation of the funds arising from the sales, and with remitting them from hand to hand, from place to place, according as opportunities served and exigencies required. Thus, the company could not participate with any person in the profits of the bank; and, when the exchange was against it, it made use of its funds at Salonichi, or at Smyrna, in the purchase of raw materials. Never was any society established on more economical principles, and never were fewer hands employed to direct affairs of so great an extent. All was regulated, all was calculated, with a wisdom, which has had no model, except in the inhabitants of Paraguay, and no imitators, except the mercantile societies of *Moravian Brethren*.

In

In order to concentrate at Ambélakia all the profits, one of the statutes prescribed, that no correspondents should be chosen, but out of the Ambélakians; and, in order to divide the profits the better among them, the purport of another statute was, that the correspondents should revolve upon themselves, by relieving each other every three years; and that, at the end of every third year, they should be obliged to re-enter the country, in order to work a year there at least with the *matadors*, and there to be initiated in the mercantile principles of the company.

The commerce of Ambélakia, thus organized, made every where the most rapid progress, and enlivened every place through which it passed. I observed its course with concern, and, thinking that this commerce might give new life to our factories at Salonichi, I endeavoured, by insinuations and promises, to direct a branch of it to Marseilles. But my endeavours proved abortive: whether it was that the Greeks were afraid lest they should find powerful rivals in the French, or whether it was that they had rather treat with the good-nature of the Germans than with the penetration of the Marseillois.

The most happy harmony reigned for a long time in the *commandite*. All the members contributed eagerly to its success. The directors were

were disinterested, the correspondents zealous, the workmen docile and laborious. The work, being equally divided among all the workmen and among all the work-shops, was performed with care and celerity: all the manufactories prospered. The company, which enlarged its profits every day, possessed an immense capital. Its exports increased rapidly, and yielded a profit of from sixty to eighty, and even a hundred, per cent. All its funds were increased ten-fold. But this immense influx of wealth, which seemed as though it would consolidate the *commandite*, threw all there into disorder and confusion. The directors, become opulent, made pressing demands; the poor, being enriched in their turn, refused to obey; the workmen quitted the shuttle to take the pen, instead of dying and spinning: every one wished to command. The meetings became tumultuous; the workmen, who were the most numerous, ruled there; and, since that time, it has been impossible to procure any wise counsels to prevail; opinions turn into every direction, and cannot be conciliated. The society was thus rent by dissensions during twenty months, and it at length broke about two years since, in order to be divided into as many small *commandites* as there were societies of workmen. The jealousy, the spirit of envy, the desire of injuring each other, all those petty shuffling passions, which enter into the compo-

sition of the Greek character, are already undermining, by their consequences, the *new societies*; and, it may be presumed, that they will only exist for a day.

It was the pride of those who were newly enriched, together with the pretensions of the principals, that caused the ruin of the old *commandite*. But what hastened its dissolution was a proceeding, in which all the members participated. Among the number of articles, there was one which prohibited the members of the society from selling to their parents; which was the way to prevent fraudulent sales. Notwithstanding this, there was a member, at Vienna, who sold cotton, to the amount of twenty thousand piasters,* to a merchant, who became, some time afterwards, his son-in-law. This merchant being afterwards brought, by the nature of his commerce, to Ambélakia, his father-in-law, by the aid of his credit, made him a new sale. The buyer failed the next year, when the company prosecuted the father-in-law. He defended himself; alleging, that the buyer, at the time of the first sale, was not his son-in-law: at length he consented to pay the principal, but he refused to pay the interest which had accrued in the mean time, and which had enlarged the capital to an enormous amount.

* £4000.

The

The cause was split and complicated. Sent from tribunal to tribunal, it was at length brought to mine, when I had the weakness, seduced by my sincerity, to decide, without requiring a bond to stand to my award: it could not be provided for otherwise. From the consulate of Salonichi, the affair passed through various legations at Constantinople; from Constantinople it was carried to Vienna, where it was finally decided, after having occasioned enormous expenses to the company.

The members that composed the company are now occupied in the payment of those expenses, which will be long and precarious. I am inviting the members to give over with a good grace, and not to consume, in vain disputes, the precious fruits of their industry. They are almost all of them fathers, and they are destined to be one day friends; if it be true that the best friends we have are those whom nature gives us. They have been long enough plagued by petty schemes of vengeance: why should they prepare for themselves new sorrows? Let them call to mind the advice which I have given to them individually: it has been dictated by friendship.

For my part, I shall never forget what I have seen at Ambélakia and its vicinity: a numerous population, subsisting wholly by the produce of its manufactures, and presenting to

me, amidst the rocks of Ossa, the affecting union of a society of brothers and of friends: the fine institution, exiled by the Jesuits in the midst of the forests of Paraguay, transplanted, as it were by magic, to the precipices and the masses of snow of Tempé; the feuds of the Greeks extinguished; the passion for empty subtleties replaced by the love of solid studies; the national vanity stifled by generous sentiments; every grand and liberal idea blooming on a soil, devoted, for these twenty centuries past, to slavery; the ancient character of Greece springing forth again with energy in the midst of the torrents and caverns of Pelion; and, lastly, all the talents and all the virtues of ancient Greece, springing forth again in a corner of modern Greece.

OBSERVATIONS.

It is from Greece that we have borrowed the art of dying cotton red. Some Greek dyers came to settle, towards the middle of this century, at Montpellier, and dyed cotton there, after the manner of their country. Their processes were soon copied by the French dyers; and it is thus that the dying of the Levant has been communicated to our manufactories of Languedoc and Béarn, and to those of Rouen, Mayenne, and Chollet.

"This dying consists* in steeping the cotton "in soapy liquors, composed of oil and a weak "ley of kali. The cotton is steeped in these "leys with great care, for many days successively, care being taken to wring and dry it "after each immersion. In the first *bath* is di-"luted a little sheep's dung, or a little of the "liquor contained in the second cavity of the "stomach of ruminating animals. After these "first leys, the cotton is washed, undergoes the "process denominated *engalage*,† is steeped in "alum-water, rinced, dyed with madder, and "its colour is heightened by being made to boil "in a ley made of kali. The Greeks usually "dress the cotton again, after all these opera-"tions, in order to keep, as well as to fix, the "colour; but, in this last case, the proportion "of the ingredients is diminished." These are the chief processes followed in the dying of cotton.

It is generally agreed, that the red colour of the Levant has more lustre and liveliness than ours;‡ but, whence has this superiority arisen?

* These are the expressions of Chaptal, in his Report to the Institute on my letter.

† This process is described above, p. 182.

‡ Our dying appears to have been much improved during my residence in Greece. Chaptal has shown me, since my return

There are dyers who will have us believe, that the substance that contributes most to effect this is sheep's dung, which appears to act in the dying in a manner similar to glue. This at least is certain, that the treadles may be supplied by gastric juice, gum arabic, isinglass, and other glutinous substances. These substances are dissolved with alum, or, which is better still, with the nitrate of alum, which gives a colour more full and more agreeable.

What may also contribute to the beauty of the red colour of the Levant is, that care is taken to rince the cotton well every time it is taken out of the *mordant*.* The colour takes thus more easily, and combines better. It appears, however, that a perfect drying is necessary after every steeping. The water being expelled, its affinity no longer opposes the combination or decomposition of *mordant*. It is also immaterial, whether the cotton is dried in the shade or in the sun, provided it be dried well.

turn to Paris, some skeins of spun cotton, manufactured at Montpellier, of a variety in the colours, and a richness in the shades, comparable to the finest of all that I have seen in Greece. But, it is to be observed, that the manufactory, from which those skeins come, was directed by that amiable learned man, who has applied chemistry to the arts with so much success.

* This is a liquid chemical preparation, made use of in Turkey in dying both cotton and leather.

A second cause, that influences, it is said, the beauty of the colour, is the fresh urine that is substituted for water; but urine has this inconvenience, viz. that in summer it putrifies too soon in the *bath*. Many of the Greek dyers have substituted, instead of gall-nuts, sumac and other more common astringents, such as the bark of the pomegranate-tree, the root of the walnut-tree, and the bark of the alder and oak.

In general, the processes of the Greeks appear to me very complicated. They make use of about fifteen ingredients, and a *manipulation* of more than one month. It is, therefore, very difficult to lay hold of the whole of one such manipulation, and it will be very possible that several errors have crept into my letters. I beg you to have the goodness to pardon them.

LETTER XIII.

TO A MANUFACTURER AT NISMES.

SPUN COTTON.

CONTINUED.

YOU wish me, N———, to protect the manufactory of your partner B———. Permit me to inform you of the state of things, and you will yourself dictate to me my duty.

The spun cotton of Greece does not answer in France, because it is too much twisted and too unequal to be made use of in the light produce of our manufactures; but it is singularly well adapted to the coarse manufactures of Germany, because it takes the dying better than that of the Antilles, absorbs fewer substances, and is, by its very coarseness, more economical in the weaving. It is, on that account, in great request at Vienna; and there is exported annually to that city a prodigious quantity of it: a commerce, continual, immense, unknown in Europe, and of which the Count of Staremberg gave the idea and the taste to his country, not more than twenty years ago, by establishing, at Salonichi, a commercial house, which had factories

tories settled at Sérès, at Larissa, and throughout all Thessaly. Since the era of that establishment, the art of dying has produced here great profits. The Greeks soon turned their speculations towards this species of industry; and we have seen, in our days, those of Baba, Rapsani, Ambélakia, Larissa, Pharsalia, and, above all, the Greeks of Zagora, who are more enterprising than all the rest, establish manufactures in their countries. All these manufacturers are rivals of each other; all seek to supplant and to injure each other, and no man is more ingenious than a Greek in executing his vengeance.

Next to the manufactures of Ambélakia are those of Zagora, which have succeeded the best, because its waters are well calculated for dying, and facilitate, by the vicinity of Volo, the easy procuring of aly-zari, which is the colour the least expensive, and most plentiful, in the Levant.

It is this that has engaged, in these latter times, some enterprising Zagoriots to establish a large manufactory of red spun cotton in the village of *Cati-Kori*, and to associate with B——, in order to conceal themselves under a fictitious name. Under this name, indeed, the new manufacture has taken, and has, in a very short space of time, eclipsed every other. Jealousies have been therefore excited, and mischievous intriguers

intriguers have endeavoured, by every means in their power, to subject the manufactory of B——— to difficulties. They have given that French manufacturer a bitter draught, as well by depriving him of the waters, as by refusing him the wood necessary to heat his furnaces; at other times, by depriving him of those ingredients that are the most absolutely indispensable for the preparation of his colours; lastly, by exacting arbitrary tributes of him, and even by taking away his workmen from their work. Cati-Kori is contiguous to Macrinizza and to Portéria. The inhabitants of those villages have espoused the quarrels of individuals, and there is, at this day, a general contest, from which each party endeavours to come off victorious.

At the bottom, B——— is only a borrowed name. His manufacture is an establishment of pure personal industry; and, unless we take, at Marseilles, a fancy to the spun cottons of Greece, we shall have reason to believe, that this establishment will be more detrimental than beneficial to the national industry, since it turns into the manufactures of Germany the materials destined to supply the French manufactures.

Under this point of view, I do not think that I ought to protect the manufactory of B———, nor am I at all inclined to do it; but I shall always

always consider it as my duty to protect his person against the vexatious practices of the Zagoriots.

I hope that you will not be offended at my freedom. I am wholly devoted to the French commerce, but I will not benefit one merchant to the detriment of every other.

LETTER XIV.

Salonichi, 10 Fructidor, year 5.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you the information I have been able to collect on the art of manufacturing Morocco leather among the Turks. Their processes are little known to us, and they never can be, but in a vague manner, because the art of making Morocco leather is exercised in Turkey by a company, the members of which are bound to secresy by an oath. I have spared neither pains nor money to penetrate this secret. I know, however, that my information is imperfect; and you will yourself find, that I could not do better, with the best inclinations, when you know, that, not being able, notwithstanding the credit of my office, to enter the manufactories of the country, I have been obliged to draw my information from the reports that have been made to me; and that these reports, being incorrectly given by ignorant and rude Turks, are often translated still worse by my drogmans, who have no idea of our arts. These informations, however,

* August 28, 1797.

ever, imperfect as they are, have appeared to me sufficient to *put* artists *upon the scent*; and it is that circumstance which has determined me to send them to you. In order to be certain of the accuracy of the processes I am about to mention, direct them, I entreat you, to be made again. Experiments repeated will easily rectify my mistakes. In the present state of things, do not attend at all to the best travellers: they will never have either sufficient patience, or sufficient local information, to engage with rude and crafty workmen in all the details into which I have entered.

The MOROCCO LEATHER of TURKEY.

The Turks excel particularly in the preparation of red moroccos, which are made with the skins of goats, both male and female. In order to manage well the time, the processes, and the colours, the skins are prepared by masses of thirty-six. It has been for a long time reported, that the Turks make use of only salt and gall-nuts, in order to take off the hair; but this is an error, which is generally believed only on the credit of some travellers. It is true, that in a country, where the dryness of the air is extreme, the most trifling corrosives are sufficient to make the hair come off; but it is not the less true,

true, that lime is used in all the Turkish tanneries to effect that purpose.

The first operation consists in doubling the skins by the middle lengthwise, and in bundles, consisting of six, and throwing them into a pit full of lime, whence they are taken out, in order to be rinced in clear water. They are afterwards drained, and, when this is done, they are dried in the shade; they are afterwards piled up, and left in this state till they are sufficiently heated, in order that the hair may come off easily. The hair is taken off usually with the hand, or with a species of knife, destined for this purpose. It is requisite the hair should be taken off with dexterity, because on that depends the beauty of the skin; and, besides, the longer the hair is, and the more dexterously it is taken off, to the greater advantage it sells.

When the process of taking off the hair is finished, the skins are thrown again into another pit full of lime. This second process is intended to cleanse the skins on the side next the flesh, as the first had for its object the cleansing of them on the hairy or grain side. The Turkish tanners scrape them thus on both sides, without being obliged, as ours are, to sew them up all round like a sack, and to pour the tanned water in by the opening formed at the ends, as it were by the mouth of a funnel.

The

The second lime-pit is followed like the first, by a washing, from which the skins are passed through a decoction of dogs' dung. This decoction is made by mixing, in a large copper, thirty pounds of that dung with thirty pounds of water. The whole is beaten with sticks, in order that it may be mixed together; and, when that is done, a liquor is extracted from it in which the skins are soaked. This operation is performed with caution, and gradually. The workman takes the skins one after another, and passes them lightly several times over the surface of the liquor, holding each skin by the two extremities. When the skins have been thus gradually impregnated, they are thrown all together into a great tub, in which they are left to soak for twelve hours. They are afterwards cleaned in pure water, and purified again in a decoction of bran, in which they lie for three days. The decoction of bran softens the skins, and corrects, in some measure, the extreme astringency of the decoction made of dogs' dung.

When the skins are taken out of this decoction of bran, they are rinsed again in clear water, and wrung, in order to soften them; and, when they have been well softened, they are cured. This operation consists in spreading a thick layer of salt on the grain side, which is that which receives the dye. The salted skins

are

are piled up; and, the longer they continue in piles, the more they are ameliorated, because the salt supples and strengthens the leather. The operation of salt is judged to be of such importance, that tanners, in easy circumstances, who are not pressed to repay themselves the money they have advanced, leave the skins for two months in the brine.

The last steeping which the skins receive in dressing is that of dried figs. There are boiled in a copper twenty-four ounces of figs for each skin, and consequently fifty-four pounds for the whole mass. When the decoction is made, a thick syrup is extracted from it, which is thrown into a large tub in which the skins are soaked. In this state they are left till the moment they are proposed to be dried.

Some persons pretend that the liquor extracted from the figs makes the leather swell, softens it, and makes it supple, and that it is this preparation that makes it take cochineal and other colours the better.

The skins are taken out of the decoction of figs only to steep them in alum, which adapts them to receiving the dye immediately. When the skins have been steeped in alum, they are taken out: for this process a *pommelle** of cork

* This instrument is a plate usually made of lead, with holes fixed at the top of a pipe, to prevent filth from going through.

is

is made use of, which polishes the grain, raises it, and causes it to come out. The skin is then perfectly dressed, and nothing remains but to dye it.

In order to make that fine red colour, which constitutes all the celebrity of the Turkish Morocco leather, a composition is made consisting of various ingredients, which are mixed together, for a mass of thirty-six skins, in the following proportion.

	Drachms.
Cochineal	130
Round *suchet*, or *curcuma*,*	45
Gutta gamba	15
Gum arabic	10
White alum pulverized .	10
Bark of the pomegranate-tree,	10
Citron-juice	2
	Pounds.
Common water	120

It is to be observed, that alum is only put into this mixture at several times. It is mixed at first with the other ingredients, in quantities of

* The *suchet* of the Indies, *crocus Indicus*, *Arabicus curcuma*, is a tuberous knotty root of the colour of saffron. It has a sharp and bitter taste, and a smell similar to that of ginger. It is made use of in the East in ragouts. In dying, it heightens and relieves the scarlet.

three or four drachms, which are increased in the same proportion to the amount of ten or twelve drachms.

The colours thus mixed are thrown into a copper,* and are made to boil about two hours, till one-tenth of the water has been consumed. When the dressing is completed, the dying commences. The water must be managed with care, that it may be sufficient for the whole mass. For this purpose, the water is drawn out of the copper in small quantities, and it is poured thus into a large vessel, which is at hand, and in which the colour is. This operation is performed with dexterity. The workman takes the skin, folds it in two, from the head to the tail, the best side being outwards, and, taking hold of it by the two ends, he immerses it lightly in the coloured water. He afterwards stretches it on the *horse*,† and wrings it strongly with his hands. In proportion as the water is renewed in the shell, the skin is re-steeped; and the

* There is another mode of preparing the colour, which is done by infusing all the ingredients before mixing them with the cochineal. For this purpose they are put into a bag, which is put into hot water, and strongly pressed several times, in order to extract the essence of the ingredients. The water that is coloured is then mixed with the cochineal. This operation produces a clearer, but less strong, colour.

† An instrument on which tanners scrape their hides.

operation

operation is repeated till the skin is sufficiently coloured, or, as the Turks say, till *it is sufficiently loaded with colour*. It is then dried, and plunged again in a tub of water, or there are infused some leaves of sumac and some gall-nuts pulverized and sifted.* The quantity is, to two skins, one pound of sumac, one pound of gall, and three pounds of water. The water ought to be well warmed, when the sumac and the gall are infused, but it ought not to be boiling.

When the skins are well impregnated with this new water, they are taken out, and rubbed over with a sponge lightly wetted with pure water. The Morocco leather is afterwards polished, and receives a lustre by means of various wooden instruments well smoothed, which serve also to disengage from the surplus those particles of gall and sumac which might be incorporated with it. In order to give it the grain, it is rubbed with pumice-stone on a piece of polished marble.

Such are the processes made use of in the dying and preparing of red Morocco leathers. There are some tanners who boast of their being in possession of particular preparations;

* This process has nothing particular in it. It is most probably performed after the dying, in order to confirm and heighten the colour.

but these pretended secrets, which are drawn from the juice of certain plants, are, upon examination, reduced to some gradations in the dying of the colours. It is thus that, when the red is weak, it is strengthened by mixing the colour with some small quantities of pulverized curcuma; and that, when it is too heavy and too much overcharged, it is made clear by mixing with it a little borax. In dying, as in painting, there is this advantage, that the colours can be tried previously to their being applied.

The yellow Morocco leathers are prepared in a manner similar to the red; but, in the yellow, the *graine d'Avignon* is the chief colour, whereas cochineal is the principal in the others.

The Turks know how to give Morocco leather any colour; but they excel only in red and yellow. Their black has less lustre than ours, their green will not last, and their blue fades still more quickly. However, we may be assured, in general, that the Turks excel us as much in the manufacturing and dying of Morocco leather as they are inferior to us in manufacturing other species of leather.

There are in Macedonia, and in all the provinces bordering on the Danube, excellent buffaloes' and bulls' hides, but the Turks know not how to tan them. They throw them, as we do, into pits, where they are powdered with tan, that

that is to say, with the bark of young oak ground and reduced to dust in mills destined for that purpose; but these pits are ill-constructed and shallow, and the hides are not suffered to continue in them long enough. The Turks powder the strongest hides only two or three times, whereas we powder them five or six times. The Turkish hides, being thus destitute of proper nourishment, continue raw, which is the reason why they stretch easily, suck in water, and become rotten.

Another fault of the Turkish tanners is, that they are not choice in the tan they use: they make use, indifferently, in their manufactories, of old or new bark. However, the fresher the tan is, the stronger it is; for, its principal action on the hides being by its astringent qualities, it is clear that it cannot be so good when it is old.

All these causes are the reason why the Turks are so much inferior to us in dressing their strong hides. Thus they manufacture no hides but for their own use; but they sell to foreigners most of their Morocco leather, which is designated in commerce under the name of *cordouans*. The Greek manufactories, which furnish leather for these sales, are those of Larissa in Thessaly, Janina in Epirus, and Salonichi in Macedonia. The Germans alone purchase *cordouans* annually, of these manufacto-

ries, to the amount of sixty thousand piasters.* The French have made several unsuccessful attempts on this article, and they appear to be disgusted for ever with the commerce of hides. They could not export, however, with profit, either buskins, as the Hungarians do, or pocket-books, as those of Barbary do; but they might export raw hides, and especially those of buffaloes, which would be excellent for the soles of shoes.

There are made at Constantinople, with Turkish leather, pocket-books, sword-belts, Tartar belts, housings, and other little beautiful works. The embroidery, with which these are embellished, is wrought with such art, that it appears to be covered with spangles and scales of gold; but these spangles and these scales are nothing more than flat golden threads with which the leather is embroidered here as we embroider on stuffs.

OBSERVATIONS.

From what I have said on the preparation of the Morocco leather, it appears that the principal processes made use of in the Levant are, lime-pits, decoctions of dogs' dung, bran, and

* About £12,000.

figs,

figs, and lastly the steeping of the skins in alum, which disposes them immediately to receive the colour, which, at present, is cochineal; but, as the processes of the Turks can be traced up to the time of the Arabs, it is probable that, before cochineal was known, they made use of vermilion.

The working is performed with the cups of acorns or with gall-nuts. At Uskup or *Scupi*, in Servia, they make use of the bark of a pine that grows on the highest summits of Scardus; and, in some Greek tanneries, sumac is substituted for gall. This last ingredient has this advantage over the former, that, containing less astringent particles, it does not dry up the leather.

The yellow Morocco leather is worked previously to its being dyed, and the red Morocco leather is dyed before it is worked. It is this that constitutes the characteristic difference of the two dyes. It is not easy to find the cause of this difference; for, if the working heightens and consolidates the colour, as some dyers assert, why, in the dying of cotton, is the red always given after it has undergone the operation denominated *engalage*?

In dying yellow, the principal ingredients are, the *graine d'Avignon*, alum, curcuma, citron-juice, and the bark of the pomegranate-tree. The three former ingredients could be easily made use of by us; but the Turks pretend that

the Morocco leathers of Constantinople owe the extreme beauty of their yellow to the two latter.

In dying red, there are made use of cochineal, vermilion, gutta gamba, gum arabic, the pomegranate-tree, alum, and some other trivial ingredients, to which the fine red colour of the Levant cannot be attributed. This circumstance leads me to think that our tanners might be able the more easily to imitate the red than the yellow Morocco leathers.

Some travellers, who could not analyze the processes followed in the manufacturing of Morocco leather in the Levant, have written, that the process followed at Nicosia in Cyprus, and at Diaibékir, in the manufacture of that article, are different from those pursued at Constantinople. I can assure you, from all the accounts that have reached me, that the modes practised in those several manufactories are, at the bottom, the same, and that they differ only in some trifling processes that are by no means essential. For instance, there are manufactories, where, instead of figs and bran, must and honey are used. There are others where the skins are prepared with oil of sesame, with which the grain-side is rubbed, in order to soften it, and to prevent it from crisping or becoming brittle. Lastly, there are some manufacturers, who, without steeping the skin in cochineal, content themselves

themselves with covering the grain-side with cotton impregnated with the colour; but, in all, after steeping the skins in lime-pits, and washing them in running water, they give the decoction of dogs' dung.

The dungs of which this decoction is made are diluted, till they become of the consistency of a pulp, more or less thick, which is applied in two ways; it is either spread on the skin as pomatum is, or it is given by immersion.

The decoction of dogs' dung is a practice reckoned very important. In the first place, it *brings down* the skin, and prepares it for swelling by fermentation. Secondly, it cleanses the *grain*, and disposes the hide to be well impregnated with the colour.

I cannot be persuaded that the decoction of dung is so essential in the preparation of the skin as the Turks assert. I think that other ordures might be substituted for it, because all fœcal substances, in general, open, penetrate, and stretch the hide, and dispose it to receive the dying. This, at least, is certain, that sheep's dung is used with success in Greece in dying cotton.

But what ought to excite our observation in studying the processes of the Levantines is, that the Turks spend less labour than we do in washing the leather; and this, perhaps, is one of the principal causes of the suppleness of their

their leathers. The power of water hardens the skin, and gives it the consistency and stiffness of parchment. The Turks, instead of washing the hides, have, by steeping them repeatedly in unctuous liquors, contrived to make their Morocco leathers incorporate more easily, and gives them a greater softness.

I will not conclude these observations without begging you to remark that there is nothing more difficult than to penetrate the secret of the Turkish tanners. Those people have all the pride and all the ignorance of barbarians. Not being able to conceive why we wish to learn any thing of them, they endeavour to elude our inquiries, or, if they do answer us, it is only to disengage themselves of our importunities, and sometimes even to deceive us the better. You know, besides, that, in every country of the world, a workman, who belongs to any company, considers himself as an initiated person, and regards every amateur as an impertinent adept.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Salonichi, 25 Fructidor, year 5.*

I SHALL include, in this letter, the other manufactured articles, which enter into the view of Greek exports.

TURKEY CARPETS.

There are carpets manufactured at Salonichi, which, though not so fine, yet are as good as those of Smyrna. These carpets are sold in the commerce under the name of Turkey carpets. The materials, of which these carpets are made, resemble, in a small degree, that of our tapestry of Haute Lisse. It is composed of pieces which resemble each other; but it is by very different processes that the design and the velvet nap are obtained.

The Turks work the carpets by pieces, which they afterwards collect together like pieces of inlaid work, and compose of them a whole,† on

* September 13, 1797.

† The Turks are obliged to work on very small elements, on account of the smallness of their materials: this is the reason

on which the design is delineated by the aid of the most brilliant and best-adapted colours. But the velvet nap is not formed, as has been commonly thought, by threads interwoven in the warp, and cut after the contexture, nor by threads of a second warp, which are cut off on the rods, in proportion as the stuff warps; it is simply formed by threads, stopped by a knot over each thread of the warp, and supported by the ends of other threads, that jut out between every row of knots. It is this mode, which is peculiar to the Turkey carpets, which distinguishes the Oriental carpet manufactory from the European. We have long wished to imitate this mode, which we think more perfect than our own: we deceive ourselves. The Turkey carpets certainly deserve their ancient reputation; but they owe it solely to the great beauty of the colours, and the wool made use of in manufacturing carpets.

The Turks pay extreme attention to the selection of the first materials. They seek for equality in the threads, in order to render the warp more smooth and beautiful; and they seek, with not less solicitude, for soft wool, in order to render the velvet nap more thick and

son why their *namas*, which are small carpets made use of at prayer, are held in much greater estimation than those of their carpets, which are set apart for their apartments.

better

better calculated to preserve the shades of the dying. They also weave with a most minute attention, lest there should remain any vacant spaces in the wool. But it is from the execution of these simple processes, and the perfect adherence of the points or ends, which constitute the velvet nap, and of the threads which support them, on which the beauty of the Turkish carpets depends: it is owing to this adherence that the gradations of the colours present to the eye the pleasing effect of colours well fixed, which, by separating every part of the design, preserve the finest unison in the whole. It is also owing to the same cause, that the stuff acquires more solidity, and the velvet nap preserves that elasticity, which renders the walking on it so soft and so pleasant. I have seen Turkish carpets, on which were small velvet stalks, waving like fine hair, from seven to eight inches in length, and on which one walks with as much pleasure as on a meadow enamelled with flowers.

This choiceness in selecting the materials, and this execution in the workmanship, ought to double the price of the work. The carpets of Turkey, therefore, can never contend, for quick sale, with those of England. I caused some very common ones to be made at Salonichi, for which I have not paid too dearly, and

which

which cost me as much as our finest carpets of La Savonnerie.

We may therefore think, that the carpets of Turkey will ever be, in the Frank commerce, only an useless article of luxury. They will continue to serve in Europe as ornaments, in the same manner as the porcelain of Japan. I shall content myself, therefore, with thus slightly mentioning this article. Of all the places in Europe, London and Marseilles alone export hence any large quantity of carpets: but it is less an article of commerce than of adventure.

GREEK VESTS.

The northern part of Macedonia produces annually from fifteen to twenty thousand okes of silk, which is finer than that of Zagora, and all of which is spun in that country. One half of this is consumed in the manufactory of *pochs*, which are a species of *chals*, with which the janisaries surround their turbans; and the other half is set apart for the manufactory of silk vests, which may be considered as a valuable fragment of the industry of the Greeks in their finest age. When we compare these vests with the accounts which the ancients have given us of their *gauze of Cos*, we are apt to believe that silk has been substituted for flax in the modern mode

mode of weaving, as they present a network the most regular and the most free, and have a softness and pliancy that are not to be found in our European linen cloths. The ancients designated these delicate articles under the names of *woven wind*, *linen clouds*, *ætherial habits*, which are characteristic expressions; and the Anacreontic poets delight in boasting, in their verses, of their transparency. Horace alone, among the ancient poets, wished his *Lycia* to appear before him as a *shadow*, and *naked* under her vest.

Nec Coæ referunt jam tibi purpuræ.

But it was jealousy alone that dictated this language. Indeed, the Greek vests form a better drapery for naked figures than linen; they delineate the outlines better; and they seem to have been woven for the Loves by the hands of the Graces. Salonichi exports annually ten thousand of these vests, which are sold from eight to ten piasters each, and are in the greatest request in all the cities of Turkey, because their quality is far superior to those manufactured at Brousse, Chios, and Smyrna. The finest are exported to Constantinople, where they constitute part of the dress of the women of the seraglio, as also of the Greek princesses of *Fanal*.

The

The Greek vests have never been hitherto regarded in our commerce but as an article of curiosity: they might become an article of importance, if our ladies would take a fancy to them. They would then probably set aside the muslin vests, and they would occasion no apparent loss to our muslin manufactories; because, their dearness would put it in the power of only a few women to purchase them. It is this consideration that has led me to advise some experiments. You will, perhaps, accuse me of pretending to send to you, to Paris, from the extremity of the Archipelago, a new fashion. This pretension ill accords with the gravity of a consul; but will you not pardon me for thinking of fashions in the same manner as an English minister thought of religious missions? "*I* "*think the missions are good, because the mis-*" *sionaries teach their new converts to wear our* "*woollen cloths.*"

The ABATS of MACEDONIA.

The abats are coarse cloths, six ells long and half an ell broad, destined for the dress of the poor. They are also made use of in packing fine tobacco. This produce of Macedonian industry is manufactured by the Yeuruks, who clothe themselves with it. The Yeuruks are the

the descendants of the ancient colonists, who, at the time of the conquest of Greece, were transplanted thither from Turkomania, in order to restrain the conquered Greeks, and also those who were unsubdued. They occupy at present the villages assigned to them. These villages are situated on the heights, and command the plain. On the slightest report of a revolt, the Yeuruks arm themselves, and descend into the Greek villages to re-establish order. The Greeks are not, like other nations, the slaves of one or of many despots: they are an entire nation, which has arms always uplifted over it. The Yeuruks are labourers or shepherds, and they have transported into the north of Greece the uncultivated and simple manners of their ancestors the Turkmans. During a war, they serve the Turkish army in the capacity of pioneers. In the two last wars, the Othoman cabinet wished to organize them into regular companies; but it failed, because they are incapable of discipline. These rude mountaineers never sympathize with the janisaries, who, being originally *children of the tribute*, are almost wholly of Greek original. These fear them, and behave to them with that unjust scorn and contempt, which citizens invariably shew towards the inhabitants of villages. The Yeuruks are the most laborious race of men in Macedon. The woollen cloths, the manufacturing of which amuses their leisure

hours, augment considerably the profit of their herds. They manufacture annually from seventy to eighty thousand pieces, each of which is sold at the rate of two piasters.* The greater part of these woollen cloths are sent to Smyrna and into Anadoulia. Five thousand pieces are exported into Italy, and there are exported annually to Marseilles from seven to eight thousand pieces, which are re-exported to the Antilles, where they are used in clothing the negroes. But, in 1788, successful prices, and a quick and continued demand, rose the exportation to thirty thousand pieces. These exports augmented still more in 1789. The allurement of a large profit, the seduction of example, the immense quantities sent by some merchants, occasioned these vast exportations. From the glutting which they caused, this article soon experienced a diminution in the exportation, a fall in price, losses, and complaints. A total suspension was the consequence of these immoderate purchases. In 1789 there were exported to Marseilles scarcely two thousand abats, and in 1791 only fifteen hundred. The war will settle the balance; and we must hope that, on the re-establishment of peace, this branch of commerce will be reduced to a level.

* A piaster is nearly equivalent to 4*s.* sterling. The total sum is therefore nearly equal to £14,000 or £16,000 sterling.

The

The CAPOTS of ZAGORA.

The capots of Zagora are celebrated in all the ports of the Mediterranean. They are made with a thick shaggy wool, which is manufactured in the villages of Zagora, and which is so well woven, that it is impenetrable to water. From Zagora the capots are sent to Salonichi or to Volo, whence they are exported to the place of their destination. Five thousand are exported to the ports of the Archipelago, of Syria, and of Egypt; two thousand to those of the Adriatic, and nearly as many to the ports of the Mediterranean. Each capot sells from ten to twenty piasters,* according to their degree of fineness, and is an article of great importance to our merchant-adventurers.

* From £2 to £4 sterling.

LETTER XVI.

Pella, 5 Vendemiaire, year 6.*

IMPORTS.

I HAVE sent you the view of Greek exports: I send you now that of the imports. I shall commence with the English commerce.

The ENGLISH COMMERCE.

The French and the English are the only *Frank nations*† that have at Salonichi an administration organized in all its branches. They have each there a titular consul, who has a settled jurisdiction, which he exercises over the factories, which, by their uniting together, constitute a species of colony, governed by the national laws. Does the civil and independent existence, which these two nations enjoy, compensate

* September 27, 1798. The second volume of the original work commences with this letter.

† In the Levant, the Europeans are called *Franks*, and the *nation*, the body of merchants of a nation. Thus the Levantines say, the *French nation*, the *English nation*.

pensate for the expense it occasions? and, if it be done to flatter the national pride, is it not burthensome to commerce? It is certain, at least, that France has multiplied, in the Levant, in too many respects, the powers of her consuls, and it is much to be desired, that the government would reform the consuls of the petty ports in the Mediterranean, and allow them to subsist only in the great ones with all the attributes due to the chiefs of the French commerce. The English consuls, being better appointed than those of France, make every where a greater appearance, and it is appearance that classes nations in the eyes of ignorant and stupid persons, who constitute the majority in every country of the world. If we wish, however, to have good subjects among foreign agents, they should have a little with which to trade, and they must pay well, in order to trade with advantage. The English have good consuls, for the same reason that they have good workmen.

The English commerce of the Levant is in the hands of a company, erected, in 1606, under the reign of James the First. Every English protestant may become a member of it, on paying a fine of twenty guineas, and a guinea and some pence sterling for petty expenses. The company consists of four hundred members, who alone can trade in the seas of the Levant, but they can carry on this trade only on their own

bottoms, in vessels belonging to the company. They swear, on entering, that they will not lend either their name or their adventure to any person; and they engage, by the same oath, to receive only the productions of Turkey in exchange for the values furnished in national productions.* Every remittance, every export in specie, is forbidden them; but they can circulate their funds from one port in the Mediterranean to another, in order to be made use of in necessary articles. No English merchant can trade in the Levant, unless he is a member of the company, or unless he pays a duty of *twenty per cent.* which is equivalent to a formal exclusion.† The company is governed by a governor, whose

* They have no idea of a similar folly, that has crept into an English regulation; since the English commodities are not sold, or are sold at a loss, the English merchants must necessarily be ruined, or suspend their operations. This idea of not purchasing with gold, in order not to lose the balance, is one of those antiquated ideas, which has poisoned the economical administration of every nation.

† The existence of this company is one of the causes of the languor of the English commerce in the Levant. The number of its members is so small, that, finding that they can make use of the whole of their capitals in a manner as certain and as profitable as in a beaten track of commerce, they seek neither to establish new branches of commerce, nor to revive those that are lost. It is the genius of companies to prefer a certain and moderate profit to an excessive but uncertain profit:

whose office is perpetual, and by a treasurer and secretary, whose offices are only during pleasure. A committee of thirteen members is charged with the direction of affairs, and, at stated periods, it gives an account to all the members of the company, at a general meeting. No act is valid until it is signed by the thirteen members, who compose the committee. The company nominates the ambassador and the consuls, whom it pays, and whom the king commissions. The consul of Alexandria must be excepted, who is both nominated and appointed by the king; because, being placed there to watch lest the commerce of India should diverge into the Mediterranean Sea through the isthmus of Suez, he is rather the agent of the India Company than of the English commerce.

fit: but, with this genius, they always do to-morrow what should have been done yesterday. When one or many traders attempt to establish a new branch of commerce, it is but just to grant them a short monopoly, in order that he or they may indemnify themselves for their risks, and that they may gather the fruits of their labours. This is their patent; but, if this patent has an unlimited duration, it loses its end, and enriches one family, instead of enriching a nation. This question has been often agitated in the House of Lords, and has never been considered in a right point of view. The Turkey Company has been always compared to the India Company. The India Company is not only a commercial company; it is a *sovereign* company, and has gotten possession of Indostan, in the same manner as Djezzar Pacha has seized his Pachalik of Acre.

The other consuls are all members of the Levant (or Turkey) Company: they take the usual oath, and also the test; and they oblige themselves, by a particular oath, to do justice, expeditiously and truly, without respect of persons.

The English have not multiplied their factories in the Levant much, but each of those factories revolves on an immense capital, equivalent at least to that of three French houses. This conduct is prudent and economical; for, it is with commercial establishments as with the execution of agricultural works: the greatest are those that yield the greatest profit; the expenses of the execution of such works absorb all the profits of the smaller.

The English factory here consists of two houses. They sell woollen cloths, châlons, (net-work,) linens, tin, lead, raw and wrought iron, clock and jewel work, and some colonial commodities. I will run through these articles.

The WOOLLEN-CLOTH TRADE.

The woollen-cloth trade was formerly in great repute in the Levant. It began to decline in 1731, under the first ministry of Maurepas, who encouraged our trade, and re-established the

the inspection of it in its pristine vigour. Since that time the credit of the English woollen-cloth trade has fallen. Since that time, also, the sale of the *Londres* has diminished progressively by the competition of our *londrins*, which are made to imitate them. The *Londres* are light, thick, woollen cloths, so called because they were first manufactured at London. The assortment was at first, invariably, one-third green, one-third blue, and one-third red. The demand at present consists wholly of blue.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 15,200*

The *mahouds*, which are a woollen cloth of a quality superior to the Londres, keep up their sale better. These cloths are of a fine texture, and of a lightness which we are utterly unable to imitate. Their colours are fine, and of a lustre that gives them relief. The Turks make use of them for their spring and autumnal dresses; their exorbitant price alone obstructs the consumption of them.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 74,520†

* £3040. † £14,800.

The CHALONS. (Net-Work.)

The *châli* of England, vulgarly called the châlon, is a species of crossed serge, which has for some time past been gaining favour in the Levant. This stuff is of a texture superior to the finest French serges, and has revenged the English for the discredit into which their woollen cloths had fallen, by giving a mortal blow to our woollen-cloth trade. The châlon of England contends even with advantage against the *châli* of Angora, whose texture is incomparably the finest, but which has neither its lustre or celebrity.

What has extended the consumption of the châlons, is their good look. Our wools of Berry and of the Bourbonnais are, for their lightness, equally as proper as those of England for the texture of these stuffs, and we might contend advantageously with the English by the brilliancy of our colours and the excellence of the workmanship. The manufacture of châlons merits greater encouragement, as these stuffs might become one of the richest branches of our commerce in Turkey.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 180,000.*

* £36,000.

CALICOES.

CALICOES.

There is a vast quantity of muslins and calicoes consumed throughout the Levant. The muslins are made use of for sashes and turbans. They are also used for women's veils, and for the scarves called *macramas*, with which the Greeks cover their breast whenever they appear in public. With regard to the calicoes, they serve for the dress of wealthy Turks. These calicoes are preferred to our silk-manufactures of Lyons, because they are lighter, and bear washing better. The consumption of them, however, diminishes every day, although they continue to be approved of, and they compose what is called here the *grand dress*; but their excessive dearness does not put it in the power of any to purchase them, except the wives of beys and agas. They are replaced, in the dress of women less wealthy, by the *bours*, manufactured in the principal cities of the empire, and especially at Constantinople, Aleppo, and Damascus. These *bours* are made in imitation of the calicoes; and, if the Turks have not been able to imitate them in fineness and quality, they have perfectly succeeded in the taste and designs. There are even, at Aleppo and Damascus, manufactories, in which is used the spun

spun cotton of India, and in which are made *bours*, which, for their textures, are little inferior to the finest calicoes of Bengal.

"But, if the consumption of the printed calicoes diminishes in Greece, that of muslins increases every day. The English sell the greatest quantity of them. They are exported by sea to Smyrna, whence they are dispersed among the other ports. Some English merchants, established in India, attempted to carry on this commerce through Egypt. They were disgusted with it, by the misfortunes which the caravan experienced in 1779, in its passage from Suez to Cairo. It was generally believed, that it was Sir Robert Ainslie,* ambassador from England to Constantinople, who caused it to be plundered by the Arabs, in order to intimidate the merchants of Bengal, who would not have abandoned the project of opening to themselves a short and easy communication with Constantinople. Since that period, the India muslins, which are not conveyed to Turkey by the commerce of Armenia, and by the way of Bassora, have been exported thither in English vessels, or they arrive here by land from Holland, across

* I could much wish that Sir Robert Ainslie had acquitted himself of a crime which all Europe imputes to him; for, it is dreadful to think that a man of honour should have been the blind instrument of the revenge of a company of merchants.

Germany.

Germany. But the expenses they incur, both in Holland and England, are so considerable, that the English and Dutch can never take any decided advantage over the Armenians. If France should resume, on the conclusion of peace, her Indian commerce, she alone would rival those three nations, and even supplant them, by landing her cargoes at Marseilles, whence they could be easily exported to the ports of Turkey.

The consumption of calicoes at Salonichi does not exceed five or six hundred thousand piasters,* but it amounts to eight or ten millions of piasters at Constantinople,† and is immense throughout the whole Othoman empire. To endeavour to appropriate to ourselves, to the disadvantage of the English, the profits of this rich provision, would be an attempt worthy of being encouraged; and I am persuaded that attempt would succeed, if it were but made.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 100,000.‡

* £100,000, or £120,000.

† £1,600,000, or £1,800,000.

‡ £20,000.

TIN.

TIN.

There are sold at Salonichi from five to six hundred cantaars* of English tin, which are sold at the rate of from eighty to a hundred piasters† the cantaar. This tin comes here directly, during peace, and by the way of Leghorn, during war. It is brought here in rods, well arranged in barrels, which invariably weigh one hundred and sixty okes.‡

The English tin is here, as every where else, in great repute. The counties of Cornwall and Devon yield the best. In scarce years, there comes from Spain, through the way of Italy, or of Marseilles, a very soft kind of tin, that comes from America, and which is brought to Salonichi in pigs, weighing forty okes.§

Some tin also comes from Germany. That which is dug out of the mines of Schlakenwald, in Bohemia, and Altemberg, in Saxony, is in the greatest request.

The tin that is imported from Hamburgh is in pigs of twenty-two okes,‖ or in small ingots,

* 82,200 weight. † From £16 to £20.

‡ Nearly equal to 500 pounds weight.

§ 120 pounds. ‖ About 70 pounds.

in

in the form of a brick, whence they are called brick tin.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 58,666.*

LEAD.

The English factory sells one thousand cantaars† of lead in pigs. The price of the cantaar is seventeen piasters.‡

It sells also some lead for fowling; but the quantity of it that is consumed cannot be ascertained with accuracy, because it varies so much every year. It is very great in severe winters, because, at that time, the peasant being unable to follow his labours in the field, devotes himself wholly to pleasure or to the wants of the chase.

We can never rival the English in the article of lead, because the mines that have been opened in France are very poor, and the greatest part of the tin that is consumed there comes to us, from England, in pigs. What constitutes the goodness of the English tin is, its extreme

* £11,730.

† About 1,730,000 pounds.

‡ Nearly equal to £3 : 10*s.* sterling.

purity :

purity: it is seldom mixed with any extraneous substances.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 11,000.*

RAW and WROUGHT IRON.

The English merchants sell iron, both raw and wrought, to the amount of ten or fifteen thousand piasters. England provides the Levant, as it does all the rest of Europe, with the finest and best wrought hardware; but, as the Turks are not very difficult, they prefer the German hardware, on account of its being very cheap.

The tin-men of this country have, for these two years past, taken a liking to the English iron, because it is more ductile, and stretches more easily under the hammer: but this is still there a rising article.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 10,000.†

CLOCKS.

The trade in clocks, which the English carry on in the Levant, is of a richness of which no

* £2400. † £2000.

idea is conceived in Europe. There are sold annually, at Salonichi, thirty dozens of watches; as many in the Morea; three hundred dozens at Constantinople; four hundred dozens in Syria; and two hundred and fifty dozens in Egypt. Each watch is worth from eighty to a hundred and twenty piasters;* and, if we value it at the mean price of one hundred piasters, this article produces to the English commerce one million three hundred and thirty-two thousand piasters.†

The consumption of this article, at Salonichi, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - Piasters 36,000.‡

One can scarcely believe that such a prodigious quantity of clock-work could be consumed in Turkey. *Prior* himself, the English clock-maker, who exported the largest quantity, expressed his surprise at it one day to one of his friends, and said, pleasantly, that the streets of the Turkish cities must be all paved with English watches.

However this be, the consumption of watches must be very great in a country where the use of sun-dials and of public clocks is unknown, and where the hour of prayer must be determined five times a day precisely.

* From £16 to £20. † About £266,400 sterling.
‡ £7200.

The watches destined for the use of the Levant have a Turkish dial, and are composed of three cases, two of silver, and the third, which is the outermost one, is of shell, which is so fine and so well wrought that it constitutes the most striking merit of the English watches. Is it on account of solidity that the Turks will have their watches with a triple case, or rather from caprice and whim? This is not easy to determine. The Turks carry their watches in their bosom covered with a small stuff purse, and they say, that the outermost case is made with a view to preserve the watch from sweat; but sweat turns shell much more easily than silver, and the outermost case is always of shell. I think that the Turks have their watches with three cases, merely because it is the custom, and custom is the fashion here.

Thick and broad watches are those in the greatest request. The Turks do not open them as we do, in order to examine their springs, when they wish to purchase them: they are content with appreciating them by their weight. The dealers of this country in clocks, who buy them by wholesale, in order to retail them, are very little better connoisseurs; they pay attention only to the name of the maker, which is always inscribed on the dial. The masters or makers most esteemed are, *George Prior*, *Benjamin Barber*, and *Périgal*. George Prior is known

known throughout Europe, and merits his reputation. That artist puts his name only to good watches that proceed from his shop. He puts to others an ideal name, which is usually that of *George Charles*. Benjamin Barber makes use also of a fictitious name for the watches that are of his manufacture; and, as he takes, as well as Prior, the name of George Charles, those two artists have on this subject a suit that has lasted for a long time.

Périgal works more elegantly, but with less solidity than Prior and Barber. *Markwick* and *Markham* are fictitious names. It is an old extinct clock-manufactory, whose name some London watch-makers have borrowed, lest the Turks should be startled by new names.

The proportion which these different masters have furnished for exportation is four-tenths for Prior, two-tenths for Barber, one-tenth for Périgal, one-tenth equally for Markwick and Markham, and two-tenths for various other masters.

Gold watches are disposed of with difficulty; they form only a twentieth part in the assortments, because the mussulman religion represents them as superfluous objects to the Turks. None but the pachas and beys purchase them. Whenever those lords wish to procure a fine watch of this kind, they usually commission, for this purpose, the English or the French

merchants settled at their port of the Mediterranean, and they specify the artist's name. If he is at London, George Prior; and Berthoud or Bréguet, if at Paris. They prefer enamelled or engraven cases, and they generally cause them to be mounted with jewels.

The English have no competitors but the Genevese in their clock-trade in the Levant. But the clock-trade of Geneva contends with difficulty with that of England, because the Genevese will never confine themselves so servilely as the English do to the capricious tastes of the consumer; and, besides, they know not how to work, with so much art, the shell-case that covers the two silver cases. The essays that have been made in France have met with still less success.

But, at the bottom, the true cause of the disrepute in which the French and Genevese watches are held, notwithstanding their cheapness, is their weakness. They cannot bear blows; and, however stupid the Turkish purchaser may be, he is not long the dupe of their falseness.

The trade in clock-work has doubled within these fifty years past in Europe. It is probable that it will be always increasing with the progress of society; for, wherever civilization exists, time is a precious article, and its value renders the instrument necessary that portions it out.

out. This trade ought, therefore, to fix the attention of government. We have, in this respect, one advantage which foreign nations cannot contest with us. We possess, to a higher degree than they, the art of making pretty cases, and of decorating them with an exquisite taste. We reign over Europe by fashion, and we should avail ourselves of the general inclination, that every where pervades, of imitating us, in order to enrich our trade in clock-work.

If the English and Genevese have taken away from us this branch of industry, it is not, that France has not produced such good workmen as those two nations, but it is because the French passion having been always to mistake the hands that work on mechanical articles, our good artists have always finished by quitting their own country. Latterly there have been some excellent memoirs made, in order to point out the means of multiplying among us the manufactories of clock-work; but these memoirs have not been read or have been despised.

Before the revolution, there was formed at Paris, in order to promote the progress of clock-work, a society of artists, known under the name of the *Society of Arts*. This establishment, in which were Clairaut, Leroi, and some other celebrated mechanics, would have contributed to perfect the manufactory of clocks and

watches, if the rivalship of some celebrated clock-makers had not broken it some years after it had been formed. It is much to be desired, that government would employ itself now in the re-establishment of a similar society. We should succeed better with encouragements prudently conducted, and by carefully removing those petty jealousies, those rivalships of profession, which may affect the lower class of artists, but which should never enter into the soul of a great artist.

TOYS and JEWELS.

The English usually ornament the cases of their watches with some precious jewels, as cases,* chains, bracelets, and other articles of jewellery or goldsmith's ware; but they must take care to send only collected smooth pieces of work; for, works of relief are manufactured on the spot.

The goldsmith's trade is still in the same state in Greece as it has been here from the time of Homer. The Greeks and the Turks are very inferior to us in every kind of work in which

* This is to be understood of the third or outermost case, which is usually made of shell or other transparent substance.

beauty

beauty of shape, taste of design, and delicacy of workmanship, must be united; but they know very well how to connect and mix various metals, and they execute, on their sword-belts, on the handles of their sabres, and on the sheaths of their daggers, charming works, which are comparable to that executed on the shield of Achilles. You will form an idea sufficiently just, respecting these articles of workmanship, if you will cast your eyes over the old French toys made at Paris in the time of Charles IX. and on which you may observe many subjects represented by the sole aid of gold and silver variously combined in a full ground. All the art of these toys consists in an infinite number of small pieces collected and soldered together, which, by the variety of their colours, detach from the field every separate subject, and give it an agreeable appearance.

Fillagree-work is also very well understood in Turkey, but it is not comparable to that made at Venice.

Of late years, the Turks have received from Paris and London some precious stones, which come from the west to the east on account of the misfortunes of Europe; but these exports have not succeeded, because the taste of the consumers has not been sufficiently consulted. The Turks prefer and seek only *white* diamonds cut into *roses* or *brilliants*. Notwithstanding

this their good taste, I have seldom seen diamonds in Turkey that are *clear* and without *flaws*. This proceeds, doubtless, from the clumsiness of the Turkish workmen, who, in breaking the rocks, give the diamonds such hard blows that they crack them.

The Turkish diamonds that are most remarkable for the beauty and transparency of their *water* never have that brightness and lustre which the *European cutting* gives them. The Grand Signior has some that certainly are very fine, but all the diamonds of his highness have been cut or touched by French lapidaries.

The sapphire, amethyst, topaz, and other hard and transparent stones, that have the property of losing their colour in fire, furnish the Turks with factitious diamonds, which are sold for true ones; and it is the Jews, who take upon them here, as every where else, the charge of deceiving the eyes, in order to cheat fools with impunity out of their money.

The French may, perhaps, sell in the Turkish *bezesteins* cases and other small enamelled works. I have seen, in the hands of several beys, thick pieces of *enamel*, whose lustre alone charmed them. But our artists must have taken care to paint, instead of figures proscribed by Islamism, landscapes and flowers. Some German artists have attempted this new branch with success. They have made *pinks* and *roses*, whose enamel

enamel is touched with infinite grace. The Swede *Zink* has already made himself noticed, before them, by the fine skill of his designs and the brilliancy of his colours. It appears that that artist possessed a mode of work and substances peculiar to himself, and without which his works would never have had that freedom of pencil, that bloom, that truth, and that ground, which give them all the beauty and colouring of nature.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - Piasters 20,000.*

COLONIAL COMMODITIES.

The colonial commodities which the English sell in Greece are, four barrels of white ginger, nine thousand piasters;† thirty barrels of pepper, six thousand piasters;‡ four barrels of sugar in loaves, two thousand piasters;§ from twelve to fifteen barrels of indigo from Carolina and Bengal, twenty thousand piasters;‖ and three or four barrels of cochineal, ten thousand piasters.¶ This cochineal is finer than that of the Havannah, and, besides, always sells twenty-five for one hundred.

* £4000. † £1800. ‡ £1200.
§ £400. ‖ £4000. ¶ £2000.

To

To these commodities must be added two or three thousand okes of logwood from Campechy and Sainte-Marthe, and some barrels of coffee from Grenada and Jamaica. This latter article is a rising branch of commerce, which does not promise any great increase. To this coffee, whose berry is thick and yellow, that of Martinico is preferred, which, from its smallness and colour, resembles more that of Moka, which is coffee from its excellence. The taste is only the second sense in commerce, and the most certain temptation is that which deceives the sight. This is the reason why the coffee of Martinico sells in Turkey at a price nearly equal to that of Moka.

The English have made this year another attempt with the sugar of Jamaica, which does not promise them more success: they exported eighteen barrels of raw molasses. The enormous expenses with which that article has been loaded, on account of its value, its relative dearness, the loss and difficulty of the sale, every thing presages that this new attempt will be unsuccessful.

The consumption of the colonial commodities, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - Piasters 47,000.*

The total consumptions, at approximate sums, are - - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 558,320.†

* £9,400. † £111,664.

P. S.

P. S. I subjoin here a letter, written at a more favourable period, to a merchant of Marseilles, and which is a necessary supplement to that which I have written to you now. You will find there, that it would be easy for us to deprive the English of the commerce in calicoes. I am not ignorant that the Indian commerce absorbs, without making any return, a considerable part of our specie; and that commerce is to every nation of Europe a gulph that swallows up every thing without making any return. But I know, also, that the only way to carry on this trade, with less disadvantage, is to carry it on by commission. This is the way to increase our consumptions by the profits of our re-sales. For this species of commerce we have more opportunities than the English. We know that we should make use of our advantages. Nations that are inattentive to their commercial prosperity are punished, for their indifference, by poverty and misery. At the pitch to which Europe has arrived, one might well declaim against the enjoyment of luxury, but we should find no one who would deprive himself of it; and, so long as we ourselves consume the productions of India, we must be tributary to the English or their rivals.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

TO A MERCHANT OF MARSEILLES.

The ENGLISH COMMERCE

CONTINUED.

I SEND you, my dear S———, as you requested me, samples of the calicoes and muslins which have the greatest run in the Levant. My port of the Mediterranean consumes but little of them; but the English and Dutch sell a vast quantity of them at Constantinople, which is the seat of mussulman luxury and indolence. Those two articles yield great profits, and you wish to participate in them with the merchants of London and Amsterdam; but you are afraid, you say, of their competition and of that of the Armenians, who carry on this commerce by the way of Bassora. You are particularly afraid, as all merchants are, of first attempts, and you ask my advice. You appear to me to be persuaded that it would be attended with more advantage for you to enter into competition with the English than with the Armenians. You are deceived, S———, and I am now about to prove to you that you may contend

contend advantageously with both. The chief requisite is to well combine your operations, and to well arrange your assortments; and I promise you that you will soon disperse all your rivals. The merchants of Constantinople themselves, dazzled with the success of your first operations, will be eager to imitate you, and you will have the sweet satisfaction of having opened a new road to their commerce, which, in passing by your country, will enrich it; for, whatever is touched by commerce is transmuted into gold.

It is a plain truth, demonstrated by fact, that the more economically commerce is managed, with the greater advantage it is carried on. You will then sell at the cheapest price, and cheapness is the chief cause of preference in commerce.

If our government retains any pretensions to the commerce of India, there is reason to presume that it will not give up our possessions in Asia, or, at least, that Chandernagor will be restored to us; but you know that that factory offers in miniature the same articles as Calcutta, which is the chief mart of Bengal. We are, therefore, right in supposing an equality to subsist between the price and the comparative goodness of the calicoes. The only question is, therefore, to know what is the way or route, attended with the least expense, of conveying those

those articles to the place of their consumption.

While the commerce of India is not carried on by Egypt, which is its natural road, that of the Cape of Good Hope must be preferred, by reason that it is more safe, and attended with the least expense. You shall judge of them yourself by a short analysis.

Constantinople is the emporium of the Armenian commerce, with regard to calicoes, as London is the mart of the English, and Amsterdam of the Dutch, commerce. The Armenians form the funds, which they destine for their Indian commerce, in that part of Turkey which presents them the most opportunities. This is usually Constantinople, Smyrna, or Brousse. These funds consist of three-fourths in specie and one-fourth in merchandizes. Accidents sometimes cause this proportion to vary; but, in general, specie will predominate in every exportation. The specie and merchandize are exported by caravans to Diarbékir, from Diarbékir to Bagdad, from Bagdad to Bassora, whence they are exported by sea to Calcutta, which is the richest emporium for calicoes, and is, therefore, the place in India with which Constantinople is most connected.

Since the English company has abandoned to the merchants of its nation the commerce of India in India, the Armenians make their returns from

from Calcutta to the Gulph of Persia, under the English flag, which they prefer, because, for a very moderate freight, they can put their goods on board those vessels belonging to the Company that are unemployed. These vessels convey their wares to Mascate, Ormus, Bender-Abassi, or some other port in the Persian Gulph. They are put on board the saicks of the country, which ascend the river* to Bassora.

Bassora is the grand mart of the Indian commodities which enter into Turkey. There are very few that touch at Suez since the English have become masters of the commerce of the Red Sea. All the rest stop at Bassora. From this point, they take different roads or routes, that of Diarbékir, that of Aleppo, and that of Damascus.

The route of Diarbékir is that most followed. The bales are put on board boats at Bassora, which ascend the Tigris as far as Bagdad or Moussoul. The bales are afterwards conveyed in caravans to Diarbékir, at which place they are made up again, re-packed, and carried on the backs of moyls to Constantinople.

The second route is that which goes the whole length of the desert and the winding course of the Euphrates, which the caravans dare not quit, lest they should want water. The merchandizes are transported by this route on

* Tigris.

camels'

camels' backs from Bassora to Aleppo, from Aleppo to Alexandretta or Latakia, where they are embarked for the places of their destination.

The shortest route is that of Damascus, which crosses the interior of the desert; but it is less followed, because the caravans are liable to perish there with thirst. From Damascus they go to Bérytus or Baruth, which is a road of the Syrian coast that is very much frequented by vessels destined to load for Constantinople.

Do not think that these three routes are as short as you represent them to yourself. It takes three months to pass from Calcutta to the Persian Gulph. That gulph cannot be penetrated by large vessels; they must be unloaded, and freighted on Arabian barks, in order to ascend the river. A month at least must be allowed for loss of time, or for stemming to Bassora the rapidity of the currents, sails being of no use whatever in this navigation. It takes up more than six months to pass from Bassora to Constantinople. In the whole, it takes up near a year. Nearly two years must be reckoned for exportation and importation, during which, the merchandizes are on the road at the risk of the proprietor, who has no opportunity here of sheltering himself by insurances against accidents.

And observe, that unfortunate accidents are by no means rare. The navigation of the Persian

sian Gulph is intersected with shallows, the current of the Tigris is very rapid, and becomes still more so after its junction with the Euphrates; whence it follows that the saicks employed in transporting merchandize are liable to frequent shipwrecks. The way followed by the caravans is still more dangerous. The *herds* of travellers, who cross with their moyls and camels the deserts of Arabia or of Mesopotamia, are, from time to time, robbed or plundered without pity; and, when they have the good fortune to escape being pillaged by the Arabs, the Kurds, or Turkumans, it is very difficult to escape the extortions of the pachas and beys, which are concealed under the name of expenses of escorting, duties on passing, and which are sometimes made without any pretence. Could they, after having paid the most arbitrary duties, but continue their route without any obstacle; but you, who have lived in an Asiatic port of the Mediterranean, know, as well as myself, that the caravans are often detained whole months, at some place on their passage, on account of the troubles that desolate Anadoulia.

Add to all these inconveniences, that transportation by land rubs and spoils the commodities more than a passage by sea. This transportation is often so long, and the bales are so often made up, that we must value, at least, at

five per cent. the waste or decay which the merchandize receives in its voyage, and which is the necessary consequence of it. Upon the whole, the way of Bassora is attended with such enormous expenses, that what costs a hundred piasters at the first purchase at Calcutta fetches a hundred and seventy when it reaches Constantinople; and, if we compute the profits of the Armenians only at fifteen per cent. for one year, and at thirty for the two years, which is certainly very moderate, we shall see, that there is, at the first cost of the sale, one hundred per cent. difference, and that the same article must be sold twice as dear at Constantinople as it was at Calcutta. You can yourself decide, whether my calculation is just by the invoice which I send you, and on which you will please to observe that it costs one piaster for the freight of entry into the Persian Gulph to Bassora; that there are paid there ten piasters for the custom, twelve piasters at Diarbékir or Moussoul, and fifteen for the duty for passing or being escorted on the rest of the route. I will not charge here the expenses of transportation, which vary with the times, or the arbitrary duties which are perpetually exacted in every pachalik, and on which however you must depend, as you will never meet with any favour.

At present, S———, be so good as to follow me now through some details, and you will agree

agree with me, that a passage by sea is more economical and safe than that of the land.

Since the decree of the Constituent Assembly, which has abolished all privileged companies, you are at liberty to export from every French port. Convenience alone must determine you. However, since you can make up your assortments as well at Marseilles as any where else, you ought to give the preference to that port, on account of its vicinity to Turkey. You can there freight a ship which will go directly to Chandernagor. There, after depositing your cargo, your prudence will re-lade your vessel with Indian commodities, and will conduct it to Marseilles, where you will take care to embark the new cargo on board the ships destined for the Levant.

I here suppose the exchanges of France and Turkey in their respective commerce with India to be upon a par. I could freely give the advantage to ourselves; and it would be difficult to contest it with us, because every one knows that there is a greater want in Bengal of the productions of our industry than for those of Turkey, and that our exports, besides, consist of one half in specie, and the other half in commodities, while the Turkish exports consist almost wholly of money. It is certain, however, that the intelligence and activity of our European correspondents assure us in India of

a realization more prompt and more profitable.

But observe, I beseech you, that the communication by sea is liable at least to unfortunate hazards; and that, were these hazards as much multiplied in one as in the other passage, we have at least this resource left us by the maritime route, that we can shelter ourselves from every risk by means of insurances.

By this way, the commodities continue never so long on their way as in a passage by land, unless the vessels are extremely delayed by contrary winds. Navigation has been much improved in our days; and you know we consider a voyage as a long one if it lasts a year. The passage from Marseilles to the Levant takes up only a month; and, by pursuing this route, you avoid great loss by the waste or decay of your commodities during their passage, arbitrary duties, and enormous expenses in carriage.

Lastly, what proves, without admitting of any reply, the superiority of a passage by sea over that by land is, that the English and Dutch sell in competition with the Armenians in all the markets of the Levant, and that they often deliver their commodities at a lower price than the Armenians do, notwithstanding the enormous duties with which they are oppressed both in Holland and in England. For, you are not ignorant that the dearness of the muslins and calicoes

calicoes of Bengal is increased in those two countries by the expenses incurred by the direction of the companies, by the impositions on the rising of sales, by the annual duties which they pay to the state, by the dividend or profits of the proprietors of the stocks, by the provision for the factor in Europe, by the profit of the person who exports the commodities into the Levant, and, lastly, by the consul's duty.

Cast, I beg you, a glance over all these additional charges, super-added to the original price, and you will perceive that it is this that really doubles the price of the first purchase, and that it is this which must prevent the English from wholly supplanting the Armenians.

Freight from Calcutta to Amsterdam or London	2 p. %
Insurance	4
Expense incurred by the direction of the companies	12
Custom-duties	18
Dividends or profits of the proprietors of the stocks	6
Expense of protection	15
Provision for the factor	4
Profit of the person who exports the commodities of India to the Levant	8
Carried over,	69 p. %

Brought over,	69 p. ⅝
Freight from Amsterdam or London to the Levant	1
Insurance	2
Consul's duty	2
Total,	74 p. ⅝*

If to all these charges you add that of the factor settled in the Levant, the duties of the Turkish customs, and some other petty expenses, which must be passed in the account, you will find that the sale of the calicoes and muslins of Bengal must be necessarily impeded by their excessive dearness.

However, recollect yourself, S———, and tell me whether you could not carry on this commerce with less expense. Attend, I beg you, and your situation will be very different. You will have to pay only a duty of five piasters at l'Orient or at Toulon at a moderate estimation, a duty to the consul of two piasters at Marseilles, and a provision for passing to your correspondents to the port where your returns are to touch.

Your other expenses will be very trifling, and, at the utmost estimation, I calculate that they will not exceed twelve piasters.† You will,

* Nearly £15. † About £2 : 8.

therefore,

therefore, sell at a cheaper rate than your competitors; and, if your first attempts are made with address, and are well timed, they will promise you enormous profits. These profits will be received from a foreigner, they will be the fruit of your prudent combinations, and you can enjoy them without remorse. I know that the merchants of the place, where your factory is established, will be eager to imitate you; and that their competition will soon diminish your profits; but you will have opened the way to them, and you can say, when you are walking before your warehouse, on the superb circumference which your port forms, while you hear them treating around you on the trade of linen-cloths, *this is a commerce which I have created.* I shall also, perhaps, congratulate myself for having suggested to you the idea and the inclination; but as I know that examples, and not words, attract the attention of merchants, it will be in the end a source of glory to you.—Adieu, my friend, I have sometimes proposed to you to do good actions, I now propose to you to do a great one.

LETTER XVIII.

Pella, 30 Vendemiaire, year 6.*

The GERMAN COMMERCE.

THE Emperor has a factory and a consul at Salonichi; but, as the commerce of his states with Turkey is free, it has been invaded by the Greeks, and the factory and consul do very little.

Of all the countries that trade with Turkey, Germany is unquestionably that whose commerce is most widely extended. Salonichi is the principal emporium of that commerce. The Germans draw from Macedonia a prodigious quantity of cotton, which is dispersed by various channels through all the north of Europe: these cottons are transported by land to Semlin, and from Semlin they ascend the Danube to Vienna. From Vienna they are dispersed through all Germany, and all the north of Switzerland, from the Valteline to Constance, and from Constance to Bâle. Orsova, in the bannat of Temeswar, which is on the same line as Semlin, and, behind that line, Hermanstadt, and Brassaw, in

* October 21, 1798.

Transylvania, are the other marts for Macedonian cottons.

The commerce of Germany extends its branches through every part of Greece; but it embraces a multitude of points so imperceptible, that it has hitherto escaped the observation of the commercial part of Europe. Nor is it also generally known, that, since the last war of the Austrians with the Turks, on account of the interior communications having been interrupted at that period, Salonichi is become, by its situation, the necessary deposit of all the Turkish commodities, which have taken the route of Trieste, instead of that of the Danube. The various branches of which the German exports consisted could be only estimated at that time with any degree of accuracy, and the estimations derived from the most authentic sources of information have made them amount to five millions of piasters.* Of this sum the Germans pay one-third in manufactures, and particularly in woollen and linen cloths, and the other two-thirds in talaris and sequins. The amount of the exports does not exceed two millions;† it sometimes stops at one million five hundred thousand;‡ and it consists of the following articles: woollen and linen cloths, glass-ware, iron, hardware, and gilding.

* £1,000,000. † £400,000. ‡ £300,000.

WOOLLEN

WOOLLEN CLOTHS.

The woollen cloths that have the greatest sale in the Levant are all light stuffs, made in imitation of the *Londres* of England, and are, on that account, called *londrins*. Of these there are two kinds, the *first* and the *second* londrins.

In France, the *first* londrins* are made wholly of Segovian wool, both in the warp and in the woof. In Germany, the Silesian wool is mixed with it, and, in England, the wool of that country. The warp consists of three thousand threads in pieces† of two ells, in order that they may return from the fuller one ell and a quarter in breadth between the lists. The *second* londrins consist of common wool for the warp; and, for the woof, of the second Segovian wool in France, and of the *second sort* in the other countries. The warp consists of two thousand six hundred threads, in parcels of two ells all but one-sixth, in order that they may return from the fuller one ell and one-sixth in breadth.

The woollen cloths manufactured in Germany are known in the Levant under various

* *Londrins premiers.* † *Rots.*

names, but they are all made in imitation of our londrins. What distinguishes them from the French woollen cloths is, that they are superior to them in texture, but inferior to them in dressing and in colours. Our woollen cloths are less substantial, because our warps are not sufficiently woven, and we do not put enough wool in our woofs; which is the reason why the French cloths continue hollow and loose; a defect sufficiently striking to be remarked here.

The French woollen cloths supplanted those of the English, in the Levant, under the first ministry of Maurepas. They took very much in 1750, and preserved their reputation till 1782. They then began to decline, but this was by slow gradations. In 1783 the English sold vast quantities of châlons: some writer immediately said, that the English châlons had given a mortal blow to our woollen-cloth trade, and the whole world repeated it. In 1785 the German cloths were introduced into Turkey, and met with a quick and easy sale. The war that followed suspended the sale of them; but, on the conclusion of peace, they met with still greater favour; and the whole world repeated again, on the word of a traveller, that the woollen cloths of Germany had supplanted our londrins of Languedoc. Had this been merely a conjecture, it would certainly have appeared better

better founded than the preceding assertion; but it must be also added, that the troubles that have succeeded in France have thrown our manufacturers into confusion, and the war, that followed those troubles, has been by no means favourable to our foreign sales. For want of our woollen cloths, they have been obliged to provide themselves with those of Germany, and it is thus that the manufactures of that country have supplanted ours.

However that may be, it is very certain that the excessive and constant frauds of our manufacturers began to disgust the Turks in 1782, and the foreign woollen goods have gotten into credit by the means of our increasing disrepute; and it is this disrepute, which is always increasing, added to the effects of the war, that has thrown the French woollen-cloth trade into the stagnation in which it now is.

It is also equally true, that our woollen-cloth trade will never recover from the terrible blow which it has received from the foreign woollen cloths, unless the government holds out encouragement to it, and unless the ancient regulations, respecting the inspection of our woollen cloths, are revived, which we have suffered so shamefully to be violated since 1782, and which have, since the revolution, been wholly neglected. The manufacturing of the second londrins ought to be particularly encouraged, because, by

by their cheapness, they are adapted to the convenience of the greatest number, and are, on this account, the most necessary article of the woollen-cloth trade in the commerce of the Levant. The other woollen cloths do not make an assortment: but the inconvenience attendant upon dividing the demands, in order to make up the assortments, will always cause the preference to be given, in accessory or trifling articles, to the nation that furnishes the principal article.

The species of disrepute, into which our woollen-cloth trade has fallen, ought not to discourage us. It will certainly take more time to remedy the evil than to cause it; but good endeavours correct, and there is no prejudice, however strong, that holds out against facts.

However, I cannot omit observing, with respect to the unfortunate fate which our woollen-cloth trade has experienced in the Levant, that the conduct of the manufacturers of Languedoc has demonstrated, in a most striking manner, that he, who wishes to gain much, will not gain for any length of time; that denials or refusals bring manufacturers into disrepute; and that the frauds of individuals may give a mortal blow to the commerce of a nation. I ought to add here, that the government, and private individuals particularly, have always appeared, in France,

France, too indifferent to our manufactures, which constitute, after all, the basis of the prosperity of states; that the time must arrive, when the national spirit must restrain the infamous adventures of avarice; when the public opinion must brand with disgrace the vile citizen, who dares to sacrifice the general credit to his own particular interest; when the government, seconding the public opinion, must punish the miscalculating manufacturer, who would prefer, to certain and lasting profits, some precarious gains, and who, by his meditated frauds, would bring our manufactures into disrepute. Every thing calls us, with regard to the woollen-cloth trade, to be the first manufacturers of Europe. No one is better acquainted than we are with the processes of weaving; no part of the dying is better understood: we have on our side cheapness of workmanship; and, if our wool is dear, because it is scarce, it depends upon ourselves to increase our sheep with our pastures. It will be the fault of the government if we do not take advantage of our resources.

The German woollen cloths, which have supplanted ours, are known in Turkey under the general denomination of *draps de Leipsick*,* because they are generally purchased at the market of Leipsick. These woollen cloths are

* Woollen cloths of Leipsick.

both

both thick and strong. The assortments consist of fantastical colours, which please the Turks, because they dazzle the eyes. The Leipsicks do not come in bales, but in pieces well arranged for conveyance by land. They are sold from hand to hand, without sample or invoice. This mode of sale is favourable to the petty retailer, who is not always able to purchase a whole bale; it is also convenient to the vender, who sells for ready money, or who is not, at least, obliged to give long credit.

The finest Leipsicks are manufactured at Aix-la-Chapelle. Those of the brothers Clermont have a reputation which they justly merit.

What has given great celebrity to the manufactures of Aix-la-Chapelle is the brilliancy of their colours and their fine assortment. The manufacturers of that city have always consulted, in this respect, the taste of the purchaser, who, when the colour pleases him, generally pays but little attention to the thickness or strength of the stuff. This remark is true, and especially with respect to the Turks, who appear to have only one sense, and whose sense of touching resides wholly in the sight.

There are also manufactured at Aix-la-Chapelle *mahouds*, in imitation of those of England; but the *copies* will never be worth the *originals*, because their colours are not so well fixed.

This

This point is, however, very important, because the assortment of the mahouds consists of lively and delicate colours, as the rose, the sky-blue, the colour of fire, the yellow thistle, and the delicate green.

The manufacturers of Aix-la-Chapelle have met with more success in imitating the Venetian *says* than the English mahouds. The says of Aix-la-Chapelle have therefore given a mortal blow to the consumption of those of Venice; but they cannot wholly annihilate it, because, like the mahouds, they are deficient in fine colours. What will still preserve, for a long time, in the Levant, the preference that is given to the Venetian says, is, notwithstanding their excessive dearness, the vivacity of their scarlet and the beauty of their coquelicot; two colours which are in request among the Turks for their *benichs* and their *caftans*.

In concluding this article of the German woollen-cloth trade, which we have partly recovered, we should perhaps inquire, whether it would be of greater advantage to us to encourage the manufactures of the Low Countries than those of Languedoc; or, which is the same thing, whether it would be of greater advantage to carry on the cloth trade in the Levant, by the way of Marseilles, and by sea, than by that of Germany and down the Danube. The question is easily answered, if we reflect, that,

that, in all commerce, the clearest profit is that on carriage; that, in one of these given cases, it is the Germans who gain by the carriage; and, in the other, the people of Provence. This is not, perhaps, the place to say, that it would be more advantageous for us to encourage the importation of Spanish wool, which is made use of in the south of France, than that of the wool of Silesia, which is used in the north: but this is the place to observe, that vast manufactures, of various kinds, injure each other in the same country, and that we ought to encourage, in the new departments, in preference to other manufactures, that of linens, which so well agrees with the humid countries of the Meuse and Rhine.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 809,800.*

The LINEN TRADE of GERMANY.

The articles, of which the linen trade of Germany consists, are calicoes, muslins, and worked linens.

* £161,869.

CALICOES.

The calicoes that have the greatest run here are manufactured in Austria. Those of Saxony are in particularly great request at Constantinople; but in Greece only the species denominated *calancas*, which are manufactured at Plaven, in Woitgland, is sold.

Marseilles sold here, before the revolution, printed calicoes, which were of a better taste than those of Germany, because their colours were more lively and their texture more fine; their designs were also more correct and better executed. The manufactories of Marseilles have, since the commencement of the war, suspended their labours, and those of Germany have continued theirs; but every circumstance promises us success, in this branch of industry, on the conclusion of peace. It is impossible to behold any thing more pleasing than the calicoes of Avignon and Béarn.

A long time has elapsed since the art was first sought in Europe of fixing colours, and of giving them that adherence and firmness which we admire in the calicoes of Bengal, and which is the reason why those calicoes, far from losing their lustre by washing, become in consequence only more beautiful. It has been said, in order to

to account for this tenacity in the colours, that they are prepared, in India, with the juices of herbs, which do not grow in our climates. But this is an error, and repeated experiments have demonstrated that we can make, in Europe, as fine colours as can be made in India; but that these compositions consume a time and trouble, which would raise the price of our works too much. The real superiority of the manufactures of India does not, therefore, consist, as has been erroneously supposed, in the superiority of their workmanship, but in their low price. The labour of ten workmen in Bengal does not cost so much as that of one of ours. Time is too dear in Europe; in India, it is as cheap as the life of men.

MUSLINS.

There are sold here twenty thousand pieces of muslins, manufactured in Saxony, in Bohemia, in Upper Austria, and in the cantons of Saint-Gal and Appenzel.

We can contend with advantage against the Germans in this article. The common muslins, which are the only ones that have a run in the markets of Greece, are all manufactured with the cottons of the Levant; but the carriage of these cottons is much cheaper for us, who per-

form it by sea, than for the Germans, who perform it by land. This species of manufactures might be introduced with advantage into Upper Provence and Upper Dauphiné, where hands are cheap, because, for six months of the year, they are out of employ. The manufacturer, who should erect the first looms on those high mountains, would diffuse motion and life through a country, which offers at present only the image of death.

We might also procure, in our populous cities, the cheapness requisite for the success of this manufacture, if we would employ our beggars in picking cotton, and ameliorate the spinning of it, by bringing our mills to greater perfection.

LINENS, both PLAIN and WORKED.

Greece formerly consumed from eleven to twelve hundred pieces of the plain linens of Silesia and Bohemia; but they are now falling into disrepute, because they meet only with refusals. The linens of Carinthia and of Lower Austria are preferred to them, which come from Trieste, and which, although less white, and apparently less fine, are of more use. This article is besides a very small object: that of worked linen is much more important.

There are consumed here to the amount of fifty thousand piasters* of this latter article, as damask linens, in which are worked barley-corns and the eyes of partridges. Vienna, Trieste, and Venice, manufacture, in this species of linens, cloths with variegated borders, and other grotesque works, which are, in the estimation of the Turks, of the greatest beauty: but all these worked linens, both Venetian and German, do not unite the fineness, the dazzling whiteness, and the variety of designs, to the solidity which those of France and Holland do. If the German linens are preferred to ours in the Turkish markets, it is solely on account of their cheapness.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 385,750.†

GLASS WARES.

The reputation of the Bohemian glasses is established in Europe; they have every where supplanted those of Venice: they are preferred to all others on account of their transparency and their *eye*. France alone has preserved here the sale of her black bottles, because they are much better made than those that are manufactured elsewhere.

* £10,000. † £77,150.

The chrystals of Bohemia are conveyed to Turkey by land, and are so well arranged in straw boxes, that they support without danger a journey of four hundred leagues. The merchants, who go to sell in Greece the glass wares of Germany, usually travel on foot. They sell them by retail: when one province is provided, they pass on to another; and they go round in this manner, from city to city, till the whole country is provided.

Quantity.	Assortments.	Prices.
120 small boxes,	Gilt vases,	at 600 piasters* the box,
150 ditto,	Common vases,	at 150 ditto.†
140 ditto,	Squares of glass,	at 300 ditto.‡

To these articles of glass wares are added chandeliers with many branches, globes, lanterns, and some other fanciful articles. Decanters, goblets, and tumblers, have but little run, because the Turks drink neither wine nor liquors. The Greeks, who bear the character of drinking with excess, are unacquainted with the custom of putting on the table a glass for each guest: one single goblet suffices for every one; and, like our ancestors, they drink all round in turn without the least repugnance. Striped goblets, and those that are enamelled, or which have gilt edges, are preferred here. The Levantines

* £120. † £30. ‡ £60.

in

in general prefer whatever is shewy; and this difference is generally remarked between the consumptions of a barbarous nation, and those of a civilized people, that the one prefers, in whatever is destined for its use, the dazzling to the good, whereas the other prefers what is solid to things that are held in repute by the caprice of fashion or by whimsical tastes. Merchants ought to pay attention to these tastes of different nations, when they make up their assortments for exportation. Their exports ought at least to be directed by common prudence, the fruit of experience. One oversight in commerce often occasions great losses, and frequently unhappy consequences. There have been, latterly, exportations from Marseilles hither, whose characteristic is that of the most stupid ignorance.

The Germans, with regard to their glass wares, are better acquainted with the taste of the Turks than the Marseillais: they export into Turkey charming works. The glass, being disguised under the appearance of a brilliant and polished varnish or japan, has furnished the Bohemians with the means of imitating porcelain, not in the nature of the clay, but in the fineness of the contours, the beauty of the design, the liveliness of the colours, and the brilliancy of the glazing. I have seen some of these vases, which were japanned with so much art, that

they imitated the finest Saxon porcelain: they would be even preferable to it, on account of their transparency, if they were less brittle. It is in these vases that the Levantines present water to their guests at the end of their repasts, and sherbet, and in which they present sweet-meats and rose-water in visits of ceremony. They are also made use of, instead of dishes, for deserts. These vases are of every size and shape, and they serve to ornament apartments, in which are small shelves, the height of a man, on which these vases are arranged with much symmetry.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 140,000.*

PORCELAIN.

The porcelain of Sèvres is superior to every thing we can behold the most pleasing; and the most perfect for elegance of shape, correctness of design, brightness of colours, and brilliancy of glazing: but this porcelain is too dear, and consequently but little of it is exported. That which the Turks make use of comes from Germany, and proceeds from the most common manufactories. The porcelain of Dresden and

* £28,000.

Berlin

Berlin has a considerable sale at Constantinople, but it has none in the provinces. Scarcely any porcelain is disposed of in Greece, except that of Franckendal and Vienna; and even that is an object of no great importance.

The porcelain of Franckendal, in the palatinate, contends for brilliancy with that of Saxony, and is one-third cheaper. Leaf-gold has been applied on this porcelain with such art, that the vessels that have been covered with it have been mistaken for vessels of massy gold. The design is correct: the figures are striking, from the force and truth of their expression; but the glazing is never of that beautiful white which pleases the eye, and which characterizes the finest porcelain.

The porcelain that has the greatest run is that of Vienna, because it is the cheapest. The clay of which it is made is of a dirty white; it is also defective in painting and shape. Its designs are without taste, and the shapes of the vessels are by no means elegant. The greatest sale of this porcelain is in Turkey, and the Turks do not like variety. This will perhaps account for the imperfections with which the manufactory of Vienna is reproached, notwithstanding the encouragements lavished on it by the emperor. That prince, it is said, entertains there eighty painters. If so, he employs his money to little purpose; for, the finest works

that

that proceed from that manufactory are only remarkable for the size of their dimensions and the capriciousness of their shapes.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 40,000.*

STEEL.

The best steel comes from England and Germany. The steel of England is held in the greatest repute, on account of the fineness and clearness of its grain. Its surface is of a fine polish, and flaws and veins are seldom to be met with in it. That of Germany, on the contrary, abounds with veins and flaws, and is full of ashes and pointed with pale spots, which are perceived when it is polished and ground. Flaws and veins render wrought steel unfit for use, and the edge of instruments unequal and soft. The ashy mixture and spotting make it like a scythe and render it blunt.

The German steel is made use of here for instruments of labour, because it has been found to be well calculated for broad edges. But the English steel is always made use of for fine and delicate works, because it is more ductile and has a greater lustre.

* £8000.

The

The quantity of raw German steel, sold at Salonichi, may amount to thirty thousand piasters,* and that of the wrought steel to twenty-four thousand.† The steel manufactories of Vienna begin to be in repute. All amateurs know that a workman at one of them, named Schwartz, has made a sword with secret works, so well finished, that it has been sold for ten thousand florins‡ to the king of the two Sicilies.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 54,000.§

COPPER and EMBROIDERY.

Germany sends to Salonichi a great quantity of wrought copper, as coppers, basons, and other domestic utensils. Great part of this copper is manufactured into *zarfs*, a species of saucers which are made use of to support the *finnjam*, or coffee-cup.

The Turks still continue to draw from Germany their kitchen-furniture. This article is manufactured at Vienna and Nieuwied; but the manufacture of Vienna is superior to the other, because the works that proceed from it consist

* £6000. † £4800.

‡ £2500. § £10,800.

of

of only one single piece, whereas those of Nieuwied are composed of many pieces soldered together. The pieces are sold by the oke, and are much dearer when they are tinned; but that operation is usually performed here, and it must be confessed that the Turkish workmen are much more skilful in that branch than those of Europe. Japanned pieces of copper have also a great sale, but the Turks complain that the japan does not last.

There are still manufactured at Vienna gold and silver threads, lace, and net-work, which surpass those of our manufactories of Lyons. However, the German gilding is inferior to ours both for solidity and taste; but its cheapness facilitates its sale. The Walachian peasants, who are dispersed through the villages of Upper Greece, wear, on Sundays, handkerchiefs ornamented with gilt net-work. The Greeks of every class adorn their heads with them on their wedding-days.

The art of japanning has been brought to great perfection in Germany. Tinned articles, which are much in fashion, are japanned here in a manner particularly agreeable; but they have not yet penetrated into the country, and the sale of them is still confined to the cities.

The

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - Piasters 115,000.*

The total amount of the consumptions, at approximate sums, is - - - - - - Piasters 1,544,550.†

The FACTORS and CHANNELS OF THE *GERMAN COMMERCE.*

The commerce of Germany with Turkey is wholly in the hands of the Greeks, who are dispersed over the two empires. Humble, crafty, intriguing, bold, those men, who were at first only the brokers of this commerce, have made themselves privileged agents. They have established factories in the principal cities of Germany, and they manage, at present, the German commerce as the French and English do that of Turkey.

Vienna on one side, and Salonichi on the other, are the two great marts of the commerce of Greece with Germany. The channels through which it passes are the Danube and the Adriatic. The route of the Danube has been for a long time the most followed. Although more expensive, it was the shortest, and saved many

* £23,000. † £308,910.

circuits,

circuits, and facilitated at the same time every exportation, because the Danube by itself, or by means of the rivers which it receives, may be regarded as the great *artery* of Germany. Add to this, that the Austrians had formerly no marine, and a maritime commerce ought to be protected by a naval power. The route of the Adriatic could, besides, accommodate only a small part of Germany, since Austria has only the artificial port of Trieste, which is situated at a great distance from the Othoman possessions. But, at present, as that power is in possession of the coast of Dalmatia, which abounds with noble havens, and which borders upon a part of European Turkey; as it is about to create a military marine, in order to protect its maritime trade; I am persuaded that the commerce of Germany will be carried on through the Mediterranean by the shortest way, which is that of the Adriatic. In my opinion, unless the greater part of the reasons which caused the passage of the Danube to be preferred has no longer any existence, we ought, however, to perceive its disadvantages, which are many and great. The course of the Danube is extremely crooked; it passes almost continually between rocks, and is intersected with a great number of islands and shallows. It is known also to be extremely rapid. Its bed is strewed with dangerous rocks, between which the current forms vortices

vortices which render the navigation of it impracticable when the waters are deep. Oars are of very little use in ascending the river, and sails not at all. The boats must be drawn by oxen, which practice is slow and expensive. Another obstacle that impedes the navigation of the Danube is the wretched construction of the boats, which are only an assemblage of planks of pine united together merely by pegs. Scarcely can they weather the passage from Ulm or Ratisbon, where they are constructed, to Belgrade or Semlin, where they arrive; and they run the hazard of being overturned every moment. The more we advance towards Hungary, the more the navigation of the river becomes impeded by the banks of sand which are collected there, by the trunks of trees which float down from the neighbouring forests, by the mills that are erected on both sides of the river, and by the posts which are fixed in the very middle of the currents, in order to form *usines*. Attempts have been made latterly to construct boats with oak; but they have failed, because the boats ought to be easily purchased, and consequently cheap, on all the rivers where they cannot go up the currents. We have experienced this in the navigation of the Rhone. — It is true, that the pretended frigate, built by Taufferer, has made some noise in Europe; but that frigate was only a paltry flat vessel, which had

had been very unadvisedly pierced for four-and-twenty cannon; and it could have been of no use, since, in order to be of service in the Black Sea, its keel ought to have been more deep. All these reasons make me think that the Austrians have at present quitted the route of the Danube, and that that river will never become so favourable to the commerce of Germany as the Rhine and the Elbe.

SPECIE and BANK.

The amount of the Greek imports amounts only to 1,544,550* piasters; it does not exceed 2,000,000† in the most prosperous years: that of the exports always amounts nearly to 5,000,000.‡ The balance is therefore at least 3,000,000§ in favour of Turkey. Austria is obliged to pay this balance with specie or paper; and hence is the commerce in money and bank that is carried on between Vienna and Salonichi, which is very considerable; for, at an annual medium, Austria‖ coins into talaris and sequins

* £308,910. † £400,000.

‡ £1,000,000. § £600,000.

‖ It is proved, from the tables with which I was furnished, while I was secretary of legation in Germany, that, in the countries

sequins 6,000,000 florins,* which are conveyed to Turkey, and of which one-third at least passes into Greece, on account of the immense quantity of cotton which Vienna draws out of Macedon. The banker Friess is the chief agent of this commerce; and, it has been asserted, that it is to this that he owes his vast fortune. This circulation of specie is sometimes increased by foreign transfers. Austria, in this case, sends the greatest part of its exports in money; but all these exports are not on account of Germany. It happens, then, that those places in France, Holland, or Italy, which have payments to make in Turkey, draw for money on Vienna, and charge that place with the settlement of their balance with the Turks. This circulation, from place to place, which communicates to the two extremities of Europe, and which reaches on one side Vienna, and on the other Salonichi, has opened a commerce of exchange between Macedon and Germany. Vienna is therefore the place in Europe that regulates the exchange with Salonichi. The course

countries subject to the dominion of Austria, there were coined, from 1741 to 1770, 140,000,000 florins for the Turkish commerce. This proportion has increased, from 1770 to 1797, in the same proportion as the commerce has progressively increased; and, according to my tables, the commerce has increased two-fifths.

* £2,100,000.

of exchange, which we have seen prevail this last year, has produced from sixty-five to seventy florins for one hundred Turkish piasters at thirty days sight. This course has, it appears, undergone a great variation, and in general it varies here with a rapidity unknown in our parts of Europe. I take the cause of these sudden variations to proceed partly from the uncertainty that prevails in Turkey in regard to the state of the circulation of money, and partly from the manœuvres of the Greek merchants in whose hands the exchange is, and who, being secretly confederated together, always know how to regulate it according to their own interests. However this be, these variations do exist, and they have made the Frank merchants believe that the exchange was sometimes favourable to them, and at others contrary. These merchants are in the right, because they judge of the course of exchange only according to their own interests, that is to say, by comparing the price of merchandize with the course; but, in fact, the exchange is always in favour of Salonichi against Europe, which necessarily arises from the nature of the commerce carried on between Greece and Germany. For, in the last case, the excess of the returns must be always settled with money on the amount of the exports, or what is called the *balance*; and this excess is always at least three-fifths in favour of Turkey. The exchange

change in favour of Salonichi is such, that the piaster, which only weighs four drachms, and has two drachms and a quarter of alloy, and whose intrinsic value is only twenty-eight French sous, passes actually in the commerce at the rate of thirty-seven sous, and has been in the course of exchange, for this year past, from thirty-five to forty sous. The sultan of the Turks possesses the richest soil in the whole earth; and, in order to represent the richness of his territories, he has the worst money that is current in the world.

LETTER XIX.

Pella, 15 Brumaire, year 6.*

The ITALIAN COMMERCE.

THE commerce of the Italians in the Levant is free, and is subject to no regulations. It is carried on principally by the Venetians and Leghornese. There are at this port of the Mediterranean† a Venetian and a Neapolitan consul. The Imperial consul is reputed the consul of the Tuscans, and the French consul that of the Romans, Genoese, and Piedmontese.

The Italian commerce consists of woollen cloths, fire-arms, glass, silks, paper, and caps.

WOOLLEN CLOTHS.

The woollen cloths are imported by the Venetians. These cloths are known in the Levant under various names. The finest of them are called *says*, which is a stuff distinguished by its fineness and thickness. As it is impervious to rain, it is set apart for cloaks and *benichs*. The says

* November 6, 1798. † Pella.

says of Venice are dyed with superior art; no where can the beauty of their coquelicot be equalled.

The Venetians also make *second londrins* in imitation of those of France, but their colours are neither so solid nor so brilliant. This is indeed the sole advantage which we have preserved over them; and Venice may in time supplant us by cheapness, unless we recommend it to our manufacturers to be more faithful in the breadths of their cloths, and to make them more strong, by fulling them more, and not to stretch them too much, which renders the French woollen cloths hollow and loose.

The Venetian londrins are usually bartered in kind for the cheapest productions of the country, which causes them to circulate with more facility, and which ought to put our manufacturers on their guard against those of Venice.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 28,800.*

FIRE-ARMS.

The manufactures of Brescia send into the Greek markets thirty cases of fire-arms. A-

* £5760.

mong these cases there are twelve fire-locks and eighteen pistols. The usual price of a fire-lock is from six to eight piasters, and that of a pair of pistols from ten to twelve. The Turks prefer barrels of polished iron; they also prefer the Venetian arms to ours, because ours are bronzed. This taste of theirs is capricious, but it is well founded. Their armourers know not how to clean a gun without polishing the barrel with a file or with pumice-stone, which disfigures it, and rubs off the bronze. Another proof of the caprice of their taste is, that they prefer plates (to which the locks are fixed) which are hard, to those which are soft and ductile. The barrels which sell best are those that are ornamented towards the breech with sculptures, and which are inlaid with gold and silver. The stocks that are adorned with gold or silver, inlaid or carved, are also in very great request.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 25,000.*

GLASS.

Venice formerly furnished the Levant with glass of every kind. France and Germany have, of late years, deprived that state of part of this commerce. The commerce of small glasses is

* £5,000.

at

at present in the hands of the French, and that of vases is in the hands of the Germans. Venice exports only the most common kind of glass. The Venetian glass is, besides, of a very bad quality. It is of a pale green, brittle, and unequal.

The art of manufacturing glass was, for a long time, a secret which the Venetians alone possessed. We got it from them towards the end of the last century; and, since that period, France has become, in this branch of commerce, the successful rival of Venice; for, we have equalled them in the casting, and have surpassed them in the silvering, of glass. In the present state of Europe, the art of casting mirrors will continue the most lucrative as well as the most agreeable branch of glass manufacturing; and in this two-fold point of view the government ought to encourage it.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - Piasters 31,500.*

GLASS WARE.

The only branch in the glass-trade, at present left entire to the Venetians, is the unimportant commerce of glass ware. Venice exports hi-

* £6300.

ther, to the amount of forty thousand piasters,* small *grains* or pieces of glass variously coloured, which are strung like *chaplets*, and with which the lower class of women decorate their head and neck. These petty wares, which we call *pebbles*,† in the French commerce, are of every size and form. There are some which look like pearls, and which resemble them both by their water, their lustre, and their colour. All these properties are the effect of a varnish in false pearls, whereas true pearls have naturally that fine water, which constitutes all their value.

The consumption of glass wares diminishes here in a very sensible degree since jewels are become fashionable. These articles are, however, imported here, in order to be re-exported to Egypt, where they pass into Arabia and Persia by the way of the Red Sea.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 40,000.‡

SILKS.

The Italians carry on an immense trade in silks in Greece and in all Turkey. No manufacturing nation of Europe has been hitherto

* £8000. † *Rocailles.* ‡ £8000.

able

able to deprive them of this branch of their industry. They have carried it on with success since the reign of Mohammed II.* at which time works of hand, as well as works of genius, fled from Greece into Italy, and flourished there under the influence of Médicis.

There are sold annually in the *bezestein* of Salonichi from seven to eight hundred pieces of Florentine satin, which is finer than all the rest that is manufactured in Italy, and which comes in boxes consisting of more or fewer pieces, according to the fancy of the manufacturer or speculator. The assortment is composed of the most brilliant colours.

Naples furnishes the Levant with tabbies and with mohairs. The tabby is a species of undulated silk. The more bright a tabby is, in the greater request it is. It must be well grained in the weaving, because the finer its grain is, the more glossy it becomes under the calender.

The mohairs of Messina are those in the greatest request in Greece; but this species of silk appears to have fallen into disrepute. The silks denominated *gros de tours* are, however, preferred to the tabbies and satins, because they are more useful. There is this difference between satin and the gros de tours, namely, that

* He reigned from 1453 to 1481.

satin

satin must be plain and smooth, and wholly of one colour, whereas the gros de tours, having the wool of one colour, and the chain or warp of another, present a thousand different shades or gradations of colours. The liveliness and motion of these shades or gradations constitute the principal beauty of the gros de tours, the finest of which come from Naples, and are thence denominated *gros de Naples*. The assortments are composed of tender and delicate colours; and there are sold here two hundred and fifty pieces.

There are exported hither, from Florence, taffeties or silks known under the name of *mantini*, the demands for which increase every day. They are in particular request in the country, where the peasants make use of them for their nuptial dresses. There have been sold here, this year, four hundred pieces.

Since European luxury has been introduced into the seraglios, Genoa has seen a new way opened in Turkey for the disposal or selling off of its damasks. The provinces, however, consume but a small quantity of them, on account of their dearness. Salonichi is the only city of Greece that receives a hundred pieces, which, being bordered with gold fringe, are made use of in the harams of the beys for curtains before the doors, for suits of hangings, or for trimmings for sofas.

There

There come from Bologna, by the way of Venice, gauzes, to the value of one hundred thousand piasters,* which the Greeks make use of in their head-dress and their pompoons. These gauzes are rolled round the head like handkerchiefs. One of the ends confines the tresses of hair, and the other hangs negligently down on one shoulder, nearly in the same manner as Ariadne is painted dancing with her companions in the island of Naxos.

There formerly came from Italy a great quantity of galoons of silk, both plain and embroidered, of handkerchiefs for girdles and turbans, and of brocades for *fermelés*, or vests *à la Turque*, and for *mintans*, or jackets *à la Galiondgi*; but the manufactories of Lyons have supplanted those of Italy in many branches of this species of silk-manufacture. They might even deprive them of every other branch, if they were but better directed. Our workmanship is superior to that of the Italians; it only remains for us to imitate the beauty of their texture, in order to excel them. The perfection of the French work would thus compensate for the cheapness of the Italian; and our commerce of Marseilles would preserve over that of Genoa, Leghorn, and Venice, the advantage of being able to complete our assortments without the

* £20,000.

least

least difficulty, an advantage which would terminate by making the balance incline in our favour.

The only article in which the Italians have preserved a decided advantage over us is that of damasks. The damasks of Genoa are every where preferred to those of Lyons, because they are superior to them in every respect. This superiority does not arise from the excellence or superiority of the *workmanship*, but from the *manner* in which the damasks are manufactured. The Italians make their warps better, and are more choice than we are in selecting their organzine, or twisted silk. The organzine, if too fine, does not sufficiently fill the stuff, which becomes coarse if the organzine is too thick. The most striking quality of the Genoese damasks, and of which ours are destitute, is that of being more soft and of having a nap like that of a fine skin.

The Lyonese have for ever supplanted the Genoese in the commerce of worked silks, which is productive of another great advantage; for, light brocades will be always fashionable in this country, and consequently will have an easy sale. The Turks prefer bright stuffs which are not too dear. This is the reason why they demand, in preference to any other, stuffs wrought with gold waves, which is a species of embroidery that is uncommonly brilliant and is

is very cheap. All barbarous nations like to shine at a little expense.

VELVET.

The velvets consumed in Turkey are close; they proceed from the manufactories of Genoa, Lucca, and Pisa.

The Italians have always been in the possession of this branch of commerce. They furnish the principal markets of Europe with it; and, notwithstanding our superiority over them in every other kind, we cannot stand in competition with them in this of close velvets. The chief causes of the preference of the Italian manufactures are their goodness and their cheapness.

The velvets of Italy have a lightness, a lustre, and a softness, of which ours are destitute. The black velvets, in particular, are of a beauty which we have never been able to reach. These velvets have more threads in the chain or warp than those of France have, and have fewer in the woof. This mode of making them gives them a greater lustre, and renders them more light, which is the reason why they appear more brilliant than ours. They are also cheaper than ours; in the first place, because the price of silk is much lower in Italy than in France; secondly,

condly, because workmanship is cheaper there than with us. The ell cost at Lyons, before the revolution, four livres for making; it cost only three livres at Genoa; and at Lucca only fifty sous. This price ought to have risen in those two countries, but the increase ought to have been proportional. The low price of workmanship, joined to the moderate price of silk, which is of their own growth, and indigenous, favours therefore the Italians in this branch of industry. It is this that leads me to think that the French will find it difficult to supplant them; but they might, by manufacturing the velvets better, contribute themselves to the consumption of them, which would turn into the national manufactures large sums, that now support the Italian manufactures. In fact, we find that the quantity of velvets imported into France, before the revolution, amounted to nearly three millions annually, if we calculate according to the registers of Lyons, and if we do not take into the account fraudulent importations.

Fagon said, that if we could manufacture, at Lyons, velvets and damasks as fine as those manufactured at Genoa, it would be necessary to found a new city by the side of the old one. He was in the right; for, by making the estimation more moderate, we find that the national consumption alone would have thrown more than

than five millions of livres* into new looms; and, if we calculate the keeping of a family, consisting of five persons, at one thousand livres† a year, it appears that the new manufactures would have given bread to a new population of twenty-five thousand souls.

We must not seek for the causes of the difference that subsists between the Italian velvets and our own, in the first materials, nor in the workmen who manufacture them. Our silks of Vivarais are worth more than the finest Piedmontese silks; our workmen are as well practised as the best workmen of Italy, and they have more skill and taste. But the manufacturing of the Italians is better regulated: their warp is wider. The superiority of the Italian manufactures over ours proceeds solely from the wisdom of the regulations which direct them. We have established looms on the plan of those of Italy, and we have in a short time equalled, not to say surpassed, them in weaving.

The regulation of 1744, which directed our manufactures till the moment when the revolution happened, was of more detriment to them than foreign competition. Since we have had so long in France the passion of prescribing regulations to commerce, we ought at least to

* About £200,000. † Nearly equivalent to £40.

model

model them after those of the Italians, which are far more perfect in this respect.

The beauty of the velvets consists in their pile or nap, which alone constitutes the figure and celebrity of that species of silk stuff. But the Italian regulations provide better for the beauty of the pile or nap than ours; for, they require that every thread of the pile that is made use of in the manufacture of close velvets should be made of treble-twisted silk threads; whereas ours permit, when the velvets are manufactured with treble-twisted silk threads, that each thread of the pile should be reckoned for a thread and a half.

The Italians are not satisfied with manufacturing their velvets with treble-twisted organzine; they will farther have the organzine, of which both the cloth and the nap are made, extracted from a certain number of cods, in order to augment the beauty of the texture.

But if the manufacturers of Genoa, and those of the principal manufacturing cities of Italy, carry their attention so far as to make use only of treble-twisted organzine, in order to beautify the *pile*; if, in order to beautify the *cloth*, they take care to use only silks of a *second* or inferior *sort*; what has been the aim of our makers of regulations in requiring, that one thread of organzine, of a similar kind, should be reckoned as one thread and a half?

What

What will make this appear more singular is, that, in the regulation of 1744, it is enacted, that, in all the different stuffs of which the velvets are made, every thread of organzine, according as it is more or less twisted, will be reckoned only as one thread, whereas, in the velvets themselves, it is to be reckoned as a thread and a half; which is saying, in other words, that the threads of organzine, being more or less closely woven, constitute the perfection of one stuff and the imperfection of another: a thing too absurd not to be exploded.

It is not therefore surprising, that the velvets manufactured in France are less fine than those that are manufactured in Italy, and particularly at Genoa. I have shewn the reason why they are not: it is evident in this, that a velvet, manufactured in France, and marked for four piles or hairs, containing four threads in a lock* of organzine, consisting of two single threads or hairs, has in reality only eight single threads or hairs instead of twelve. Hence arises the superiority of the Italian velvets.

Another defect, less important, but still peculiar to our manufacturing of velvets, is, that we make them with stays made of steel teeth, which, not being so flexible as those made of

* *Boucle.*

reeds, which are made use of in Italy, cause inequalities in the chain or warp, by reason, that in all close stuffs the chain ought to command the teeth, in order that it may be well united; whereas, when the teeth command the chain, cavities and stripes are the necessary consequence.

Lastly, the velvets of Italy have a finer pile than ours, because the Italians cut the pile with a knife, to which a guard is affixed, at the distance of ten bars, which prevents any of the threads of the chain being cut through awkwardness; whereas our *cutter*,* which is only a simple blade, directed between two bars, might cut both chain and pile, and produce a defect by the slightest deviation, arising either from the inattention or unskilfulness of the workman.

The number or quantity of bars, which the Italians leave on the face, is productive of another advantage, namely, that by retaining the stroke of the batten while the shuttle passes, they afford a finer woof, and the Italian velvets are therefore of a better quality, and fitter for the knife, than those of France.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - Piasters 376,350.†

* *Taillerole.* † £75,270.

PAPER.

Venice carries on the greatest commerce in Turkey in paper. The papers which are exported from that place are white, thick, but very close. The Turks cannot make use of any weaker paper, because they make use, for writing, of a reed, cut into the form of a pen.

The *fioretto* and the *three moons* are the papers in the greatest request, because they are very strong and very heavy; for, here every thing is estimated by weight—women, watches, and paper. The fioretto is the most fashionable kind of paper, because it is the dearest. The Turks gum it, and brighten it with a polishing-instrument.

Next to Venice, Genoa is the place in Italy which exports the greatest quantity of paper here. The Genoese papers are much lighter and not so dear as those of Venice. They are made use of in winter instead of glass, for economy.

Upon the whole, Italy sends paper into Greece to the amount of more than one hundred thousand piasters,* and into Turkey to the

* £20,000.

amount of more than a million;* which ought to engage our paper manufacturers in a competition with the Italians in this important branch of the Levantine commerce.

Marseilles is, however, the only place in France that can circulate any of its papers in Turkey. These papers are known under the name of papers *au raisin*. The raisin is in every respect superior to the Italian papers that are adapted to the taste of the Turks, and it would support the same glossing; but it can never come in competition with them, on account of its exorbitant price.

The dearness of the French papers arises from two causes. First, they pay too heavy duties on exportation. When these duties were more moderate, all the paper-mills in the southern provinces were in a flourishing state: at that time, there were reckoned in the Angoumois alone more than fifty mills. At present, all these mills languish, or are no longer in existence. The government ought therefore to lower the rate of the duties, and even to grant trifling premiums, if it wishes to bring our paper-trade into repute in the markets of Turkey.

The second cause of the dearness of our papers proceeds from the high price of the raw materials. Rags are more scarce, and consequently

* £206,000.

quently dearer in France than in Italy. Hence it follows, that the dearness of the raw materials might disappear in papers of superior qualities, on account of the beauty of the workmanship; but that, in papers of common qualities, it must be evident, to the disadvantage of France. We ought therefore to endeavour to lower the price of the raw materials. The industry of the French has already succeeded; not being able to increase the old materials, it has itself created a new one.

The papers which are consumed in the Levant are the common papers, gummed and not gummed, and the papers made use of instead of glass, and for packing. But, in the manufacturing of these papers, means have been found of remedying the scarcity and dearness of rags, by making use of new processes. *Delille*, to whose attentions the manufacture of Montargis owes its reputation, has attempted to transform into pulp vegetables and the bark of certain trees. These attempts have succeeded; and, when we behold books, which that manufacturer has printed on paper made of marsh-mallows and the bark of the linden-tree, we perceive all the advantage which French industry can draw from this useful discovery.

Lyes made of lime and pot-ash, and a judicious use of vitriolic acid, operate powerfully in reducing hemp and linen to that ex-

tremely attenuated part of their substance which suits the pulp of the paper-mills. It has been proved that it is possible for us, by carrying those means into effect, to supply the deficiency of rags by old cordage. This old cordage might also serve to make the finest paper, since, being reduced into tow, it might be easily bleached. The disadvantage arising from too great an attenuation, which is to be apprehended with regard to linen, is of no consequence to the substance that enters into the composition of paper.

The consumption, of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - Piaſters 108,000.*

CAPS.

The cap-trade is one of the richest branches of the Greek commerce. The cap is here the principal part of the head-dress; it is the hat of the Levantines. The Greeks wear it simply in the form of a *calotte* or skull-cap; the Turks surround it with a turban; and the women of every rank and condition decorate it with handkerchiefs, fringe, and pompoons. The caps are known in the Levant under the name of caps of *Fez*, because the first manufactories were established

* £21,300.

blished in that city of Barbary. Those manufactured at Tunis are at present the most celebrated. The Tunisines bring their caps to Coron and Modon, where they are exchanged for Turkish commodities and vermilion. From the Morea they pass into the principal markets of Greece, whence they are circulated as far as Macedon. Greece consumed, not many years since, from twenty-five to thirty thousand dozens of Tunisine caps; it consumes, at present, only from five to six thousand dozens. This branch of manufacture of Barbary received, in the last plague, blows from which it will recover with difficulty. The manufacturers of Tunis have lost their best workmen by the plague; they have suspended their labours; and this suspension has brought on bankruptcies and unhappy events. The Italians have enriched themselves with their losses, and have availed themselves of their misfortunes. Cap-manufactories have been established at Genoa, Leghorn, and Venice; and these manufactories at present furnish Greece with caps.

We receive annually from Genoa thirty dozens of caps, among which those of *Alberti* are distinguished. Leghorn sends us five thousand dozens, which are remarkable both for the fineness of their texture and the goodness of their colours; and Venice three thousand do-

zens, which are produced by the fine manufactory of *Raut*.

The assortment of these caps consists only of two colours, red and white. The red are all of the same shape, and are always the most numerous in all the exportations of them, because the men wear no others. The white ones, on the contrary, which are destined for the use of rich women, vary as much as their taste. The Constantinopolitans prefer broad caps; but in Greece the fashion is to wear them pointed, nearly in the same manner as the Ionian mitres are with which the ancient Greeks dressed their heads. It is only in the islands of the Archipelago that the women wear enormous red caps, which they content themselves with bordering with lace, and the top of which they cover with fringe. Every where else the caps are surrounded with a *basma*, which is the women's turban, and which they decorate with trifles. The wives of the beys place on the front of them a crescent of pearls.

France is a successful competitor with the Italians in the cap-trade. We were, before the war, even preferred to them in every market, because our caps have glosses on them, and the peasants will have no others. Our finest manufactories are those of Orleans, Carcassone, and Marseilles. The two best manufacturers of Orleans

leans are the *Michels* and the *Henris*; the Michels, in particular, have given such perfection to their caps, that they rival those of Tunis. *Fortan* is the best manufacturer of Carcassone. Among the manufacturers of Marseilles must be distinguished *Rossel* and *Bonhomme*, and *Béon* among those of Béarn. In 1790, fifteen thousand dozens constituted the total of our exports and half of the foreign exports.

The government cannot too much encourage the cap-trade, as every circumstance conspires to cause it to flourish in France. We have ourselves the raw materials that are in the greatest estimation. The Levant presents us its vermilion, Spain its wools, and America all its dying drugs. It is to Marseilles that the Italians and inhabitants of Barbary come to purchase the greatest part of the wool and vermilion which they use in their manufactories: we have, therefore, preserved over them an economical advantage in the price of the raw materials. We can ourselves still procure them to be worked up at a cheap rate, by causing the caps to be knit in the country and in those departments where the low price of the necessaries of life brings down the price of labour. In order to give birth among us to this species of industry so useful to the country, we ought to grant some trifling premium to the manufacturers,

who

who would then willingly apply themselves to this new branch of manufactures.

I see no manufacturing nation of Europe that can stand in competition with us in the cap-trade, if it be properly encouraged. Workmanship is too dear in England, too scarce in Spain, and the other countries of Europe have no wool that is fine enough. The Germans have made several attempts, but they have failed. The qualities were tolerable, but the colours were most wretched. The Germans will never be in this species of commerce a formidable rival; they can work up no other wools than those of Silesia, and those wools never give the German caps that fineness, and that softness and thickness, which so eminently distinguish the caps manufactured by us with the wools of Castile.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 465,000.*

The total consumptions, at approximate sums, are - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 1,074,000.†

* £93,000. † £214,800.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

Salonichi, 1 Nivôse, year 6.*

The COMMERCE of HOLLAND.

THE Greeks carry on all the commerce of Holland. The Dutch consul is here merely titular, without exercising any consular functions. He has persons under his protection, but none of his own nation.

The Greeks of Salonichi purchase by commission, at Amsterdam, the woollen cloths known under the general name of woollen cloths of Holland, which hold a medium between the londrins and the leipsicks, and which are stronger than the former and finer than the latter. This goodness in the texture of the stuff causes the Holland cloths to be always in great request among the janisaries, who are in easy circumstances, and among the wealthy Albanians. The janisaries make use of them in their caftans and in their benichs, and the Albanians in their vests and in their caps. But these cloths are ill dyed, although the colours are bright at the first sight. This defect is still

* December 20, 1798.

more

more apparent in the Dutch woollen cloths than in any others, because, being destined for a Turkish dress, which is very full, the colour, by rubbing, soon disappears on the folds. The Turkish habits, besides, cannot be highly glazed, on account of their fulness, until they have been wetted, and a hot iron has after that process been passed over them to fix the colours. But all this dressing requires the colours to be very fast, and particularly the red; for, it often happens that the tailor's goose, or pressing-iron, passing over the sutures, causes the simple colours, as blue, green, and light brown, to disappear, and alters the mixed colours, as the violet and purple.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 50,400.*

The Dutch export no other branches of their manufactures, but they usually export spices, as pepper, cloves, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmegs, to the amount of fifty thousand piasters.† To these they add a little sugar and coffee, in order to make up an assortment, and to pay, with all these commodities together, for one or two ladings of Macedonian cotton.

* £10,080. † £10,000.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

Salonichi, 12 Nivôse, year 6.*

The COMMERCE of RUSSIA.

THE commerce of the Russians in Turkey increases every day. The Black Sea and the Danube are the two channels of this commerce. Constantinople is the chief emporium of it. What is not deposited there enters Roumelia by the provinces of Moldavia and Walachia, and is dispersed through the country situate on the south of the Danube by the markets of Selimia and Ozongovia. The Greeks are the sole agents of this commerce; for the Russians are still too stupid to take any part in it.

There come from Russia silks of every kind, as taffeties, gauzes, galoons, and gold thread and gold lace. There come also velvets, which there is great difficulty to introduce here, as is always the case with a new species of merchandize.

The competition of these velvets, however, renders it very probable that the price of the

* January 2, 1799.

Genoese velvets will fall. The common velvets of Russia are equal in quality to those of Genoa, and are much cheaper, because the first materials are not so dear in Russia as they are in Italy. The Russians work, however, their silks of Casan and Astracan, and they purchase the silks of the north of Persia, and especially those of Ghilan and Mazanderan, which were formerly conveyed to Smyrna by the caravans of Erzerum and Teflis. The Russian velvets have only one defect: their colours do not stand. But it is asserted, that the cabinet of Petersburg is about to call into Russia some Italian manufacturers, who are reckoned to be excellent in colouring velvets.

There may be sold at Salonichi from twenty to twenty-five boxes of Russian velvets. This object is still, as we see, only a rising article, but it promises to be successful.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 60,000.*

F U R S.

The chief article of Russian commerce in Greece, as also in the whole Othoman empire, is that of furs. This branch of commerce is of

* £12,000.

a

a richness unknown among us. I will endeavour to give you some idea of it.

The pelice is here the favourite object of luxury; it is the ornamental dress of Turkey, the mark of opulence, and the title of greatness. No person is decently dressed when he is without his pelice. In every state, and at all seasons, the pelice constitutes the chief ornament of dress. The use of furs is, therefore, universal in Turkey, and there is sold every where in that empire an immense quantity; a commerce continued, vast, of which the northern European powers have hitherto in vain attempted to deprive the Russians.

The best furs come from the interior of Russia. It is the Greeks who go to purchase in the southern provinces of that empire in the markets of the Ukraine and of Poland, and who come afterwards to sell them again in the markets of Selimia and Ozengovia, whence they are dispersed through all Roumelia. The other parts of Turkey are furnished with furs at Constantinople, whither they are brought by the Black Sea from Akerman, Oczacow, Casan, and Astracan.

There are sold in the markets of Greece furs to the amount of nine hundred thousand piasters;* but these furs are not all consumed in

* £180,000.

that

that country. Salonichi exports one-third part of them to Syria and Egypt, in order to clear the balance which arises from its commerce with those two provinces.

The furs called *raw* are those which have not yet received any shape or dressing, and which are in the same state as when they were taken off the body of the animal. The *wrought* furs are those which have been shaped and stretched. The common furs are both dressed and finished in Turkey; the richest come there already dressed. Siberia is the chief magazine of the finest species.

The species in the greatest request here are, the *samour*, the *sessamour*, the ermine, the petit gris,* the black fox, and the furs denominated Agnelins.

SABLES.

The Levantines call the skin of the sable *samour*, and that of the common martin *sessamour*, which differs from the pole-cat only in the colour of the hair. The common martin lives in all the northern climates; but the sable, which is very small, and which has, from its diminutive size, received the name of the mouse

* Small grey squirrel.

of Muscovy, lives only in the vast forests of Siberia. Its skin is soft, bright, and of a fallow colour, inclining to black. It is shot for the benefit of the czar, who employs for that purpose the criminals who have been condemned to banishment, and who sometimes sends there whole regiments cantoned at Tobolsk. The Samoyedes, who are subject to him, pay their tribute in martins. Every head has been taxed at two skins since the conquest.

With regard to the sable, the blackest is held in the greatest esteem. But frauds are practised under the polar circle as well as in the temperate zone. The Siberians have found out the secret* of dying the Russian martins, and of giving them a jet as glittering as that, which is naturally of the finest black. Lemon-juice is the best thing that has been found to consume the fictitious colour and bring the fraud to light.

The sables in the greatest repute are those that are made with the point of tails. This part of the fur is the thickest and most bright; but the dearness of a pelice, composed of parts thus put together, can only be conceived. Thus

* I have been assured that a Siberian merchant settled at Moscow had made in this way an immense fortune. He made use, in his processes, of the sap of the walnut-tree tempered with oil.

the Grand Signior wears, in public ceremonies, sables that are worth thirty thousand piasters.* It is said that the two rich furs, which Catharine presented with her jewels to the Vizir *Baltadgi* Méhémet Pacha, in order to dissuade Peter the Great from the unsuccessful campaign of Pruth, and to bring the Turkish minister to sign the agreement of Falksen, were worth more than a hundred thousand piasters,† and that they are still kept in the seraglio, where they are shewn on the day on which the sultan gives his annual entertainment to his women.

The sables do not require much dressing. Skinning them serves only to take off their hair, and to render them more soft and more thick to the touch. These skins are usually sold in boxes, consisting of ten masses, numbered, which diminish in beauty from No. 1 to the last. The mass is composed of twenty pairs, or of forty skins, and sells from three hundred to three thousand piasters.‡ Its usual price is five hundred piasters.§ Nine vests are usually made of a mass, namely, four out of the back, which is called *arka*, four out of the legs, which are called *ternok*, and one out of the neck called *samour-pacha*.

* £6000. † £20,000.

‡ From £60 to £600. § £100.

ERMINE.

The ermine is the summer fur, and is principally set apart for the dress of women. Its beauty consists in its whiteness, which, however, is not durable, as the finest ermines grow yellow if exposed much to the air. They are, notwithstanding, always of a stronger white than the skin of a white rabbit, which is sometimes attempted to be substituted for it. The furriers of the Levant cover the ermine with black spots, in order to relieve the whiteness; they also fasten on, with much dexterity, the tails of the animal to the body of the fur, which form then a species of *pandeloques*, which the Turks handle very tenderly, and which serve them for a plaything; for, here a rich Turk spends his day sitting on a sofa with his pipe in his mouth, and employing himself in stroking his beard or his fur. It was this that engaged Tott to paint one day several Turks in this droll attitude, and to write humourously beneath his caricature, *a Turkish promenade*.

The fur of the ermine is sold in masses named *soroks*. The sorok consists of forty skins, and is worth from twenty to forty piasters. The annual consumption may be computed at eight or nine soroks.

The PETIT GRIS.*

The petit gris is a fur made with the skin of a Siberian squirrel, whose hair is of an ashy-grey. This squirrel differs from ours by its skin, which is red in summer, as they are, but which becomes white in winter. The skin of its back is of a very fine grey, but that of the belly is as white as ermine. The assortment of the petit gris consists of a millier (1000 lbs.) of skins. Every millier is numbered, and the smallest numbers mark the finest skins. The men line their *tartares*, or riding-coats, with them, and the women their *djubés*, which are a species of Polonese garment. Eleven skins are used in every pelice, namely, five off the back, which is the part of the fur in the greatest esteem, and six off the belly, which is the part held in the least request. These skins are imitated by those of rabbits whose hair is rather grey; but these furs are much inferior to the real petit gris. The consumption of this article may amount to five hundred milliers, and the price of the millier is from three to five hundred piasters.†

* Small grey squirrel. † From £60 to £100.

BLACK FOX.

The fur of the black fox is the most valuable, and is even dearer than the sable; on which account it is the mark of power in the great dignities of the empire. The Grand Signior and the pachas *of three tails* wear the skin of a black fox in public ceremonies. The best of them come from Little Tartary. They are purchased at Azof, Caffa, and Akerman; and they are made use of preferably to any other furs for winter dresses, because they are very warm. There are some which have hair so long and so soft, that a hen's egg might be concealed there. These skins have no great sale at Salonichi, and only the most common ones are consumed there. The best are purchased at Constantinople, and cost as much as fifty thousand piasters.*

AGNELINS.

The agnelins constitute, throughout the whole of Greece, one of the richest branches of the fur-trade. The finest are those with

* £10,000.

which the Turks cover the *calpaks*, which form the head-dress of what is here called the *Greek nobility*, and which is the mark of clerical dignity in all the classes of *rayas*. The *papas* of every Christian sect have their heads covered with a calpak. These furs are made of the skins of abortive lambs; they are divided into two sorts, the black and the grey. The black ones come from Little Tartary and the borders of the Volga. The wool is extremely curled, short, soft, and of a glittering jet. The common caps and the borders of garments are furred with it. These furs sell from fifteen to fifty piasters* the pair, according to their fineness or coarseness. A pair is requisite in order to fur a cap.

The grey ones come from Persia, and are held in much greater estimation than the others. They are still more thick and soft, and have a finer and softer curl; but they are so dear, that only white calpaks, and that part of robes of ceremony which is turned up, are lined with them. The princes of Walachia and Moldavia, the drogmans of the Porte, and those of European powers, wear these furs on their calpaks. They sell from fifty to a hundred, and even two hundred, piasters† the pair.

* £3 to £10. † £10, £20, and £40.

There

There come now to Salonichi furs of Egyptian lambs, but they are inferior to the others. The consumption of these various furs of abortive lambs may be valued in Greece at eighty thousand piasters.*

The English exported to the Levant, not long since, furs from Canada. There were also some brought out of Germany, which were purchased at the markets of Frankfort and Leipsick, and which came from North America. But, some years since, Russia became the master of the whole of this commerce; and that of other nations in Turkey is so trifling, that it is not worth the trouble of being valued.

When the English found that the furs of Canada could not supplant those of the north of Europe in the markets of Turkey, they flattered themselves that they could at least take the trade of Russian furs out of the hands of the Greeks, by turning it into the White Sea and the port of Archangel. The English, being accustomed to make every year, with their manufactures, several ladings for this port, took furs in return, which they re-exported into the Levant. They thus avoided the payment of the duties of the custom and the *mezetterie* at the entrance of Constantinople, in the country of the Cossacks, in Tartary, and Russia. Trans-

* £16,000.

portation by sea, they thought, was, besides, less expensive than land-carriage, and they calculated justly. This plan appeared well laid; but it has not been continued. I think that they have been disgusted by the dearness of insurances, which must have been at least three per cent. considering the length of the voyage. Furs being a fine merchandize, which takes up little compass, a common box, being worth two thousand piasters, must have in that case paid sixty piasters; but would have cost only fifty piasters for carriage from Moscow to Constantinople. This saving is very great and ought to be considered.

The consumption of this article, at an approximate sum, is - - - - - - - - - Piasters 900,000.*

The total consumptions, at approximate sums, are - - - - - - - - - - - - Piasters 960,000.†

* £180,000. † £192,000.

LETTER XXII.

Salonichi, 15 Pluviose, 6th year.*

The COMMERCE of FRANCE.

THE origin of the French commerce, in the principal ports of the Levant, may be traced up to the time of the crusades. The commerce of Salonichi receives its date only since the administration of Colbert: but this commerce has made such rapid progress, in the course of a century, that it has in a short time equalled that of the most flourishing ports of the Mediterranean. Salonichi owes its commercial prosperity to the advantages of its situation. It is one of the most central cities of European Turkey; and, by its gulph, which opens into the midst of the Archipelago, it communicates easily with all the ports of the Mediterranean.

This city is the emporium of our commerce in Greece, and the place where our principal factories are established. These factories dispose of woollen cloths, caps, embroidery, coffee, sugar, indigo, and other colonial commodities.

* January 14, 1799.

WOOLLEN

WOOLLEN CLOTHS.

Marseilles sends to Salonichi two hundred and fifty bales of woollen cloths. Each bale fetches from one thousand to one thousand two hundred piasters,* which makes this article worth about two hundred and fifty thousand piasters.†

The commerce of our woollen cloths of Languedoc diminishes every day, on account of the growing reputation of the *leipsicks*; but it depends upon the government to support the French woollen-cloth trade, by re-establishing the office of inspector. At an equal price, the Turks will prefer our light and brilliant londrins, on account of the beauty of the colours and of the assortments.

CAPS.

We exported lately to Greece fifteen dozens of caps, the sale of which sent into our factories more than one hundred thousand piasters;‡ but our exportations of them have diminished very considerably since the war. It is the

* From £200 to £240. † £50,000. ‡ £8000.

places of Italy which have gained by our losses.

Our cap-trade is notwithstanding very extensive, and our fine manufactures of Orleans rival those of Tunis. They even equal them in the knitting, the contexture of the stitches, and in the beauty of the colour; and if they are still deficient in any thing, it is only in the *gabari*. The Turks are grown children, who prefer the Tunisine caps to those of France, merely because the former are the *originals* and the latter are *copies*. We must deceive their eyes if we wish to feel their purse.

EMBROIDERY.

The sale of this article falls instead of rising, because the manufacturers of Lyons will not submit to the caprice of the Levantines. They will have here only narrow *fringes* and *gold lace*, or other petty trifles, which delight them. Thick galoons, such as the *moüsquetaires*, will never succeed. The reason of this is plain; it is because it is the women who consume the greatest quantity of galoons, and the women delight here, preferably to every thing else, in what is glittering in the eyes. On this account the galoons of Venice and Constantinople, which are brilliant and false, have supplanted

planted those of France. The amount of the embroideries of Lyons, sold here now, does not exceed forty thousand piasters,* whereas formerly it amounted to one hundred thousand.†

COFFEE.

We sell twelve thousand cantaars of coffee, which may be valued at five hundred thousand piasters ;‡ this is our chief article. Of all the coffees of the Antilles, that of Martinico is held in the greatest repute. Its berry is small, round, and of a deep blue. The liquor which it gives has a pleasant perfume and an agreeable flavour. The Turkish government favours the importation of this coffee, although it is unquestionably detrimental to its sacred connections with Mekka and Djedda. Is this from calculation or instinct? If it is from instinct, that instinct is happy: the coffee of our islands is paid for by the Turkish returns, which are always made in goods, whereas the Moka coffee must be paid for in sequins of Venice.

* £8000. † £10,000. ‡ £100,000.

SUGAR.

SUGAR.

Our factories sell annually at Salonichi twelve hundred cantaars of sugar, both moist and loaf, the produce of which sale is forty thousand piasters.*

The sugar that comes from Egypt injures the consumption of ours. It has not so good an appearance, but it is much better. Egypt is a country that produces the best canes; but the indolence of the inhabitants is extreme, and the tyranny of the government encourages this indolence still more. If the Egyptians once augment their plantations, and do but take pains in refining their sugar, they will furnish all the Levant with it.

The spring is the season of the year when our sugars experience the greatest sale, because, at that period, the Greeks make their excellent *conserves of roses*. The Levantines also make use of French sugar in their *sherbets*, which are delicious drinks; they ought also to use a great deal of it in their coffee, which would render that drink more agreeable, and would double our sales; but they never will take that custom from us. A continual use of the pipe hardens

* £8000.

the palate; and it appears that the Turks, who are *great smokers*, will not deprive the coffee of the bitter taste peculiar to it, and which agreeably tickles the throat.

INDIGO.

We sell here three hundred cantaars of indigo, which produce about one hundred and twenty thousand piasters.* The indigoes in the greatest request in Greece are the *Guatimale*, the *Jamaica*, and that of *Saint Domingo*.

Fine indigo ought to be in broad pieces of a moderate size, to float on water, to be inflammable, of a fine blue or violet colour, and intersected with silver spangles.

It is the colour that determines the preference, in proportion as that colour agrees better with the quality of the water of the places for which the indigo is destined. Blue amalgamates or incorporates more easily with the waters of Salonichi; violet unites better with those of Larissa; and, in Livadia, the violet-coloured indigo, well coppered, which somewhat resembles a pigeon's egg, is made use of with great success.

This species of merchandize is subject here to great frauds. Besides those that are committed in the first manipulation, by squeezing the leaf, from which the indigo is extracted, too much; by mixing slate, and other substances resembling it, with it: the Greeks adulterate it still more with scraped lead. These scrapings assume the colour of the indigo, with which they incorporate, and preserve all its external appearances. The Turkish q'adis do all they can to make the Jews swear on the Bible that their indigo is not adulterated: the Jews perjure themselves, and the Turkish merchants continue to be deceived.

The only way to avoid being cheated, when a person purchases any indigo at the Jewish shops, is, after examining its colour and weight, to examine its durability, and to infuse it in water. The indigo which dissolves best, and which is divided into the greatest number of homogeneous particles, is the best; and that which settles most at the bottom of the vessel is, for the same reason, the coarsest. When it is adulterated, the heterogeneous bodies separate, and continue indissoluble.

The Jews of Salonichi make indigo, as our tavern-keepers of Paris make wine. They take ten parts of meal, one of pure indigo, five of indigo in lozenges, which come wholly adulterated from Constantinople. All these several substances are mixed together, and reduced into a fine powder, which is converted into a pulp, by infusing

* £24,000.

infusing it into water, in which gum-arabic has been dissolved. With this composition they make cakes, or lozenges, which they dry in the sun, and break into small pieces, and which are coarsely ground, when they are sprinkled with the powder of the real indigo.

The indigo of Saint Domingo abounded so much here in 1789, that it fell suddenly twenty-five per cent. It was obliged to be carried back to Marseilles or Genoa, where it produced a better price than in the Levant, and there were some merchants who gained twenty per cent. by this re-exportation. The French commerce then *leagued* together in order to stop the continual falling in the prices. It was agreed that the indigo should be delivered at the market of Salonichi only at five per cent. above the current price of Marseilles; and, to prevent all fraud, it was at the same time prohibited to be bartered for other commodities. The minister of the marine, who was at that time invested with the direction of our foreign commerce, approved of this singular regulation, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the consul, who predicted that the Levantines would provide themselves at Leghorn, if the *league* was continued; and that the French merchants would be obliged to keep their indigo in their magazines. The prediction of the consul was accomplished. The purchasers applied to foreigners,

reigners, who sold to them at a cheaper rate; and both minister and merchants continue incorrigible.

OTHER ARTICLES.

Marseilles continues to send to Salonichi seventy cantaars of cochineal, which may be valued at sixty thousand piasters,* fifty cantaars of pepper, from Goa and Holland, which are worth five thousand piasters;† other spices, to the amount of eight thousand;‡ brasil-wood and logwood, to the amount of ten thousand;§ drugs, liquors, syrup, paper, lead, and small shot, to the value of thirty thousand piasters.‖

The PROFITS OF THE FRENCH COMMERCE.

If we take the aggregate of all the exports, we find a total of one million one hundred and sixty-three thousand piasters;¶ the amount of the returns rises to one million three hundred

* £12,000. † £1000. ‡ £1600.
§ £2000. ‖ £6000. ¶ £232,600.

and ten thousand piasters,* of which one million† consists of cottons; one hundred and fifty thousand‡ of wools; sixty thousand§ in wax, abats, capots, hare-skins, and yellow seed; and one hundred thousand‖ in corn. This total of the returns always keeps the same level; because, when one article diminishes, another increases in proportion. The difference that appears in the balance is always from one hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand piasters,¶ and varies but little. When it is more considerable, it is when it is occasioned by ladings of corn; and, in this case, the deficiency is always replaced by specie or remittances. The port of Constantinople sends here then a part of the funds which arise from the surplus of its exports on its returns. In general, when partial transfers are made in the various places of Turkey, they are rarely against, and almost always in favour of, Salonichi, which proves the resources of that port of the Mediterranean.

It would be difficult to determine, with accuracy, the mean rate of our annual profits, because those profits vary according to the accidents inseparable from commerce, and because those

* £262,000. † £200,000. ‡ £30,000.

§ £12,000. ‖ £20,000.

¶ From £30,000 to £40,000.

accidents

accidents are multiplied here by reason of the instability of fortune. I think, however, that we may obtain some kind of approximation, by taking for our rule the interest of money.

The rate of interest must rise or fall according to the rate of commercial profits. On these profits, it is just if we subtract half to discharge the interest, and the other half to serve for the recompense of the merchant.

But, in barbarous countries, such as Turkey is, the rate of interest is always higher than in civilized states, because the profits of industry are greater there, by reason that there is less competition.

Arms are there more scarce, the lands less dear, and always more productive, taken separately; because, in those countries, only the most fertile and best-situated soils are cultivated; but the rate of interest is always put upon a level with the produce or revenue of lands.

The rate of interest is therefore the true mark of commercial profits, as it is in every country the true thermometer of the public wealth or poverty. The *virtuous* Brutus, lending at forty-eight per cent. in his government of Cyprus, on account of *his friend* Cicero, brings to my recollection the ferocious Djezzar lending at the same rate in his pachalik of Acre; and this exorbitant rate of interest gives me no better

idea of the Roman administration than of the Turkish administration, nor of modern Cyprus than of ancient Idalia. The more one travels, the more one is persuaded that the greater part of the ancient historians are impostors. Is it possible that they could wish to instruct the world by deceiving it?

In Greece, the mean rate of interest is twenty per cent.; we may therefore compute the profits of commerce to be ten. The exports yield a profit of twenty-five per cent. and the returns a loss of fifteen. I compute the loss on the returns at fifteen per cent. but it is only speaking in the jargon of the merchants, who do not always present just ideas. The loss of fifteen per cent. does not proceed from purchasing the returns, since it has been redeemed by the profit of the exports; but it results from the changing of money, by reason that in Turkey all purchases are made with piasters, and that in France we sell in écus;* and that, in order to turn piasters into écus, we experience a loss of fifteen per cent. which is owing solely to the difference of money.

Complaints have been made at Marseilles, that the commerce of Greece has become ruinous; nor are they unfounded. The frauds and misdemeanors of factors may ruin the merchants

* Crowns; one of which is equivalent to 5 s. sterling.

of

of a nation, without that nation ceasing to make advantageous exchanges. When the committee makes illicit profits, those profits are taken from the lawful profit of the constituent; and then the one is ruined, while the other enriches himself. However, when the principal loses, he becomes disgusted; and it is thus that the frauds of factors terminate always in the ruin of the commerce of a nation. This consideration ought to be always present to wise governors, and it ought to engage ours to be more choice in the French whom it suffers to pass into the Levant. There is great need here of better principles and virtues, because they are continually in contact with the Greeks and Italians, who are the two species of men that are the most corrupt upon the face of the earth.

The avarice of some merchants is not less prejudicial, than the frauds and impositions of others, to foreign sales. In general, all the merchants, who overcharge their customers, make a false calculation: they injure them as much by exaggerated prices as by mal-practices; and they realize the fable of the hen with golden eggs, by sacrificing a certain lasting profit to the attraction of a momentary profit.

LETTER XXIII.

Salonichi, 30 Pluviose, year 6.*

I SHALL present you, in this Letter, with the view of the Greek commerce. At one glance you will be enabled to measure the various branches of which it consists, and you will find the balance in the difference of the totals. But I beg you to rely on this balance only as a reed. If you take it for the only basis of the profits of this commerce, you will found that basis on false calculations, and will precipitate the government into unfortunate measures.

* February 17, 1799.

A GENERAL VIEW.

Greek Exports.	European Commerce.	Greek Imports.
Piasters.		Piasters.
558,320* p.c	The commerce of England	558,320* p.c
4,663,000†	The commerce of Germany,	1,544,550†
1,150,000‡	The commerce of Italy . . .	644,400‡
140,000§	The commerce of Holland	100,400§
1,000,000‖	The commerce of Russia .	960,000‖
1,310,000¶	The commerce of France .	1,163,000¶
8,821,520** p.c	13,691,920 p.c*	4,970,670** p.c
* £111,664	* £2,738,384.	* £111,664
† £932,600		† £308,910
‡ £230,000		‡ £128,880
§ £28,000		§ £20,080
‖ £200,000		‖ £192,000
¶ £262,000		¶ £232,600
** £1,764,304		** £994,134

When we resume the total of the Frank exports, in the Greek commerce, we find that it amounts nearly to nine millions of piasters.* These nine millions are paid partly in specie and partly in commodities. The English and the Russians are the only nations that settle all without money: the former with their watches, their muslins, and their châlons; the latter with their furs. The Germans pay one-third with their linens and their leipsicks, and the two remaining thirds in sequins and in the talaris of Hungary. The Italians pay one half in colonial commodities, in caps, and silks, and the other half in sequins of Venice. The Dutch pay the smallest part with their sequins, and the greatest part with their spices. Lastly, the French pay four-fifths in commodities, and the remaining fifth in talaris, which are sent by Augsbourg, and by the Germans to Marseilles, in order to settle their balance with France.

The amount of the importations does not exceed five millions. The balance is therefore about four millions† in favour of Greece. If the total of the balance presents, in the other provinces of Greece, the same disproportion, we should have reason to think, that the commerce of the Levant, like that of India, will gradually absorb all the money in Europe. This

* £1,800,000. † £800,000.

is

is the way of the world: in the west, gold is dug out of the bowels of the earth; in the east, it is interred there; and the same level is preserved in our intermediate regions.

The prices both of the exports and imports are those established in the market of Salonichi. I could not comprehend in my Table the prices of carriage, because they vary too much; but, by approximation, they may be estimated at one-tenth of the price of commodities, half of which takes the route of the Danube and of Germany, and the other half that of the sea. It is the Turks and Germans who receive the profits of the land-carriage. The profits of carriage by sea are divided among the Greeks, the French, and the Italians. The inhabitants of the islands of the Archipelago, and particularly those of Idria, have one half of these profits, the French one-fourth part, and the Ragusans and Sclavonians the other fourth part.

It is generally thought that the commerce of the Levant is more profitable to the French than to the Turks, because it is wholly active for the one, and wholly passive for the others. This is a prejudice which will not bear an analysis. This commerce is productive of equal advantages to both, because, in exchanges of convenience, both the contracting parties gain at once. It is by no means true, as some have written, that active commerce is always more

profitable

profitable than passive commerce. Nature has fixed no certain price on things; that always arises from the abundance or scarcity of them, as well as from the desire of possessing the respective objects of exchange. Consequently, the more passive commerce is, of the greater utility it must be; for, he, who presents one commodity to be exchanged for another, renders himself liable to give more, by testifying a greater desire to possess it. I know that cunning, when treating with ignorance, sometimes inverts, on this point, the natural order of things. Our superiority, with regard to the Turks, is not, however, such, that we can sell them bits of glass for gold dust. The theory of commerce, both active and passive, is only a chimera. All commerce is useful, inasmuch as it augments the national activity; but it is always so with two nations who trade together, without which it could not be; for, none but fools can be dupes for any length of time, and we cannot refuse nations common sense. Perhaps, if we fully penetrate this matter, we shall find that all that is called the profits of the commerce consists, in the last instance, in the carriage; and it would be then demonstrated, that the only really trading nations are the carrying nations. What is certain is, that the carriage of goods is the source of the clearest profit to the French in the commerce of the Levant. Besides,

sides, in order to appreciate with some degree of justice, which gains the most, whether it is Turkey or the Frank nations, who trade thither, we must know with precision in both countries the price of labour,* which is the only criterion by which to regulate

* Labour is the real price of things, money is only a nominal price. According to Smith, the subsistence of the workman or the real price of labour varies with circumstances; it abounds in a society which is risen to opulence, it is less in one that continues stationary, and it is much less in that which declines and descends. The price of labour in Greece does not prove this theory. The day's work of a peasant pays him from twenty to twenty-five paras, and that of the artist thirty or forty.

An oke* of beef is worth six paras,† and an oke of mutton twelve.‡ This difference in the prices of beef and mutton proceeds from the nature of those two kinds of meat; the flesh of the mutton is very delicate and tender in Greece, and that of beef as tough as leather.

Bread is worth four paras§ the oke, so that an oke of mutton is worth three okes of bread, and an oke of beef is worth an oke and a half. The price of corn is in proportion with that of bread; it is two piasters and a half for the Greek quilot, which is a measure of twenty-two okes. The peasant can eat from six to seven quilots of corn in a year; whence we see, that a labourer in the country can earn, in thirty-six or forty days, the bread that is necessary for the whole year. This man eats meat only on the days of St. George and St. Dimitri, and on the feasts of Christmas and Easter. He does not spend more than eighteen or twenty piasters in other food, such as caviar, anchovies, fruits, and pulse. He can therefore

* 3 lbs. 2 ounces. † 6 pence. ‡ 1 shilling. § 4 pence.

earn

regulate the true value of every thing. We ought to know the relation which the prices of labour bear in both countries. But who can flatter himself that he possesses this knowledge? We must therefore know precisely to what sum, arising from labour, each of the commodities exchanged is equivalent. If, with these ideas, we are informed of the precise quantity of those commodities, we can then speak with some degree of certainty of the profit and loss of each nation.

earn his annual support in eighty days work. In one hundred and sixty days he earns that of his wife, together with his own; and, if the support of a child, who cannot yet work, is usually estimated at half that of a man, in two hundred days he earns also that of his child. Thus a Greek peasant works only two hundred days in the year. He makes a hundred holidays, and spends the remainder of his time in thrumming on a guitar or dancing the Roméca. His wife reposes from morning to night reclining on a sofa, and stirs thence only to get bread for dinner, and henna to dye her eyebrows and nails. The excessive gain of the men is the true cause of idleness in the women.

The high price of labour in Greece proceeds from two causes, the scarcity of hands, and the great number of feasts in the Greek calendar. A Greek can only work two days out of three: he must therefore earn in two days sufficient to maintain him three. If it be true that the catholic states can never rise to the same prosperity, arising from their industry, as the protestant states do, the countries in the Greek communion will always continue, for the same reason, beneath the ecclesiastical states.

What

What is most important for us to know is, how the mass of importations is distributed which the Frank commerce causes to flow into Greece.

The Frank merchandizes, which arrive at Salonichi, do not stop there. Commerce divides and disperses them throughout all Greece. The consumption of Salonichi is very small. The most exact calculations do not make it exceed annually thirty thousand okes of coffee, twenty-five bales of cloth, twenty-one thousand caps, and twelve hundred okes of indigo. Sugar, the use of which is confined to the wealthy, and cochineal, are used principally here, and are carried but seldom elsewhere, unless it is to supply Sérès, Larissa, Janina, or some other neighbouring city, or unless it is sent to Adrianople, Smyrna, and Constantinople, in search of more advantageous and of higher prices. Salonichi consumes only one thousand quintals of sugar.* The greatest quantity is consumed by the confectioners. The remainder is consumed in the seraglios of the beys and in coffee-houses for sherbet. The consumption of cochineal does not exceed eight hundred okes.† The cochineal is made use of in dying the *pochs*, which serve for the head-dress of the janisaries, and in that of the

* A quintal is equivalent to one hundred weight.

† 936 lbs.

celebrated

celebrated red Morocco leathers, the manufacturing of which is in the hands of fifty Turks, who, by means of their freedom, enjoy great privileges, and form with their workmen a body of men formidable to the government of the country. This body is at the disposition of the bey who pays it most, and is often made use of to quell the seditious. The privileges of the tanners are exercised in general by Macedonian mountaineers, called *amaoüks*, who, under Alexander, were as many heroes, and who are at present the best porters of Turkey.

The markets dispersed through the interior of Turkey in Europe are the channels through which the surplus of what is not consumed at Salonichi passes.

The market of Zeitoun, which is held in Germinal,* disperses the Frank merchandizes through Thessaly; that of Sélimia, which is held in Prairial,† disperses them through the Othoman provinces which border on the Danube; and the markets of Negrocowp, Oloosson, and Ozongovia, which are held in Vendemiaire,‡ provide Servia, Albania, and all Upper Greece.

* From March 21 to April 20.

† From May 20 to June 19.

‡ From September 22 to October 22.

It

It is not long since the Frank merchants sent factors to all these markets; but these factors were always fleeced by the agas, and sometimes plundered by robbers. These troubles have caused all these sales to be made on the exchange of Salonichi directly with the merchants of the country, who, making their payments only at a stated time, are in some degree merely managers.

Selling well, in this country, is not, as with us, selling at a high price; it is selling to persons able to pay. With respect to the commerce of the Levant, the most able merchant knows less respecting it than a mere factor who is acquainted with persons, because the most difficult part of this commerce is the getting of the money paid. In Greece, as in Egypt, a man can never get his debt from his debtor, unless the latter contracts a new debt with him.

In a well-governed country, payments are easily got in, because agreements are punctually performed; but here the laws press upon *the weak*, and do not bind *the strong*. In vain is it said, that the form of the Turkish government is despotic at Constantinople; but in the provinces it is a military aristocracy, which approaches that of Algiers or Tunis in a greater or less degree, and which, at the bottom, is in all respects the same. The janisary pays when he

pleases;

pleases; and, when he does not choose to pay, force alone can compel him; and force is in his own hands.

There is then no other security against the merchant of the country than his morals, and they are weakened by the contagion of example. The janisary-merchant pays only when he is interested in the preservation of his credit, on which he founds the hopes of enlarging his estate and his ambitious projects. Put a stop to selling to him, and he will cease paying you. The following circumstance, which recently happened to me, will give an idea of his treachery. I solicited a janisary, who was reckoned rich, to fulfil his engagements with a Frenchman. This man eluded me by frivolous reasons: I became angry, and threatened him with the anger of the pacha and with the bowstring. He heard me with the utmost coolness, and answered me, "I know that you *can* "*strangle me*, and I know also that you *will* "*not do it*; for, after all, what will your mer- "chant gain by it? Before I die, I will declare "myself a bankrupt, and you will expose him "to run the hazard of losing his debt, whereas, "by contracting with me, he may lose only a "part of it."

The bad faith of the Turks is not the sole cause of the difficulty of getting payments in; it proceeds also from the impoverishment of the country,

country, which is the effect of the vices of the government.

Despotism renders property precarious, because it always concludes by invading it. It confines industry, because no one cares to gain what he cannot keep; it restrains the circulation of money, which thus accumulates in the hands of persons interested in concealing it. Want of circulation renders sales at stated periods more necessary and more uncertain. When a man will not pay his creditor, he cannot pay in his turn.

The same causes, that influence on the difficulty of getting payments in, afford the same reason likewise for the high interest of money.

It is very natural that the lender should require a greater interest in proportion as he is less certain of its return into his capital. In a country where fortunes are better divided, the want of money is felt less. The demand being less quick, money is less dear. As despotism gives all to one, and takes every thing from others, it favours more than other governments an unequal distribution of riches. This is the reason why the interest of money is higher in the Asiatic governments than in those of Europe. The rate of interest may be even calculated according to the greater or less degree of despotism. It is twenty per cent. in Turkey, twenty-five in Persia, and thirty in the Mogul

empire; or, to speak with more justness, the rate of the interest of money in these countries follows, it is true, the progression above-mentioned, but it has no fixed proportion, and is subject, as it is every where else, to that of necessity. In the Frank commerce, it is twenty per cent. Out of the commerce, it rises to twenty, twenty-five, and often no one will lend but on securities. When this security does not exist, it is seldom, whether from inability or ill-will, that the principal is repaid. The interest is paid at first with some punctuality; it afterwards is a little in arrear; then it is wholly dropped.

The interest paid by the Franks is always the least, because the idea of re-payment is attached to that of lending. It is, however, always higher than in our Europe, because the effects of unfortunate events are apprehended here.

Besides, money is here decidedly scarce. This scarcity may be viewed in two lights; in that of an accidental scarcity, and that of an absolute scarcity. The former arises from the variations which foreign moneys experience in Turkey, and which, by reason of the balance, are as common as those of the country. When one of these moneys rises too high, the Grand Signior fixes its value by a firman. The firmans are executed just as the pachas please; they are

respected in some provinces and eluded in others. In all other countries, the value affixed by the prince is always modified by that affixed by commerce. What then is the effect of the tariff of the Porte? It is, that foreign money, being in a state of perpetual fluctuation thither, where it rises out of the countries where it falls, there is a perpetual stirring between Smyrna, Alexandria, and Salonichi. Hence arise in one place moments of scarcity, and at another moments of abundance. Stock-jobbing has established its calculations on these fluctuations, and is one of the greatest evils that affect the commerce of Turkey. It is also there an evil that influences the difficulties of getting payments in.

The absolute scarcity of money is the united effect of all these and of many other causes. The whole divan may be bought with gold; and hence is the practice, which the beys and agas have, of hoarding up treasure in the provinces, in order to redeem themselves from the bow-string, or to purchase themselves pachaliks. This practice of heaping up money draws from the circulation an immense quantity of money which might be usefully employed in commerce while it is lying dead in the coffers of the great. Another circumstance that augments this rarity still more is, that the sultan of the Turks being

the greatest false coiner of all the princes of Europe, at every new coinage an adulteration of the money is apprehended. In every new reign the money alters for the worse. The government then orders the old piasters to be bought up; but individuals, who find it more to their account to keep them themselves than to send them to the mint, cause them to be melted by the goldsmiths, or else they send them clandestinely into Germany. The intrinsic value of the piaster has diminished one half within these twenty years. The Grand Signior may be considered as a prince who has no real money, but only counterfeit money. Thus folly renders every thing dearer.

One would think that all these faults of the government would diminish commerce. This is an error. In commerce, the profits are multiplied in proportion as the hazards increase. Trading nations are not the dupes of bankrupt nations. They sell to them at a dearer rate, and they indemnify themselves for their losses by double profits. The commerce must diminish, say they, because the country is impoverished; and the country is impoverished, because the mass of productions diminishes. This is true; but population diminishes in proportion as the mass of productions diminishes, and the surplus is always the same. When the beys

beys have less corn, they support fewer men in their territories; for, they had rather lessen the number of their peasants than their horses. To the luxury of magnificence they add that of convenience, since European ideas and European tastes have been introduced among them. The effect of the new wants, which they have contracted, is, that, instead of devouring the subsistence of *one* district, they devour that of *two*; but the consumption of European commodities does not diminish. On the contrary, it has augmented one-third within these twenty years by the effect of the progress of luxury, of which any person may be convinced by casting his eyes over the statements of the European commerce. However, these general augmentations cannot last, because it is impossible to carry on a rich commerce for any length of time with a country that is ruined. Already may local diminutions be perceived, and we have here the proofs of them before our eyes. It is true that the diminution of the commerce of Salonichi must be referred to other causes, which I shall mention, but the impoverishment of the country has also contributed its proportion to it.

The commerce of Salonichi was always increasing till 1775, and it continued so till 1781. At the former of these periods Bulgaria, Servia, Bosnia, and the Morea, which lost the Frank

establishments during the Albanian revolution, provided themselves at that port of the Mediterranean. In 1778 were established the duties on exportation and carriage, from which the communication by land had been till that time exempt. This was the first blow that was given to the prosperity of that place. The spirit of commerce is insensibly extended; it has multiplied its sources and its channels. The Frank merchants of Adrianople, disgusted at being only the factors of those of Constantinople, and being nearer than those of Salonichi to the principal markets of Roumelia, and especially to those of Ozongovia and Sélimia, which are the two greatest markets of Turkey in Europe, have carried on the commerce on their own account. They have frequented those markets, and have injured, by their competition, the sales of our merchants. The position of Adrianople is very favourable; the vicinity of the port of Enos and the navigation of the Marizza facilitate the conveyance of goods, and render it less expensive than land-carriage. If the merchants of Adrianople know how to profit by their advantages, we may presage them a brilliant success; but, by turning the Frank commerce out of the Gulph of Salonichi into that of Enos, they enrich themselves at the expense of our merchants of Greece.

The

The commerce of Salonichi has not only suffered losses in the north and east of Turkey in Europe, it is also impoverished in the south and west. The Morea has recovered its commerce by recovering its tranquillity. New establishments have been formed at Arta, Preveza, and especially on the coast of Albany. The Venetian ports of Dalmatia furnish, however, the Turkish provinces with which they are surrounded, and Ragusa, some years since, supplied the wants of Bosnia. This new direction of the commerce is natural; but what ought to appear astonishing is, that Germany, which draws colonial commodities from Hamburgh, pours them some time after over all the Othoman provinces which border on the Danube, and that they are circulated to the very extremity of Greece. Such are the causes which have narrowed the circle of the commerce of Salonichi, and which have accelerated its decline more than the impoverishment of the country.

It follows, from what I have been saying, that the mass of the European commerce will diminish in the Levant in the same manner as it diminishes in India. The Europeans will, for the future, send less specie into the ports of the Mediterranean, but they will always send there the same quantity of their merchandi-

zes, because habits of luxury continue. Exportations and returns will always be better balanced, till, at length, this country being ruined, it is no longer able to pay for foreign commodities, and the commerce ceases.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

Salonichi, 20 Ventôse, year 6.*

TURKISH COMMERCE, WEIGHTS, MEASURES, and MONEY.

I WILL not conclude the View of the Greek Commerce without saying a word respecting the commerce of Salonichi, with the other cities of Turkey, and without mentioning the value of their weights, measures, and money.

Salonichi receives from Egypt Moka coffee, flax, linens, gum, incense, sal ammoniac,†

* March 11, 1799.

† Sal ammoniac comes in small loaves, both round and broad. Some have written, that this salt proceeds from the urine of the camel, sublimated in African sand. This is the tale of a traveller. The following is the truth: Wood being very scarce in Egypt, the Egyptians burn camels' dung, mixed with straw infused in urine. But it is from the soot which proceeds from it that they draw, by sublimation, the sal ammoniac, which is a substance composed of marine acid and volatile alkali, which the soot contains. Sal ammoniac is made use of as a dissolvent by the Turkish tanners: it assists the sublimation of imperfect metals, heightens the colour of gold during fusion, and serves to make *aqua regalis*.

drugs,

drugs, and henna-powder.* These various articles may amount to eight hundred thousand piasters:† they are paid for with seventy thousand bales of tobacco, and the surplus, which may be computed at one hundred fifty thousand piasters,‡ is paid for with talaris and sequins.

Syria sends to Salonichi, to the amount of two hundred thousand piasters,§ nut-galls, sword-blades, and the *bours* of Aleppo and Damascus. Salonichi sends in return cochineal, abats, and a hundred thousand piasters‖ to pay the surplus of the exports.

There come from Smyrna soap, aly-zari, and dry fruits, in exchange for capots and abats. The most important commerce that subsists between Smyrna and Salonichi is that of bank, which is supported by the perpetual fluctuation of money.

The island of Candia furnishes oils, soap, citrons, and oranges; all which is paid for with kali and specie, and may be worth about one hundred thousand piasters.¶

* Henna is a shrub of the family of *salicares*, whose leaves, when pulverized, and wrought into a pulp with lemon-juice, are made use of as cosmetics.

† £160,000. ‡ £30,000. § £40,000.

‖ £20,000. ¶ £20,000.

There

There come from the islands of the Archipelago, and particularly from Chios, fruits, wines, and silks, as taffetas, sashes, and handkerchiefs. Salonichi gives in return raw silks, abats, and pays for the remainder with money. The exports of Chios may be estimated at eight thousand piasters.*

Salonichi sends capots and abats to Marseilles, and receives in return the *vallonée*, which is gathered on the coast of Troy. This article, which is the cup of the acorn of the oak called *vélani*, is made use of in the Turkish tanneries.

There come from Barbary black slaves and Tunisine caps. These caps are brought into the ports of the Morea, with which Barbary has great connections, in order to recruit its soldiers, and are exchanged in those ports for vermilion. From the Morea they pass to the markets held in Thessaly and Albania, where they are bartered for other commodities, whence they are circulated even to Salonichi.

Lastly, Salonichi receives from Constantinople silk stuffs, gold and silver brocades, yellow moroccos, worked amber, valuable pipes, Circassians that have been refused, toys, and, in general, whatever is necessary for Turkish luxury. The total of these various articles is

* £1600.

computed

computed to amount to nearly one million of piasters,* which sum is paid in corn, tobacco, and silk vests. The exportation of corn covers the debt; but, when Constantinople is completely provided in the Black Sea, Salonichi sends specie or remittances to balance the returns.

WEIGHTS.

The Turkish weights are the cantaar, the oke, and the drachm. The cantaar contains forty-four okes, the oke four hundred drachms, and the drachm, which is the element or smallest of the Turkish weights, is the same thing as our *gros*, and makes the eighth part of an ounce. The cantaar contains, therefore, one hundred and thirty-seven pounds table-weight,† and the oke three pounds two ounces, or fifty ounces. It is known, that in our ancient weights there were twelve ounces in the pound mark-weight,‡ and

* £200,000.

† *Poids de table*; nearly equivalent to our troy-weight.

‡ *Poids de marc.* This weighs sixteen ounces French weight, which it is to be observed is generally two or three ounces more than ours. Thus the *poids de table*, according to the French measure, weighs *thirteen* ounces, but is equivalent to

and that there were sixteen ounces in the pound table-weight, and that consequently there was a difference between the two weights of twenty-five in the hundred.

MEASURES.

The Turkish measures are the *pic* for stuffs, and the *quilot* for grain. The *pic* contains twenty-five inches: a pic and three quarters make an ell French. The quilot of Salonichi is equivalent to three quilots and three quarters of that of Constantinople, which is commonly called the *quilot of Stambol*; four quilots and a half make the *charge* of Marseilles, and a fifth more than a septier of Paris.

The Turkish measures may be estimated with still more accuracy, if we mention their connection with weights. The quilot of Salonichi weighs eighty-five okes in Macedonian corn, and that of Stambol twenty-two. The charge of Marseilles may be computed at three hundred pounds, and the septier of Paris at two hundred and fifty.

to *fifteen* ounces of our measure, and the *poids de marc*, which weighs *sixteen* French ounces, to nearly *eighteen* of our ounces.

SILVER

SILVER MONEY.

The money, current in the Levant, is the money peculiar to the Grand Signior, and some foreign money, coined for the commerce of the Levant.

The Turkish money, which serves as the type and measure to other moneys, is the piece of silver, of forty paras, which the Turks call, in their common language, *grousch*, and *aslanli* in technical terms. It is properly the écu* of Turkey; it is known in the European commerce under the name of the Turkish piaster, and at the present course of exchange it may be represented by two livres tournois.† At the same rate the para may be represented by one of our sous, the piaster being worth forty paras.

The piaster formerly weighed six drachms, and was eleven grains fine, as the greater part of the European money was. Sultan Ahmid III.‡ who reigned at the commencement of the present century, is the first Othoman prince who dared to adulterate the money, and to establish new duties. However he was obliged to put a

* Crown. † 1*s.* 8*d.*

‡ He reigned from 1700 to 1718.

stop

stop to those two enterprizes, for fear of a revolt; for, the sultans can plunder all their officers, who are, after all, only their *valets*; but they dare attempt neither the honour nor the property of other Mussulmen, who are under the protection of the laws.

Ahmid III. altered the piaster one-third. All the coins that issued from the mints of Cairo and Constantinople contained no more alloy than the piasters of Ahmid, till the reign of Sultan Mahmoud,* who governed the empire towards the middle of this century, and who lowered at once the title and the weight of the Turkish money. The piasters coined in his reign weigh only five drachms and a half, and have one-third of alloy. Since that period, the adulteration of the coin has been continually increasing. On this account all the ancient piasters have disappeared. No other piasters are at present in circulation than those of the three last reigns. The piaster of Sultan Moustapha, which is beginning to become rare, weighs five drachms; it has two drachms and a half fine, and two drachms and a half alloy; or, according to our way of speaking, is at the standard of six grains. The piaster of Abdul-Ahmid weighs half a drachm less than that of Moustapha, and, like that, consists of one half fine

* He reigned from 1718 to 1754.

and

and one half alloy. It is worth, therefore, from the sole difference of weight, one-tenth less. The *sarrafs*, or money-changers, purchase the piasters of Moustapha and Abdul-Ahmid at a higher price than the common piasters, and send them to the mint of Constantinople, where they are re-coined, which debases them so rapidly, that, in a short time, only the piaster of the reigning sultan will be met with, which is a real piece of base coin.

The piaster of Selim III. weighs four drachms: it has one drachm and three quarters fine, and two drachms and a quarter of alloy. A drachm of fine silver sells for sixteen paras current money of the country; the piaster is therefore intrinsically worth twenty-eight paras: the prince gains, therefore, twelve paras by the coining. The drachm weighs a gros; eight gros make an ounce; eight ounces make a mark; and, if we value the mark of silver at fifty-four livres, which was the price when I was in France, the ounce at sixteen livres fifteen sous, and the drachm at sixteen sous eight deniers, the intrinsic value of the piaster, in French money, must be twenty-eight sous one denier. If it is worth, at the present course of exchange, from thirty-five to forty sous, it is on account of the balance of commerce, which is wholly in favour of Turkey.

The asper is the first element of the Turkish money: it is worth four deniers, if we reckon the

piaster at two livres. Three aspers make a para, and forty paras make a piaster. The following are the principal divisions. The *asper*, the first element, which is base money, as well as the para, which weighs three aspers, and which is of the size of one of our deniers. The *bechlik* is the smallest piece of silver, at the same standard as the piaster: it is worth five paras. — The *onlouk* is a piece of ten paras. — The *yirmilik* is worth twenty paras. — The single *izlote*, thirty paras. The new *izlote*, or *grousch*, and in the Frank commerce the *piaster* properly called, is worth forty paras. — The *altmichlik*, sixty paras. — The *ikilik*, eighty paras. — The *yusluk*, a hundred paras. This last piece is the largest piece of silver money, at the same standard as the piaster, as the bechlik is the smallest piece. The Franks call the *yusluk* the Turkish *talari*, on account of the relation it bore, before the last re-coinages, to the talari of Hungary.

These are the Turkish silver coins. The following are the foreign coins current in Turkey. The *talari* of Hungary, which is called *thaler* or *dhaler* in Germany, *caragrousch* in Turkey, *pataque* in Egypt, and *talari* in the Frank commerce. This coin is actually current at three piasters thirteen paras; it weighs eight drachms fourteen-sixteenths, and is eleven grains fine.

The *piaster* of Spain, called the *sévillane*, is of a purer standard than the talari; and, although it only weighs eight drachms eight-sixteenths, it is worth three piasters twelve paras. The Saxon talari is worth three piasters eight paras; the ducat of Venice three piasters twelve paras; and the *Ragusan*, or piaster of Ragusa, two piasters five paras.

GOLD COINS.

The Turkish gold coins are the sequin *foundoukli*, the *zermahboub*, and the *meshir*.

The sequin *foundoukli* weighs one drachm one-sixteenth. Gold is sold in Turkey by the *métical* and the *carat*. Sixteen carats make a drachm, and twenty-four carats a métical. The métical of gold sells for nine piasters,* and the carat fifteen paras:† the drachm of gold is therefore worth six piasters. We have seen that the drachm of silver was worth sixteen paras: the proportion of silver is therefore to that of gold as one is to fifteen. In Europe it is as one is to fourteen. Gold must be dearer in Turkey than in Europe, because it is more easily secreted from the rapacity of government. All persons here, who have a fortune, realize it in gold.

* £1 : 16*s*. † 1*s*. 3*d*.

The

The sequin *foundoukli* weighs seventeen carats; it has thirteen carats of pure gold, and four of alloy; or, according to our way of speaking, it is after the standard of nearly nineteen carats. The intrinsic value of the foundoukli is therefore only one hundred and ninety-five paras, or four piasters thirty-five paras. It is set down for seven piasters, according to the prince's standard, and, in commerce, is current for that value.

The sequin *zermahboub*, called *stambol*, in order to distinguish it from the sequin of Cairo, denominated *meshir*, weighs thirteen carats. It has ten carats one-eighth of pure gold, and is intrinsically worth three piasters twenty-one paras, although the prince's standard has five piasters.

By virtue of the same will of the sultan, the sequin *meshir*, which is coined at Cairo, is worth four piasters: it weighs, however, only thirteen carats, and has only eight carats and a half of pure gold, which makes its real value to be three piasters eight paras.

The foreign gold coins current here are the sequin of Hungary and that of Venice.

The sequin of Hungary, called *madgiar*, is current for seven piasters: it weighs a drachm, and is after the standard of twenty-three carats.

The Venetian sequin, which is worth seven piasters and a half, and which weighs one

drachm one-sixteenth, is the coin held in the greatest esteem in Turkey; this, for its excellence, is the money of all the East. It is of a purer standard than any of which I know. Next to the sequin of Venice, the gold coin in the greatest repute is the sequin of Holland and that of Tuscany.

All the other moneys are merchandizes in the Levant, and are delivered by weight, when their standard is ascertained. The Turks reckon large sums by *purses*. The purse is an ideal measure, worth five hundred piasters. The custom of Salonichi is farmed out for seven hundred purses, and that of Larissa for three hundred.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

To L—— P——,

EX-INSPECTOR OF COMMERCE.

Salonichi, 1 Germinal, year 6.*

The ADMINISTRATION of the LEVANT.

I PROCEED to answer your questions respecting the administration of the Levant, which is the work of Colbert, and which has brought our commerce to the high degree of prosperity to which it had arisen before the revolution: it alone can re-establish our commerce. I am on the spot, and my observations relate to facts. I think that I have no prejudices. Educated from my youth in the principles of the economists, and since in those of Smith and Stewart, I have found it necessary to deviate, in some measure, from my theory, when I could in anywise depart from facts. These facts I have analyzed and compared, and it is from comparing them that I have drawn the truths which I present

* March 21, 1799.

you. If a good theory is only an explanation of a good practice, it is not well to put too much confidence in those who read only books, and it is much better to trust those who *turn the wheel of commerce*, or who have their eyes upon the *playing* of that wheel. The theory, explained in good writings, would be, perhaps, good to follow, if all states would follow it; but, since one of these states will wish to have advantages, which others neglect to seize, the two weights of the balance will not be equal, and the equilibrium will be broken.

FIRST QUESTION.

Ought the French Commerce to be open to Foreigners?

It is "a plain truth," said one of our greatest writers,* when discussing this question, "that "the more economically commerce is carried "on, the greater extent it acquires. The "cheaper merchandize is, the greater is the "consumption, and the greater is the produc-"tion and cultivation. Between the person "who produces and the person who consumes,

* Considérations sur la Guerre des Turcs.

"the

"the merchant is an intermediate or accessary "hand, who has no right to any thing but a re-"compense for his time. As this salary in-"creases the price of the merchandize, it be-"comes as much dearer, and the consumption "as much less, as the salary raises it." The purchases are then less, the sales smaller, the manufactures are not carried on, and commerce languishes.

From these maxims it follows, that the least expensive mode of carrying on the commerce of the Levant is also productive of the greatest profit. Let us then examine, according to what hypothesis the commerce of the Levant may be carried on with the most economy.

The foreigners, who can be our competitors in the carrying on of the commerce of Turkey, are the Italians and the Othoman subjects; but neither of them can carry it on with so little expense as our factors.

The Italians cannot contend with us. We are more favoured in the Levant than they. The articles, of which our exports consist, are colonial productions, and the object of our returns is the support of our manufactures: the Italians, on the contrary, have no colonial commodities; and every one knows that they manufacture badly, and that they manufacture little. Attempts have been made latterly to open ways for the disposal of the wools and cottons

of the Levant in Italy; but they have failed. The Italians cannot therefore carry on this commerce as for us, and in the same manner as we do: they are consequently obliged to make use of more intermediary or accessary hands, and pay greater expenses for commission; they cannot therefore have, in the carrying on of this commerce, the same advantages that we have.

The Othoman subjects cannot support a competition with us. They pay five per cent. for the customs, whereas we pay only three per cent. This is the only duty which we pay; and, as soon as it is paid, we can transport our commodities, at our pleasure, from one port of the Mediterranean to another. The Othoman subjects, on the contrary, pay a duty wherever they deposit their merchandize; they afterwards pay, in every city where there is any great consumption, duties on their entry, which are very oppressive, and from which we are exempted.

The subjects of the Grand Signior, who apply themselves more particularly to commerce, are the Jews, the Greeks, and the Armenians. The individuals of these nations are exposed to frequent extortions on the part of the Turks: they cannot appear before the pachas and the q'adis, even in the most trivial affairs, but with purse in hand. As they are governed by their own

own magistrates, under the inspection of Turkish officers, exclusively of the public impositions, they support also those of individuals. The communities levy, on every adult person, a tax, proportioned to his real or apparent property or means; and in certain cities of Greece, as Livadia, Larissa, and Salonichi, a particular duty is levied on industry, which is deducted in the public markets. It is true, that the Greeks and the Armenians are peculiarly parsimonious in their clothing and food; but this domestic economy cannot compensate for the expenses incurred by the extortions of the great, which necessarily arise from their political existence.

The Othoman subjects cannot therefore be the competitors of the French in the carrying on of the commerce of the Levant, but by employing those detestable means peculiar to them, and which are so strongly and so generally cried down in all the markets of the Mediterranean. The Greeks and the Jews are the *two moral pests* of commerce. The soul is indignant when one is obliged by one's office to detect their profound immorality. Do you know the reasons why there is so little good faith in the markets of the south of Europe? It is because they are infested by Greeks and Jews. Woe be to the people who have with these nations degraded the least point of contact.

This

This moral degradation is in these nations the effect of a defect in society. Man is never so crafty and malicious as when he is in society; and the cause of his evil-being is his social nullity. Thus, till the Greeks and Jews are restored to those rights of society which they have lost, those two nations, being enslaved and broken, will continue the most corrupt people of the earth.

The basis of our commerce in Turkey is in our woollen cloths and galoons, which the Greeks and Jews will counterfeit: they will deluge us with pretended galoons of Lyons; they will sell londrins as transparent as serge. They ought to be content with an honest and continual profit; they will wish to make rapidly great profits: fraud will change confidence: the Turks will be disgusted; for, nations, like individuals, are not long the dupes of fraud.

What will be the consequence of this? The commerce of woollen cloths and embroidery will take flight towards Germany, and we shall lose our manufactures of Lyons and Languedoc. This consequence is so closely connected with its cause, that it merits some investigations.

Woollen cloths constitute, in the commerce of the Levant, the most essential and the chief article. They constituted formerly half our imports;

ports; it is therefore an object of the utmost importance, to furnish the Levantines with woollen cloths, because every one acknowledges that the same person, who furnishes in a market the principal article, furnishes also the accessary or inferior articles.

Let us see, then, whether the commerce of woollen cloths is compatible with the freedom of commerce.

Our woollen cloths have acquired their superiority over those of foreigners only by the vigilance of government over the manufacturing of them. They will lose that, since they will be no longer inspected; and the inspection is irreconcilable with the freedom of commerce. Our woollen cloths, being withdrawn from a wise police, will be rejected on account of their inferior quality, and on account of frauds. The *leipsicks* will supplant our londrins, and, notwithstanding the beauty of our dye and the variety of our assortments, the Turks will prefer strong and lasting woollen cloths to our brilliant, but light, woollen cloths. We shall then lose the commerce of the Levant, which will pass from the hands of the French into those of the Germans, in the same manner as it has passed from the hands of the English into those of the French, since we have supplanted our rivals in the important article of the woollen-cloth trade.

The

The defects which I have been mentioning in the commerce of Turkey, should it become free, arise from the nature of things. Those I am about to mention belong more to persons; but they are not less real.

This is the character of the Greeks:—they are bold in their enterprises, persuasive in their discourse, seducing in their promises: they will represent to their correspondents at Marseilles all their mercantile operations in brilliant colours; they will engage them in dangerous affairs; and will conclude by ruining them.

As the government of the pachaliks is supported by extortion; as the rich are often beheaded in order to seize their money; the treasure of the wealthy Greek merchants will often go to swell the exchequer, and the bankruptcies of their friends will be multiplied at Marseilles. That celebrated city will then lose all the advantages of its admirable situation. Trieste, Venice, Leghorn, and Genoa, will be enriched by its spoils, and will flourish by our imprudence and our misfortunes.

The commerce of Turkey is no longer in its infancy; we have brought it to the highest degree of prosperity of which it was capable. All the commercial states, for these ten years past, prove to us, that so very far has it been from *increasing*, that it has done nothing but *decrease*. The

The causes of its decline are the depopulation of the country, and the spirit of manufacturing, which prevails through the north of Europe, and which has penetrated even into Russia: the competition of foreign nations will not, therefore, give it any greater extent.

Past experience corroborates this assertion. We have seen foreigners enjoy, for several years, the freedom of the commerce, and yet the commerce has not been increased with the number of establishments. We have seen, at this port of the Mediterranean Sea,* the number of the French settlements limited to eight, reduced to six, enlarged to twelve, and the commerce has not followed the same progression. It has always been the same. However, if the larger or smaller number of competitors has been able to give new motion to the sales and purchases, must not the various successive periods of these fluctuations have been remarked?

What is the consequence? It is that these fluctuations in carrying on the commerce have produced only one thing: they have enlarged or enervated the trade of every individual merchant in proportion to number. The more numerous the merchants were, the less business they could do: they could do much more when

* Salonichi.

there

there were not so many. But the mass of the commerce has always continued the same. This is a truth here, that is capable of a demonstration, of which the commercial states present us the grounds,

If we take a middle term in the commercial states, from 1780 to 1790, we find that the exports from France to Turkey amount to eight millions of livres,* in which the various ports of the Mediterranean participated in the following manner:

	Livres.
Constantinople . . .	4,000,000.†
Adrianople	500,000.‡
Salonichi	2,500,000.§
The Morea	1,000,000.‖

We find, also, at the same periods, that the importations of Turkey in Europe into France amount to seven millions of livres,¶ namely:

	Livres.
Constantinople and Adrianople,	2,000,000.**
Salonichi	3,500,000.††
The Morea	1,500,000.‡‡

* £400,000. † £200,000. ‡ £25,000.
§ £125,000. ‖ £50,000. ¶ £350,000.
** £100,000. †† £175,000. ‡‡ £75,000.

The

The remainder of the balance, which amounts to one million,* has been paid these ten years past in Venetian sequins or in the talaris of Hungary.

The division of this mass of commerce, among the various ports of the Mediterranean in Turkey in Europe, is not always the same. When the quantity that enters at Salonichi diminishes there, it increases at Adrianople; it increases at Salonichi when it decreases in other places, because the inland part of the country is sometimes furnished at one port of the Mediterranean, at other times at another. In a word, the terms of the *division* vary according to circumstances; but it is always one of the ports of the Mediterranean above-mentioned which receives as much more as the other receives less. The one gains what the other loses, and the produce of both, being united together, forms always the same *dividend*. Commerce does not, therefore, increase by competition. You will find in the character of the Turks an explanation of this commercial phenomenon.

The Turk is unacquainted both with the variety of our fashions and the diversity of our tastes. His luxury in arms, in pelices, and in horses, belongs to objects absolutely foreign to our industry. Always the same in his way of

* £50,000.

being,

being, of living, and of dressing, the pleasures and the wants of yesterday are to him the pleasures and wants of to-morrow. Rich or poor, he puts on every morning the same woollen cloth, and lays it aside only when he has worn it entirely out, in order to purchase another of the same quality, the same price, and the same colour. He has drunk coffee in his childhood, he will drink it in his old age. He will not forsake old habits, but he will not imbibe new ones.

This stupid monotony in habits and tastes must set constant limits to the consumption of our commodities, even although that consumption should not be circumscribed by a sensible diminution in the population of the country and in its agricultural productions. The admission of foreigners to a participation in the French commerce cannot therefore give that commerce a greater extent. It can serve only to give them a participation in the profits of our countrymen; but the French government is too wise to enrich foreigners at the expense of the French; and it is too enlightened not to perceive that a commerce, committed to twenty-five millions of active and industrious men, must receive at their hands every augmentation of which it is capable.

Lastly, to sum up the whole in a few words, have not the warehouses of the French merchants

chants offered at all times, whether in the Levant or at Marseilles, a complete assortment to customers; and have commodities been ever known to be wanting when asked for? It is proved, then, that the French alone are able to carry on the commerce of the Levant without there being any necessity for the admission of foreigners to participate in it.

The commerce of the Levant afforded employment, before the war, to a great number of Frenchmen. There were merchants who voluntarily quitted their country, factors who followed and who replaced them. Both, after a residence of ten or twelve years, returned into France, there to enjoy the fruit of their labours; thither they brought the savings of their industry which supported the wealth of the state.

If foreigners become the agents of our commerce in the Levant, the profits which our countrymen would have made will be lost to us. The Jew, the Greek, the Armenian, will enrich themselves at our expense, and will carry back into their own country a fortune which might have been turned into our factories. We meet in the principal countries of Greece, and especially in the mountains of Thessaly, with an immense number of aged merchants, who consume in the Greek villages, far from the

observation of the beys, a brilliant fortune, which they had acquired in Russia and Germany.

And let it not be said that the political advantages we might offer them would be an inducement to them, and retain them for ever among us; that they would prefer a residence in France, full of pleasures and enjoyments, to a residence in Turkey, where they experience the perpetual tyranny of the government and of opinion. No one can know the invincible attraction of one's native country, the charms of the finest climate in the world, and the power of patriotic habits.*

A Greek would die with vexation in France, if he could not indulge his imperious tastes, which vary so much from ours, and unless he could feast his eyes on the view of nature,

* There are dispersed through my consulate several Jews, at Salonichi and Larissa, all of whom are under the protection of the French, and who enjoy immense fortunes. I have often invited them to realize them and convey them into France, promising them that they would find every thing agreeable. They constantly answered me, that France was certainly the foreign country to which they gave the greatest preference, but that they could not abandon the *sepulchres of their fathers*. The Jew, however, has the ways of a citizen of the world, and is less attached to this country than the Greek, who considers Greece as *his own country*, and the Turk as *an inconvenient and transient guest*.

wonderful

wonderful both by its charms and its horrors.

These are the local causes and particular circumstances which have given place to the Greek establishments of Leghorn, Trieste, and Vienna, which will not be permanent. The chief gatherer of the customs of Egypt, who does but *vegetate* in Italy, would give half of a fortune, consisting of many millions, could he but die in peace on the mountains of Libanus.

It is therefore necessary that foreigners should be excluded from the commerce of the Levant. All the French ought to concur in this; but they ought to limit the *adventures* to the hands of the captains.

In order to buy and sell commodities in the Levant, it is requisite to have a knowledge which the captains cannot have.* Pressed to realize them, because they are pressed to depart, they sell beneath the current price of the market and buy above. Thus they cause the price of our commodities to fall, and that of

* Among other things, they are ignorant of the languages of the country, and they can only make use of Jew brokers for interpreters, who *jabber* only a little Italian and the Provençal; but woe be to those who fall into the hands of these brokers!

the commodities of the Levant to rise. The facility with which they withdraw themselves from the consular jurisdiction affords them opportunities of making fraudulent purchases in the ports of the Mediterranean. This illicit commerce is a disgrace to us, excites the anger of the Turks, and exposes the captains to extortions which degrade the French protection. Add to this that their concern in their adventures detains them too long in the Levant, and that this delay, when continued, is as prejudicial to the activity of our navigation as to the profits of the persons who freight them.

It is therefore important that an *adventure* should be limited to captains, and that they should be obliged to direct their merchandizes to the French houses, in the same manner as other merchants, as soon as those merchandizes shall exceed a certain value.

It is only by thus circumscribing the commerce of the Levant that it can be re-established. This commerce differs as much from every other as Turkey differs from other states in its constitution. No maxims of European commerce are applicable to it: it requires a particular administration. A man pays dear for becoming *the prophet of evils*; but we owe truth to our country. Our commerce of the

the Levant is lost beyond recovery if it passes into the hands of the Greeks, and if we allow it an unlimited freedom. No speculative principles contradict practice, and experience is here in our favour.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

Salonichi, 20 Germinal, year 6.*

The ADMINISTRATION

CONTINUED.

SECOND QUESTION.

Ought the Administration, which has been hitherto followed in carrying on the Commerce of the Levant, to be kept up?

TOWARDS the middle of the last century, France lost the commerce of the Levant. Colbert restored it to it in 1669, in the first place, by granting Marseilles the freedom of its port; secondly, by making it the emporium of all the returns from the Levant; thirdly, by permitting the passage to be free; fourthly, by laying a duty of twenty per cent. on the commerce and navigation of foreigners.

* April 10, 1799.

These

These four regulations form the whole summary of the legislation which has directed the commerce of the Levant from the ministry of Colbert till 1782. The regulation made on the continuation of the inspection of Tott allowed the freedom of this commerce to foreigners: it prohibited them only the article of woollen cloths, in order to introduce the credit of our manufactures of londrins; and, in order to favour our navigation, it suffered the duty of twenty per cent. imposed on foreign navigation to subsist. However, notwithstanding these two regulations, which lessened the inconveniences attendant on an unlimited freedom, the merchants of Marseilles, being deceived in their expectation, exclaimed against a measure which they had themselves solicited. This law was annulled in 1785, and the old regulation, being put in full force, concentred again the commerce of the Levant in the hands of the French.

This regulation was kept in force till 1791, at which time the Constituent Assembly suppressed the duty of twenty per cent. on the commodities of the Levant imported into France in French vessels on foreign account, and thus modified the regulation in one of its most necessary parts, by confirming it in all other respects.

Experience has not yet allowed us to form any judgement of this operation of the Constituent Assembly, because, the war having cut off the communications of Marseilles with the Levant, the commerce has been suspended in our factories; but this new law could be only fatal to our commerce, if we must judge of it by the effects of that of 1781. The commerce fell at that period notwithstanding the foreign competition, and did not appear to rise till after the regulation had been reformed. The interval that elapsed from 1785 to 1791 was the most brilliant period of the French commerce in the Levant. The aggregate of the importations and exportations arose in 1790 to seventy millions of livres;* in 1782, it had been only forty-eight millions;† and, at the period of the ministry of Colbert, in 1669, only three millions and seven hundred thousand livres,‡ according to the price of a mark of silver towards the end of the last century. The facts, which ought to be the basis of commercial legislation, contradict therefore the freedom of commerce. One would think that the demands of merchants are only the suggestions of private interest, and I assure you, that I was myself for a long time in this error; but I have been undeceived by ana-

* £3,700,000. † £2,400,000. ‡ £185,000.

lysing

lysing the legislation which has directed the commerce of the Levant. I shall follow here this analysis, and it will conduct me to the solution of the question proposed.

I. *The freedom of the port of Marseilles.*

The freedom of a market fixes there a great concourse of merchants, who like to be able to carry away their commodities when they cannot sell them; and, if they must leave them by force, or redeem them, in order to carry them away, they will prefer the keeping of them in their warehouses. Commerce is only an exchange of the productions of one country for those of another. Take away freedom from this exchange and you destroy it.

Commerce naturally seeks those places which attract it, and avoids those where it is oppressed and plundered. The shores of a civilized people must alone present to it the appearance of the coasts of a barbarous people.

France wants a free port on the Mediterranean, in order to combat and destroy the effects of the contiguous rival establishments: and where can we place it with more advantage than in a situation, which, to the advantages given it by nature, unites those that flow from a great commerce? Marseilles has therefore a

right

right to the freedom of its port, both by its happy situation and the extent of its market.

To abolish the free port of Marseilles is to favour the free neighbouring foreign ports; to raise the commerce of Leghorn, Venice, and Trieste, on the ruins of our own; to augment the means of carrying on, by our frontiers, a fraudulent trade; to excite our merchants to become smugglers by the allurement of a great profit; and thus to corrupt the public morals.

Provence is indemnified for the barrenness of its soil only by its free port of Marseilles, which procures it an opening for the disposal of its merchandizes, and thus supports the efforts by which its industry contends with nature. To destroy this free port is to carry death through all that country.

A free port, some persons say, is a privilege; and there can be no privilege in favour of one city to the prejudice of others.

This is an error. A free market is not a local privilege, since it is established for the benefit of all. It is a place marked out by nature as the most proper for an emporium for every article of manufactures for exchange. It is a vast warehouse, if I may so call it, where the citizen of the world comes to expose to sale, to sell, and buy, the commodities which suit him. It is of consequence to draw thither the greatest number of factors possible, and they will come there

there only by surrounding them with all the charms of hospitality and liberty. In the very midst of the vexations of feudal government, the advantage of assembling merchants together is so well perceived, that there is no species of favours and inducements which the lords do not offer to the public in the free markets of their domains. Ballad-singers and troubadours appeared at Beaucaire before comedians and poets were seen at Paris.

To wish to deprive Marseilles of its port, in the same manner as some persons wish, on account of the advantages of its situation, would be to establish that tyrannical ostracism, which would exile a citizen for no other reason than because he has too much merit.

Lastly, to wish to transport the port of Marseilles to another place to which nature is averse, and where, at least every thing must be made, is the same as to wish to throw down a vigorous strong oak, in order to substitute for it a weak shrub.

II. *The making of Marseilles the emporium of all the returns from the Levant.*

The returns of the Levant ought to be made at Marseilles: both nature and policy require it to be so. Nature appears to have marked out the

the port of Marseilles with her finger, to assemble there all the advantages which could not be adapted to other places. This port, indeed, being hollowed into a bason, inclosed on every side, is sheltered from every wind; and it is surrounded, in its road, by desert islands, which present an easy landing to navigators. By means of the canal of Languedoc, which approaches it from the ocean, it is seated between two seas; and, being situated on the borders of Europe, opposite Africa, on the side of Asia, it appears to be destined to make France the centre of the world, and a place of communication between every nation.

Nature is more powerful than human institutions. The revolutions of empires may, indeed, remove commerce from one place to another, but the force of things always brings it back to its natural course. The mouths of the Euxine, of the Euphrates, of the Nile, and those of the Rhone, will always be the routes of commerce; and when Byzantium, Babylon,* Alexandria, and Marseilles, shall perish from moral or physical causes, other cities as celebrated will rise on their ashes and be erected on their ruins.

It is the seat of great communications that is destined by nature to be the centre of com-

* Bassora being much nearer to the sea, and consequently better situated, has supplanted Babylon as a place of commerce.

merce;

merce; and, when Alexander wished to make his metropolis the emporium of all commerce, he founded Alexandria.

The discovery of America and of the Cape of Good Hope has, for a time, indeed, removed the seat of these great communications; but France, which, by the contiguity of its territory, borders on the Mediterranean at La Mancha, has preserved all its advantages; and the port of Marseilles, which communicates by Agde to the ocean, seems formed at present to unite the two greatest seas in the world and the two greatest continents.

Nature appears, therefore, to design Marseilles to be the emporium of our commerce in the Levant. The government, far from opposing the views of nature, ought to second them.

All commerce requires some point on which to lean. Every part of an empire has local advantages given it by nature: if these advantages are for the benefit of all, why should not that be required in favour of commerce which every government requires in favour of social order? Ought not a portion of territory, as an individual, to be sacrificed to the public prosperity.

But some will say, all the citizens, all the parts of an empire, have an equal right to every legal means, in order to display their industry. Let them apply this principle strictly to the

commerce

commerce of the Levant, and it will be necessary to have as many lazarettoes on the coasts as there will be cities, which will follow this commerce; and, then, what expenses and what inconveniences must be incurred! We shall surround ourselves on every side with repositories of death; and, in every part of the vast circumference of this empire, we shall erect as many pestilential houses.

Let them grant the liberty of receiving the returns of the Levant to all the cities that demand it; then that liberty necessarily brings a multiplicity of points, where commerce is carried on, and in no one of which there is any restriction, because apprehension poisons every calculation. Instead of a central point, so useful, so necessary, you have only irregular, uncertain, aims, on which you can fix nothing. Indeed, must it not be acknowledged that the commerce of the Levant, being concentrated at Marseilles, has flourished more and more during a century? Can we imagine an activity greater than that shewn by the annual states of the commerce, which present an excess of importation equivalent to the consumption of many months? What can we object to facts? The doing better ought to give place to the doing well; a mathematical truth with respect to commerce.

France is one of the most populous, the richest, and the most industrious, states of Europe.

rope. Under this point of view, Marseilles, being situated at the entrance of that state, presents to maritime commerce the most extensive opportunities for sale; and, for the same reason, it ought to become the best-stocked market, if we make it a free mart.

The people, who live on the borders of the ocean, and who wish to carry on the commerce of the Levant, have no active navigation in the Mediterranean. They send their commodities to Genoa or Leghorn, in order to complete their cargoes in those two ports, and send them from thence to the ports of the Mediterranean. If Marseilles is made the emporium, they will prefer that port, because it will offer them a more extensive and more varied market.

Besides, by concentrating the commerce of the Levant at Marseilles, you insure it immediately. The merchant then says, the commerce is there, and at no other place; all the play of that machine is before my own eyes; I can study it, I can observe all its movements; the competition is only around me, not at a distance; I have no competitor beyond the reach of my sight. The merchant is then confirmed; he works with confidence, not in the dark. Disperse this commerce over the whole empire, and the whole becomes only a blind undertaking.

And, then, what maritime city can envy the exchange which Marseilles is perpetually making

king of its activity for that poison, which it had learned to neutralize, in some measure, by its unfortunate experience? Must the hazards of death be multiplied, in order to flatter local vanities, by placing in other cities destructive *germs*, which might, notwithstanding the most rigid vigilance, escape, and, in the twinkling of an eye, destroy thousands of French?

Lastly, every one knows that the coast of Languedoc is celebrated for its shipwrecks. Establish a lazaretto on that coast, and you will be reduced to the cruel alternative, either of receiving the plague by a shipwreck, or to hunt shipwrecked persons like so many wild beasts.

Policy requires, therefore, that the returns of the Levant should be fixed at Marseilles, and that that port should be made a free emporium, in order that we should not be deprived of the profits of re-exportation.

III. *Freedom of passage granted to Marseilles for the commodities of the Levant.*

The commodities, which enjoy the favour of passage, cross the land, and are exempt from the customs, without paying the duties, provided they have a ticket or cocket by way of caution, which is required in order to prevent smuggling.

Freedom

Freedom of passage, it is true, diminishes the receipt of the customs; but it augments the consumptions, encourages agriculture, lessens the price of carriage, and attracts towards the country where it exists an immense concourse, which disperses gold every where. In the administration we ought to be less seduced by the allurement of a great profit, than by small profits, multiplied and dispersed through many hands. A vast reservoir of water is in the country only an object of luxury or of curiosity; but, when it is dispersed at a distance into a hundred different channels, it diffuses abundance and fertility every where.

Such are the general advantages of carriage; but France, by its geographical situation, appears to be called in a special manner to carry on this branch of industry. Situated in the midst of the most commercial nations of Europe, it must approach their territories by rendering itself the intermediate agent of their commercial relations.

Marseilles is the natural seat of these relations. Its situation gives it easy communications with Geneva, Switzerland, and Germany, which are the countries that consume the greatest quantity of the commodities of the Levant. If the Swiss and Germans cannot draw these commodities easily from Marseilles, by the way of passage, they will provide themselves with

them in Italy, and the profits on commission will be lost to us.

It would, particularly at the present moment, be impolitic to impose the least duty on the passage of the returns of the Levant. Genoa, Leghorn, Venice, Trieste, have acquired, for some time past, close relations with Switzerland and Germany. Those cities have free ports, and they present us competitions, which the smallest imposition whatsoever would encourage.

IV. *The duty of twenty per cent. on the foreign commerce in the Levant.*

The spirit of this law is to incline the balance in favour of our countrymen, when they carry on the commerce of the Levant in competition with foreigners; and, it must be confessed, that it has attained its end; for, it gives such advantages to the one, as are tantamount to a formal exclusion to the others. I have shewn, in the preceding letter, the necessity of this law; I am now about to examine here the reasons alleged against it.

There are, it is said, moments in the year, when our manufactures languish, for want of the support proper for them. Why should they be

be deprived of it, when foreigners present it to them?

The views of the Levant, which have at all times presented an excess of consumption, prove that our manufactures have never languished for want of the materials of the Levant; but let us suppose what has never yet been, is it not obvious, that, when there is a demand for a commodity in a market, the attentive merchant turns his speculation immediately towards that commodity; that he hastens to demand it in the place which produces it, when he has no reason to apprehend his being thwarted in his operations by foreign competition; and that, consequently, the moment of scarcity precedes only for an instant that of plenty? It is thus that every one takes his level in the various places of commerce; for, the active correspondence, which the interest of merchants carries on, has an influence on all the markets, with the same rapidity as air has an influence on those ingenious machines, destined to inform us of its variations. Must we, then, in order to accommodate the brokers of Marseilles, deprive the most laborious and industrious merchants of their labour, and consent to participate with rival nations in a lucrative commerce, which constitutes the prosperity of our manufactures and the celebrity of our navigation?

The French government does not appear to have ever perceived the importance of the commerce of the Levant. This commerce ought to be considered as a colonial commerce. It is national in all its movements; wholly active for us, wholly passive for the Turks; and, such is its peculiar character, that no political combination on the part of the territorial power can diminish its profits.

All these advantages are still farther augmented by our capitulations with the Porte, and by a consular administration, organized in all its branches. Our factories are every where independent; we form, in the principal ports of the Levant, a regular colony, subsisting under the protection of the national authority.

Our colonial establishments, and also those in the Levant, present striking similitudes in their relations with the metropolis. If one consumes our agricultural productions, the other consumes our manufactures: both contribute to the support of our manufactures and our navigation.

Perhaps also, if we must balance all their respective advantages, we should find, in the last instant, that the profits of our factories are absolutely gratuitous; whereas those of our colonies are diminished, I had almost said compensated, by the enormous expenses of protection and administration.

V. *The*

V. The duty of twenty per cent. imposed on foreign navigation.

Navigation is to commerce what industry is to agriculture. It gives existence to foreign exchanges, in the same manner as industry gives forms to agricultural productions. The trader and the navigator are the canals of communication, through which the productions of the land and of industry flow. From the places where they abound greatly, and are of no value, they pass into places where they assume one; and, wherever they are deposited, they turn into gold whatever they touch. The trader and the navigator create nothing, but they, in some measure, make something of nothing. They labour not, neither do they manufacture; but they cause others both to labour and to manufacture, and they multiply productions by augmenting the consumptions of them. A spring, which is lost in rocks and sands, produces no wealth to me; but it becomes a source of riches to me, if I erect an aqueduct to conduct it into my meadows. This spring represents the productions of the earth and manufactures, and the aqueduct is the navigator.

Navigation ought therefore to be encouraged, as one of the greatest sources of public pros-

 perity.

perity. It ought to be considered in a two-fold view; first, it is the great carriage of commerce, which is both a mine of gold to our sailors, and a school for our squadrons. Secondly, it is a fabric of our construction, which is so much the more important, as it is divided into many branches, and gives bread to many workmen.

Our navigation in the Levant employs six hundred vessels, and gives employment to our dock-yards of the Mediterranean, while the profit of the freight alone affords support to six thousand seamen and their families. Suppress the duty of twenty per cent. and you annihilate this navigation, which is the source of so much wealth.

Our maritime commerce of the ocean occupied, before the war, six hundred thousand tons, and in that number there were reckoned to be about two hundred thousand French tons, which is one-third of the foreign navigation.

If we compare the navigation of the north of Europe, which is free from tonnage, with that of the south, which is subject to a freightage, we find, upon the whole, that we have lost all our advantages resulting from the navigation of the ocean, and that we have preserved them in that of the Mediterranean; for, out of one hundred and sixty-seven thousand tons

tons of our navigation in the south, eighty-five thousand are reckoned to be French tons; which constitutes half of the navigation of foreign powers. This difference between our navigation in the north and that in the south of Europe is the proof which we are seeking. We possess as many coasts as England, and, being three times as populous, we can give employment to at least twice as many seamen. The following is, however, the result of our two maritime codes.

According to the accounts presented to parliament, England employed, in 1785, in its foreign navigation, one million four hundred thousand tons; and those, who were employed by the English ministry, have assured me, that, in 1789, the tonnage, employed in its foreign navigation, amounted to two million tons; which, at the rate of six men per hundred tons, according to the English computation, makes the number of men employed amount to one hundred and twenty thousand men.

I speak not here of the coasting-trade of the two nations, which ought to be greater in France, because the internal commerce is more extensive. I speak only of foreign navigation: and that navigation arose among us, in 1789, only to about three hundred thousand tons; it certainly gave employ to not more than sixty

thousand seamen, which is only one-fourth of the sailors we might employ, if we had a maritime code equal to that of the English.

It is at least certain, that our marine might have made a greater progress, if the government had considered the freightage on foreign navigation as the *palladium* of ours.

This duty on freight, which has constantly supported our southern navigation, ought therefore to be kept up. If it must be suspended during the war, in order to favour our indirect commerce, and to facilitate our supplying ourselves, this suspension ought to take place only in favour of the Mediterranean flags, to which, on the conclusion of peace, ours will always be preferred. Those flags must, however, be perhaps admitted, on the conclusion of the present war, since Genoa, Leghorn, and Trieste, also admit them; for, the interests of our commerce require that we should take the level of those places in the beginning; but, in ordinary times, the law of Colbert ought to be put again in full force.

THIRD

THIRD QUESTION.

Can the Commerce of the Levant be meliorated by the Regulation of Colbert?

The ameliorations which might be introduced into our connections with the Levant relate to navigation and commerce. And, first, our navigation requires improvements, in order to support with advantage foreign competition.

Our navigation in the Levant may be considered in two points of view; under that of a direct navigation, and that of a navigation from one port of the Mediterranean to another, known in the Levant under the name of *caravan*. We can support our direct navigation by the duty of twenty per cent. levied on foreign navigation; but we ought to employ ourselves in the promotion of the *caravan*, which forms more than half the navigation of the Levant, and which produces the clearest profit. The caravan has also an advantage, in the ports of the Mediterranean, which is peculiar to it; and that is, that it affords an useful employment to the small capitals found in the hands of our seamen; for, those who are concerned in the caravan, instead of hoarding up their capitals, improve the value of them, by lending them

to

to those who freight them, who secure the repayment of them on the produce of the cargoes.

The profits of our caravan can be circumscribed only by foreign competition, which we ought to endeavour to remove. Our chief competitors are the Sclavonians, the Ragusans, and the islanders of the Archipelago.

Necessity alone causes the Sclavonians to be employed; but they are every where disgusted with it. Their freight is dear; they are dishonest; and they commit enormous barratries. They are rather corsairs than navigators.

The Ragusans are our most formidable rivals. Their freight is the lowest; and their practice of navigating *for part* renders their crews more careful and more economical than ours, who navigate *for pay*. We have celerity in our favour, whether we owe this advantage to the shape of our vessels, or to the superior working of them by our sailors.

The Ragusan marine has, however, made, within a short period, a progress truly alarming to ours. In 1740 it had only twelve vessels, which sailed from one port of the Mediterranean to another, with a firman of the Grand Signior: at present it has more than two hundred which navigate every sea, and more than fifty which coast round Turkey.

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The Ragusans, who are the Dutch of the Mediterranean, have good anchorage and a severe discipline, and have an interest in their voyages, because they navigate for part. This, I think, is the source whence they derive all their advantages. It remains only for us to copy them in the excellent part of their conduct, and then we shall preserve over them the superiority of shape in the construction of our vessels, and in working them quickly in voyages.

If, notwithstanding these two advantages, which cannot be disputed with us, because they belong to our progress in the arts, the Ragusans continue to contend with us, it is because their freight is much cheaper. Their captains live on-board on salt meat and black olives, whereas ours love luxury, good cheer, and costly dainties, which bring on repentance and sorrows.

Since the war, we have found new competitors in the islanders of the Archipelago, and especially in the *Idriots*, who employ in their navigation the little naval knowledge which they have acquired in the service of the Othoman marine. The Idriots live on little, and, like the Ragusans, they consider economy in expense their most certain profit. If the number of their sailors were less, their freight would be cheaper, and consequently in greater request; but these

Greeks

Greeks inspire one with little confidence, on account of their immorality; and they are too adventurous in their voyages, because, as they have only an imperfect knowledge of the use of the compass, they never push out from the coast but with fear. During a war, it will be always to our advantage to make use of these carriers to supply ourselves, because, whenever they give us umbrage, we can let loose the Maltese corsairs against them.

The high price of freight diminishes the employ of our marine: it is therefore expedient for us to lower this freight. We can attain this object only by easing our navigation from every oppressive duty, and particularly by meliorating the form of quarantine, an improvement which is unanimously called for by navigators.

Every vessel, that arrives at Marseilles from the Levant, is put under quarantine, which is of no use, because they must go back again to the Levant. These vessels are obliged to disarm and to re-arm, which occasions enormous expenses, which might be saved, by permitting them to depart, after they had consigned their cargoes to the lazaretto. Why should we not follow at Marseilles the practice followed in all the lazarettoes of Italy? The practice followed by the Italians would be particularly advantageous to our vessels laden with commodities that may be landed without delay, because these

these vessels would lose no time in effecting a speedy return. The practice followed at Marseilles prevents those of our men employed in the caravan from entering that port before the end of their caravan, while they are making several voyages to Italy, which injures our direct concerns with the Levant.

These are the improvements which we ought to introduce into the regulation of navigation: the following are those which we might introduce into the regulation of commerce.

I have not concealed the disadvantages imputed to the duty of twenty per cent. and which engaged the ministry, in 1781, and the Constituent Assembly, in 1791, to suppress it. These disadvantages are perhaps only imaginary; but, if they really exist, they may be lessened by reducing the duty of twenty per cent. to ten. This reduction would have the double advantage of preserving its preponderance to the French commerce, and of not depriving our manufactures of the means of receiving raw materials from foreigners, if our national ones should at any time fall short. This duty, thus mitigated, would not leave sufficient allurement to avarice to attempt fraud, and would consequently hold out less encouragement to contraband trade, which, exclusive of its immorality, has the great inconvenience of favouring a man by no means scrupulous against an honest and faithful trader.

But,

But, whether this law be mitigated, or whether it be suffered to subsist, it must be rigorously executed. The French must not lend their name for the allurement of a commission. We ought to curb the avarice of a dishonest trader by severe confiscations, and, if it must be done, with the obligation of an oath.

We must raise our commercial credit in the ports of the Levant, by re-establishing the office of inspector over the londrins, and by encouraging our manufactures of caps, châlons, silks, and embroideries. We shall thus be victorious over foreign industry; but this victory is more worthy of a civilized people, since it is gained without loss of blood.

But, when we endeavour to encroach upon foreign industry, we should also be employed in extending our own. The commerce of the Levant offers us branches of commerce, such as naval ammunition and corn, which we might easily carry on, with some concessions on the part of the Porte. We may at last obtain of it free admission for our flag into the Black Sea. Since it cannot prevent the Russians and Austrians from trading in that sea, it is its political interest to give them competitors, either to deprive them of a part of the profits, which only increase their power, or to raise the price of sales by the competition of purchasers.

Besides,

Besides, if we wish ever to strike a great blow in favour of the Othoman power, it can be done only on the Black Sea. And, how can the Turks wish us to defend them, if our seamen are unacquainted with that sea? And, how will they become acquainted with it, if they have not frequented it? Our squadrons cannot appear in these *lineages*, or *descents*, until our navigators have stripped off of them *the golden fleece*.

The Black Sea sends into the Archipelago, under false colours, a prodigious quantity of corn, which is re-sold to us with enormous expenses for commission. We shall then avoid these ruinous expenses, and the still more ruinous circuitous routes of Italy.

France, like every other European power, that has a military marine, draws all its naval ammunition from the Baltic. We purchase, in those magazines, only the refuse of the English. If we go to provide ourselves in the magazines of the Black Sea, we shall meet there with fewer competitors. The finest Russian wood may be indifferently sent into Douna or the Boristhenes, and descend to Kerson, as well as to Riga: but the market of Kerson is more convenient for us than that of Riga, because we must carry cash to the latter place, whereas, in the former, we need carry only our commodities.

We

We ought also to endeavour to fell the woods of Albany, whose excellence is well known, and which are, so to say, at the gates of Marseilles. The French settlement at Arta deserves on every account to be encouraged.

If we should succeed in bringing to our southern ports the timber of the Black Sea and of Albany, the price of naval materials may fall in our timber-yards. This fall may have an influence on the expenses of construction and on the prosperity of our work-houses; it may also have an influence on the value of freight, and on the prosperity of our navigation: and it is thus, that, by encouraging one branch of our industry, we should encourage every other.

We have in our own hands the means of ameliorating the commerce of the Levant: we should be expeditious in employing them. But we must recollect that these improvements can be effected only by keeping up the ancient system. This system is a good one; and the more we analyze it, the more dangerous we perceive that all innovation must be; that our ancient laws were calculated on the knowledge of localities, of customs, of the manners of countries, of the tastes of the Othomans, and on the political constitution of their empire; that, in order to re-establish the rank, to retain the superiority, which we have acquired, and also to extend our commerce,

commerce, our ancient laws must be restored in full force, and that we must form out of them a body of legislation adapted to our new laws.

We must mind what steps we are about to pursue. Our rivals are there, who are watching us, in order that they may gain by our faults and our misfortunes. Genoa, Leghorn, Venice, Trieste, observe us in silence. Those, who possess large capitals at those places, take no concern either for our cause or for that of the kings who are at war with us; they are intent only on our commercial economy; and, as our affairs stand at present, they devour the commerce of Marseilles in expectation. Whatever mask they may wear, they are *all* our enemies, because they are *all* our competitors; and, if they had been powerful, they would have waged war with us: they wage war with us with their gold.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

Salonichi, 10 Floréal, year 6.*

The ADMINISTRATION

CONTINUED.

FOURTH QUESTION.

Ought the Regulation respecting Consuls to be kept up or modified?

THERE are too many consuls, and that is the radical defect of the consular administration, and also that of every French administration. *Bureaucratic* luxury aims at devouring the republic. We tremble when we consider what legions of persons employed, and factors we have, and that they are equal in number to our soldiers. Since these men can only present the great inconvenience of consuming without producing any thing, and of collecting together in the cities

* April 30, 1799.

ties the population of the field, they ought still to be discouraged for the good of the thing. It is impossible to make for the administration a certain and regular way, unless the wheel-works are rendered more simple.

I know that the passion of creating places is inherent to all rising governments, but it must be avoided in ours as the greatest of scourges.

According to the general thesis, men must be created for places; but, among us, places appear to be created for men. Consuls have been put in every port instead of being placed in that only where there was a body of merchants. In all indirect ports or harbours a mere agent is requisite; a pilot, when it is a place of passage; and a maritime agent, when it is a place of great resort.

According to this principle, consuls ought to be established in the Levant, at Smyrna, Aleppo, Alexandria, at Salonichi, in Cyprus, and at Canea. In the petty ports of the Mediterranean the agency should be left in the hands of a merchant; and, at the entrance of the Archipelago, at Rhodes, and at the Dardanelles, a mariner should be stationed, in order to pilot our squadrons.

It is easy to perceive, that, by multiplying the consuls, we have lost the end proposed, which was, to maintain the national dignity.

The expenses belonging to the consular establishment, being dispersed through too many hands, are become inadequate. Hence the consuls have been obliged to be niggardly in their entertainments; and, lest external pomp should be diminished, we have endeavoured to impose on foreigners by gilding our consuls like shrines; so that, in the first factories in the world, the respectable heads of the French commerce have been seen clad, at the same time, in habits laced with gold and in tatters, like the Neapolitan peasants, who are seen walking at Pausilippo in a vest embroidered with gold over ragged clothes.

The consequence has been, that the consuls, being ill paid, have neglected the national representation or appearance, which classes nations in the eyes of a foreigner; that they have laboured to little or no purpose, because vulgar men, such as we must suppose to exist in every state of society, work only in proportion to the price affixed to their labour; and that the most able consuls have neglected the duties of their station, in order to seek in commerce an addition to their salary.

We must, therefore, open our eyes with respect to the regulations which forbid consuls to trade. However, if the consuls carry on trade, and continue to be sole judges in commercial affairs, they will be both judges and parties; they

they will then have it in their power to make use of all the credit of their office to crush their competitors. The morals of an officer properly selected must be depended on, but he must not be placed perpetually between his interest and his duty; for, if an honest man is often on guard against the impulses and surprises of his passions, he cannot be so always; and those who value themselves upon this strength of soul are hypocrites or knaves.

The consuls ought to be wise, moderate, and conciliating men; they ought to be versed in political and commercial economy, in the law and jurisprudence of nations. Their rank supposes a preparation and long studies. Since those places are become uncertain like all others, the men proper to be selected have withdrawn themselves or have been set aside. They have been replaced by *new* men,* who,

* If the system, which makes us judge every man to be competent to every employment, prevails much longer among us, it will end in disorganizing every thing and re-plunging us in barbarism.

We have seen men, who have had no other merit than that of sitting down on, and rising off, their legislative benches, like a *see-saw*, demand an embassy and a consulship with the same assurance that they would demand a place in the customs and in the registry. From their extravagant pretensions, these men imagine themselves to be the trunk of a tree, of which a statuary can with equal indifference make a seat or a god.

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having no idea of commerce or of affairs, have suffered themselves to be over-reached in their decisions by corsairs, and have alienated the neutral powers from us. Destitute of that liberal education, which makes a man consider honour, and not money, as the last end of power, they are occupied more about their own fortune than that of the state. They had been sent among strangers, in order to render the national character beloved and the French name respected. In order to fulfil this august mission, it was only requisite that they should put dignity in their actions, wisdom in their speech; that they should surround themselves with mild virtues, and temper the national nobleness with French politeness. By this conduct they would have subdued prejudice and gained hearts. They have, however, only exasperated them by their violence and by their passion; and, absurdly aiming to imitate, both in manners and language, the agents of England, they have learned only to copy them in that *stupid British pride* which insults nations gratuitously. Frenchmen, they have not sufficiently perceived their dignity. Without doubt, they might be proud

The revolution has misplaced all men: it will not terminate till some powerful hand shall replace them all. The prudent employment of men constitutes the whole science of a good administration.

of

of belonging to a great people destined by nature, and not by created institutions, to hold the balance of Europe; but, since they are so great, they ought to be generous. Generous nobleness, and not stupid pride, is the distinctive character of great souls and great nations.

The institution of consuls is a prudent institution which ought to be kept up; but it must be disengaged from the defects which disfigure it.

1st. The authority of the consuls is ill constituted; it is excessive in certain points, and insufficient in others. There are many regulations which explain the duties of consuls, but there is none that specifies their powers; so that a delicate consul is always apprehensive of exceeding his privileges, or of being deficient in their duties, which occasions anxiety.

Every one knows what is called the *caravan* in the Levant. Created with a view to form seamen, it forms only vagabonds, from the defect of our consular laws. In every crew we meet only with sailors, who have no sooner arrived at a port than they endeavour to land. Their captains comply, because, while they are on shore, they are very glad to manage their salaries with economy, and to rid themselves of bad subjects. These spend, in the mean time, the money which they have earned

in their passage, instead of carrying it back to their family. They stupify themselves by sloth, destroy themselves by debauchery, and expose, by their misconduct, the French name. Being afterwards rejected by our captains, when their misery compels them to re-embark, they pass into the service of foreign flags; and, renouncing for ever their country and their family, they thus break the most sacred and the most gentle ties.

If the consul, more sensible at that time to the loss which the state suffers than scrupulous with regard to his duties, forcibly seizes them, and chains them on board a national vessel, he does what he has no right to do, and becomes a petty tyrant. If he suffers them to depart, those men are for ever lost to our marine, and go perhaps to supply that of the enemy. It is, therefore, necessary to augment, in certain points, the consular authority; but what is more necessary still is, to circumscribe it so that it cannot be easily abused.

The whole art of constituting this authority consists in the solution of the following problem:

To re-vest the consuls with an authority, sufficiently imposing, to support, with all suitable dignity, the honour and the rights of the French nation abroad, without which that authority

thority might become oppressive to individuals.

2dly. The second point of importance is to have good consuls.

If we wish to have good consuls, and, in general, good officers, they must have a little with which to labour, and they must pay well, in order to work well. An apprenticeship must be required of them; for, men are not born wholly formed for offices, and it belongs only to the Grand Signior to make his butcher a minister, and very often his barber. Expectations must be held out to consuls; the old pension, on retiring, to those who have acquired by their services; and an embassy* to those consuls

* In some states of Europe some persons have wished to separate the diplomatic course or charge from the consular charge, which, in my opinion, is improper. These two courses or charges form only one. The consul collects *facts*: the diplomatic person combines them so as to draw from them treaties to the advantage of his nation. If the consulships are not made a ladder, on which to ascend to embassies, it is requisite that our novices in *the diplomatic art* should not make a step without the underlings.

The diplomatic science consists of three parts: the knowledge of languages and treaties, that of political economy, and that of negotiating.

The study of languages and treaties is a mechanical work. The fool here knows as much as the man of wit.

The

suls who have displayed wisdom in their conduct, and economical views in their correspondence;

The study of political economy, or of that which is the foundation of the agricultural power of nations, and the power arising from their industry and commerce, and the connexions to be established among them, is a study which requires sagacity, extensive ideas, and a spirit of observation; and, as it consists of *facts*, the elements of which we find only in travels, in subaltern diplomatic situations, and in what is called, in diplomatic language, *posts of observation*. This study is immense, because it comprehends all that constitutes the relative power of nations, forms of government, the natural and moral composition of armies, the military geography of empires, the institutions of people, and their natural constitution.

The art of negotiating is the most difficult to be acquired, but it is the least important, because it serves only to *make an illusion*; and if, in negotiations, we can without scruple deceive *enemies*, who demand peace only that they may prepare the better for war, we ought to be always faithful towards *friends* and *neutral powers*, because unequal treaties do not last. The negotiator ought to have a prepossessing exterior, to be polite in his manners, to have a ready choice in discriminating opportunities, a natural and not an artificial discretion, serenity, if not in his mind, at least on his countenance, and that amiable candour which makes us give a man our confidence, and which we seem to catch. He ought to be accustomed to false cabinet-days, to possess, in a very great degree, the talent of familiar discussion, and to know how to manage the instruments which take hold of the human heart and the passions of governors. Such and so precious qualities as these are often a present from chance, and they are partially acquired by a fine education, and by travelling, and by being accustomed to men and courts. But, as they are seldom found collected in one and

dence; for, such men must be singularly well adapted to conduct a negotiation. Their business and the same individual, it has been agreed to substitute for them a brilliant fortune, which gives beauty to deformity, and wit to those that have it not. The senate of Venice was the *prince*, who best knew how to avail itself of this *universal delusion*. When it knew of a patrician who was *too wealthy*, it sent him politely to ruin himself in a court.

Germany is reckoned to have the best *writers* on the civil law; England the best *economists*; France and Italy the most subtle negotiators. The French negotiators, particularly, have distinguished themselves above those of other nations for that flower of sociableness and atticism which appears to be a natural production, of which, it is true, the revolution has strangely dulled the colours; but to which peace, sweet peace, will restore all its celebrity and all its bloom.

The diplomatic body is usually divided in two classes; into ambassadors and ministers of a second class. The *ambassadors* are the ostensible ministers: it is a coin, of which governments make use, in their political concerns, when they wish to *cajole* each other. The ambassadors are posted as *sentries* near the *influencing* governments, and these diplomatic persons amuse themselves, during their leisure hours, in warping, and tearing fine thin lawn, or in fighting, as Don Quixotte did, with windmills. The *ministers of the second class* are the real *labourers*. They make conventions or agreements, and treaties, lay the foundation of alliances, call down peace from heaven in the midst of all the horrors of war, and are, in the political world, the sacred band which unites and collects together all nations. It is of them that Arons says,

" The wise depositaries of the faith of men, peace alone is " the fruit of their sacred ministries; sovereigns of the world, " they are sacred ties; and, being universal benefactors, they " are universally revered."

ness is to form a tariff well; and it is to the constructing of a tariff well that all the art of a negotiator is at last reduced. I know that ambassadors generally set up the highest pretensions, but they appear then not to know that all the power of nations is built on the power which arises from agriculture and industry; and that it is commerce that gives motion and life to agriculture and to manufactures. I know also that there are negotiations which require an acquaintance both with military and with diplomatic affairs; but these negotiations are rare, and only take place when cessions and demarcations are in hand; but, in these cases, the negotiation ought to be always prepared in a council consisting of engineers and statesmen; and the *ostensible* negotiator can then be with his *full powers* only an agreeable man who carries all his knowledge in his pocket, and disperses it like an automaton of Vaucanson.

Lastly, we must give more stability to embassies and consulships, admit only able men to those offices, and not dismiss them without any motive, I had almost said without any judgement: for, according to the last analysis, all functions are trades; and, as we learn only one

I ought not to have written so long a note on the subject of the dispute between ambassadors and consuls, which is, after all, only that between surgeons and physicians.

trade

trade in life, to turn a man out of his place is making him useless to society, that is to say, doing him an irreparable injury. It would be much better, then, for him *to be hanged*, as a certain English law prescribes: we should be less cruel for his sake.

Instability in employments is, besides, one of the greatest causes of disorders in society. Since ranks are not assigned by education and talents, every man, thinking himself competent to every employ, is always wishing to rise, to the rank or degree above him; and, as he may be pulled down by the same means that elevated him, he hastens to make the most of what is called his *momentary reign*. All emulation is then annihilated. The sole incentive of souls is interest; and honour, worth, and glory, are only trifles.

I will add, that the general restlessness which then seizes on minds occasions factions; for, when man is not put into a place by one party, he hopes to be so by another. Clubs are then formed, and the first law of clubs is this:

No one shall have any employment except ourselves and our friends.

FIFTH

FIFTH QUESTION.

Ought the patent Drogmans to be continued?

We call *patent drogmans** the Greeks and Jews who purchase a *barat*, or patent, of drogman, not with a view to discharge the office of an interpreter to ambassadors and consuls, but in order to enjoy the privileges attached to that office. The *barat* withdraws the Othoman subject from his proper jurisdiction, in order to place him under that of the Franks. These species of protections are sold like merchandizes; and it is the ambassadors and consuls who carry on this singular kind of traffic. The dearest barats are those of France and England. I have seen them sold for as much as ten thousand piasters.†

The barat is sought both as an object of vanity and as an object of interest; as an object of vanity, because the patentee‡ wears cloths of brilliant and privileged colours; as an object of interest, because he pays, in his commerce, only the duty of three per cent. as the Franks do. The Greek and the Jew find, therefore, in this patent, a gratification of their

* *Drogmans barataires.* † £2000. ‡ *Barataire.*

favourite

favourite passion, which is pride in one, and avarice in the other. The former, under his *calpak*, acquires the privilege of looking a Turk in the face; the other, in *yellow slippers*, has the privilege of cheating him with impunity. Both of them are no sooner emancipated than we see them pass suddenly from the extreme of meanness and servility to the extreme of insolence. This is here, as in our Europe, the history of all upstarts.

I think that the government ought to put an end to this disgraceful chaffering of barats. The French protection is not a thing to be bought, and on no account ought it to be sold, either at an extravagant high price or at a low price. Indeed, if the *barats* had no other end than to protect some wretched victims from the most degrading subjection in the world, they ought to be preserved or continued, in order to be given away *gratis*. This would be a homage paid to the rights of humanity where the violation of them is made a sport; but the continuation of the barats is utterly incompatible with the national honour and interest.

The patentee* ought by right to enjoy all the privileges of the Franks; but in fact he does not, because it is impossible to subdue the public opinion, that opinion which prevails in the

* *Barataire.*

divan,

divan, and which considers the Greek and the Jew as the born slaves of the Mussulmen.

Moreover, the patentee communicates his privilege to two *firmanlis*, who are considered as his domestics; whence it happens that a person who is extremely rich appears as the *firmanli* of a ruined patentee. — *How is it,* said a sensible pacha of Macedon to me on this subject, *that this wealthy and haughty Greek is the servant of that mangy dog?* (Meaning a poor Jew who had got a barat.) — *He is, however, sir! and this is the basis on which he founds his claims. — Tell me, consul, whether he ought to be: but is he really so, and do you yourself really believe him to be so? It is thus, that, by wretched subterfuges, you deprive the glorious Sultan of his richest subjects. This is an imposition on the Sublime Porte, and I cannot tolerate this abuse in my pachalik.*

It then becomes necessary to negotiate for the national honour, to yield one point to obtain another, and, lastly, to make use of our credit in petty things when we ought to employ it only in great things.

But the chief reason why the barats ought to be abolished is, because those, who have the patents, enjoy the same exemptions as the French; are real competitors to our merchants, and competitors so much the more formidable, because they carry on commerce with much less expense than we do.

SIXTH

SIXTH QUESTION.

Ought we to continue to Consuls the Drogmans or Interpreters of the Country?

No; because these drogmans, being brought up in Othoman effeminacy and servitude, will never have the courage to carry truth to the foot of the great. They tremble before the staff of a janisary, and they cast over our political existence an appearance of humiliation.

The drogmans ought to be the speech of the consuls; and the native drogmans misrepresent that speech. Woe be to the consul who does not understand the language of the country! The drogmans surround him with so many wiles, they circumvent him with so many intrigues, that that consul finds himself, as it were, a stranger to his own duties. The drogmans serve, in the ports of the Levant, an apprenticeship to a lucrative trade, which they go afterwards to exercise at Constantinople. There they make an ambassador a species of idol, whom they seclude in a temple, to whom they suffer only the initiated to approach.

With some few exceptions, the native drogmans are castrated beings who have all the subtilty of little minds and all the meanness of corrupt

souls. They have likewise all the vices of the Levantines and of the Franks, without having any of the virtues of either. But they have in return, like the Greek women, the most seducing wheedling; and I never saw a consul who was not their dupe.

If we wish to offer prospects to the French drogmans, and that they should undertake the charge of consulships, we shall find in the French school sufficient subjects to supply all the wants of service; but we must encourage the school *where young men are taught languages*, which is, as it were, a nursery, and admit there only young men *really*, and not *fictitiously*, destined for the office of drogman.

SEVENTH QUESTION.

Ought the Office of Chancellor to be left to the Drogmans?

The uniting in the same hands the office of chancellor and of drogman presents disadvantages, but it offers also advantages.

The inconveniences are, that a drogman-chancellor neglects the less attractive duties of the drogmanship, in order to attend to the details of the chancery, of which he becomes a petty minister, and that it is with great difficulty

culty that he can discharge both offices at once.

The reason which causes these two offices to be united together is, the economy of it, and an amelioration in the condition of the drogmans; and this reason deserves to be taken into consideration.

The chancellors are the depositaries of all public acts; they digest and give notice of them; they discharge, at the same time, the offices of notary and tip-staff. They ought to be of thoroughly-tried fidelity, and they have need of a great spirit of order. It would be of advantage, if they were well acquainted with our jurisprudence and its forms, and that they had also some acquaintance with Mussulman jurisprudence, lest they should do any acts contrary to the laws of the country, in the transactions of strangers with our countrymen. They must understand the Turkish, and write the Greek, language. All these reasons have made me think, that we cannot make good choices but among the drogmans. Such are the advantages of the uniting of the two offices: you have seen its disadvantages. If you ask me, however, which is the way that presents the most advantages, and the fewest disadvantages, I will answer you, that it is that which would leave, in the petty ports of the Levant, the functions of the drogmanship united to those of the chan-

cery, but which would separate them in the great consulships, as at Smyrna, Salonichi, Aleppo, and at Alexandria. Besides, whatever way we take, it is indispensably necessary that the chancellor should be nominated by the government. The chancellor, for the good of the service, ought to be independent of the consul; which he by no means is, since the consul has chosen the chancellor from among the drogmans.

EIGHTH QUESTION.

Ought the Prohibition of the Marriage of the French with native (Turkish) Women to be continued?

It certainly ought. The following is my account: the managers or factors reside ten years in the Levant. If we take a middle term, we may calculate their profits at ten thousand livres a year.* The expenses of their house-keeping are paid when they are children; they therefore carry back into their country a clear profit of one hundred thousand livres.† It is certain, that the most prudent Levantine woman occasions them an expense of five thousand livres‡ a year, when they are married; they therefore

* £500. † £5000. ‡ £250.

carry

carry back fifty thousand livres* less, which they might have spent in France, or which they might have made use of in commerce, a sum absolutely lost to the state. Add to this, that these crossed unions, which may improve individuals *naturally*, deprave them *morally*, by presenting us, in the children, a *mongrel race*, which unites all the vices of Europe to all those of the East.

I think, however, that the French ought to be allowed to intermarry with the daughters of their countrymen, who have been settled here for a long time, or who have recently arrived from France. These daughters have generally portions; they are less fond of tinsel and pearls than the Levantine women, and they occasion less expense to their husbands: they moreover bring up their children after the French way, and make them citizens of the state. It would even be desirable, that the marriage of French men with French women should be encouraged at the ports of the Levant from a motive of national interest, and that, on this account, they should not be allowed, on any pretence whatsoever, to marry foreigners. The reason of the thing ought therefore to continue the prohibition; because, it is remarked, that there are more women than men in France, and that

* £2500.

every man, who marries a foreign women, condemns a French woman to a state of celibacy.

NINTH QUESTION.

Ought Bailing to be continued?

Certainly: because it requires a more strict choice in the factors. A merchant, although bailed, is without doubt the first victim of his own misconduct and folly; but, on a deficiency of his personal property, his bail becomes liable, and it is a double restraint, which secures at once goodness of choice and the tranquillity of the ports of the Mediterranean.

TENTH QUESTION.

Ought Arrests to be abolished?

No; because the lower the interest of money is, the more advantageous the commerce of a nation is. It does not require the having of great economical ideas to perceive that a nation, where the interest of money is four per cent. gains two per cent. more than another, where the interest of money is six. This is the reason why the Dutch have succeeded in supplanting

planting all nations in the commerce of commission.

But, among the causes of the high rate of interest, we must reckon the abolishing of arrest. When you borrow, it is natural that the lender should require of you a higher interest, in proportion as he is less certain of re-payment at the term agreed upon. This security in commerce rests only on two things;—on the personal property, and on the morals of the debtor. But the morals of the debtor being weakened by a thousand causes, and personal property being secreted very easily from the most active researches, the security becomes void, without a pledging of his person, or writs of arrests. Certainly this law must be moderated by every humane proceeding that is consistent with its execution. But, if you abolish it among you, you enrich the nations among whom it subsists at your own expense, because those nations can then sell at a cheaper and purchase at a dearer rate. You render, by this means, lending on security more common, and you lessen competition as much. Lastly, you increase the want of the borrower, and give the rich a new power over the poor.

It is all these reasons, or perhaps the instinct of commerce, which have engaged the English government to deprive its merchants in the Levant of the protection of the *habeas corpus*; be-

cause, if the consuls there had not the necessary authority to stop the disorders of merchants, the Turkish government would find itself obliged to repress them itself; but, as this first blow would be struck at the more particular of the Frank privileges, it would shortly draw after it the fall of all the others.

CONCLUSION.

I have been shewing you the means of improving an important branch of our foreign commerce: it remains for other consuls* to shew you the means of improving the other branches. But both they and myself will have done nothing but have pleasing dreams, so long as our plans shall not be submitted to a *council*, destined, by the nature of its institution, to give the government an insight into our commercial and jurisprudential relations.

The *council of commerce* existed among us from the reign of Louis XIII. to that of Louis XVI. It was instituted by Richelieu,

* The consular agents, being placed in the centre of all the differences and debates, are the only persons that can estimate with accuracy the goodness of the *commercial measures*. In a wise government, they ought to be consulted. They alone can still furnish the materials of a history of commerce: all those that have been hitherto published are only tales.

who

who presided over it for a long time. Colbert, the creator of our manufactures and our arts, who wished to have statues erected in honour of great merchants, as the Greeks and Romans erected statues in honour of their heroes, and that our ambassadors should present to kings their letters of credence with one hand, and, with the other, specimens of our silks and woollen cloths, submitted to this council all his noble projects.

A similar council is established in England, Holland, and Denmark; and, if the commerce of those powers has made a rapid progress every where, it is owing to the prudent directions of a *college of commerce*. Since Spain and Russia have shewn in Europe their eager desire to shake off their state of torpidity, they have also created a similar establishment; and they have judged it to be of such importance, that they have connected it with the supreme administration, and have put it under the particular cognizance of the council of state.

If a council of commerce had existed among us, we should not have seen, in our days, impudent lawyers set up tariffs, reform the laws of the great Colbert and of the commercial part of Europe, pervert all ideas of economy, and soil, by touching them, the finest institutions. We should not have seen the French flag pursue a neutral flag on every sea, remove from

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our coasts and from our ports the flag of a friend, thus annihilate the sad fragments of our commerce of exportation, and by this means diminish, in as great a degree, the re-production of our soil and of our industry. We should not have been reduced to the necessity of purchasing at second hand the productions of our own colonies, and to pay our enemies enormous charges for commission, and thus augment their means of offence, by diminishing in the same proportion our means of defence.

The course which the war has taken has been directed by the same hands. The government had not been unable to put a stop to the horrible robberies committed in the sacred name of the laws; questions of prizes had not become endless suits, or causes of rupture between nations formed to weigh in the same scale of the balance: they had been decided administratively, under the intervention of government, by aged merchants and aged consuls, who had grown grey in affairs. These men were equally acquainted with the public law of Europe and with maritime jurisprudence: they had all in their head more or fewer diplomatic ideas. But a consular judge ought not to be a stranger to these diplomatic ideas; for, when the law is obscure, they ought to decide in the disputes respecting prizes, according to diplomatic reason, in the same manner as decisions are made in common

common jurisprudence, according to natural equity.

I think that the council of commerce ought to consist of *retired consuls*, of merchants, and celebrated manufacturers; and that it ought to be under the presidency of the minister for foreign affairs, or of a statesman *well acquainted with diplomatic affairs*. His offices ought to be to examine, in the first place, the plans of amelioration, and the commercial and maritime laws; secondly, the tariffs and commercial treaties; and, thirdly, the regulations respecting our manufactures. The inspectors ought to be recreated, as well as the *chambers of commerce*, and put under his direction. Have these institutions, six years peace, and you will have restored commerce.

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.*

To B—— A——, Ex-Ambassador.

Salonichi, 1 Prairial, year 6.†

On the POLITICAL and COMMERCIAL SITUATION of FRANCE in the LEVANT.

YOU wish to know, my amiable B——, our situation in Turkey; you ask me if my opinion

* Although this letter is purely political, I thought it my duty to retain it in this collection, because it is immediately connected with our commercial system in the Levant. The Turks, by declaring war against us, have dispensed me with the considerations which might impose a political reserve on me towards them; and, after having been, with all the consuls of the Levant, the victim of their *barbarous fury*, I ought to have acquired the right of speaking the truth on their account.

The situation of the unfortunate French, who groan in the *bagnes** and fortresses of Turkey, can only be conceived by those who have experienced them or who have been witnesses of them. I could not have imagined, before my return into France, that the French, in general, could have been so insensible to it. Unfortunate comrades! receive this expression of my tender concern. I know that my prayers will not release you; but, if you have no need of my fruitless remembrance, I have need, for my own part, to weep continually over your misfortunes, and to tell them to those who are unacquainted with them.

† May 20, 1799.

* The places where the Turks confine their slaves.

nion

nion of the Turks has not been modified by my residence among them? if I have always continued those political dreams which made us pass such delicious moments when we lived together in the midst of the most polite court of Germany? You flatter yourself that I am always happy, because you take your prayers for realities; and you forget that I live here without assemblies, without theatres, without libraries, in the midst of fires, of the plague, and the most ferocious soldiery in the world. I live, say you, in Greece; but I am only more wretched in consequence, because I find no where here what I saw at Paris. I have lost my illusions, I wish to remove yours.

Remove your fears, however; it is not in my power to dispel those illusions from you which historians and poets have put upon you; I will remove from you only some old and tender errors which we have imbibed together in our diplomatic annals. Pardon me for the intention; for, if fiction is pleasing in poetry, it may have fatal consequences in politics.

I will only tell you, that the present war has ruined a part of our factories; that the others are approaching slowly to ruin for want of protection; that the pachas and beys are devouring us, one after another, in the same manner as Polyphemus devoured the unfortunate companions of Ulysses; lastly, that our applications

to

to the divan become every day more illusory: I can give you no information. I wish to carry you back to more ancient times; and, drawing you nearer to objects which you have never seen but at a distance, I wish to make you read in *facts* the *lesson* of our political conduct with the Turks.

The Turks, whose government, like that of the Jews, is theocratic, and consequently exclusive, have never liked the civilized nations of Europe, whom they call *infidels*, and they like the French nation no more than any of the rest; but our military successes have imposed upon them so much, that they dare not openly shew their hatred to us, and hence arises the species of contradiction observed in their conduct. They appear to favour us in public, and they thwart us secretly in every thing we do. The divan of Constantinople plays with us as a man plays with a mistress whom he no longer loves, but whom he still wishes to deceive. In every country where we are favoured, we must seize the smallest favours, and in every place we meet with nothing but discouragements. The personal affronts which we have received at Seyde, Cairo, and Aleppo, have been echoed throughout Europe; and we are receiving new ones which will, in a short time, complete the ruin of our settlements in Turkey, if the government does not quickly alter

ter its maxims with regard to its conduct to the Porte.

The Turks are actuated only by two motives, interest and fear, the two great powers of the earth. Interest acts upon them only by halves, because property has few charms under an unstable and extorsive government as theirs is. Their chief mover, therefore, is fear. Fear is the universal spring of this empire. The circumstance which happened to Tott is known throughout the world. Pray, entreat, pay, you will obtain nothing of an Othoman subject: you obtain every thing if you shew him a stick. The prince is not more reasonable than the subject. Those who have lived some time at Constantinople know that nothing is got from the divan but by force. The ambassador, who presents himself there, must appear, in the same manner as Louis XIV. appeared in his first bed of justice, whip in hand.

It is sufficient to have treated with the Turks, in order to know that in general there is nothing more dangerous than to make use of palliatives towards them. Accustomed to owe every thing to violence, they consider moderation as the mask of weakness, and repay civility only by contempt. The most polite conduct meets in return from them only with insolence. It has been said that they are sensible of favours. Our ambassadors and consuls can inform

inform us, that, among them, the performance of services is considered only in the light of a discharge of duties, and that they become pretexts to exact new ones. The most inflexible severity in law is the only arm with which their arrogance can be combated. The menaces which they lavish ought to be repelled with haughtiness; and it is only by cannon-shot that we can demand the reason of their violent proceedings. The anarchy and contempt into which the Othoman empire is fallen weaken it in many respects. It is about a century since Duquêne cannonaded, in the port of Chios, a Mussulman squadron, and the Porte, by this vigorous stroke, humbled itself at the feet of Louis XIV. In these latter times, we have overwhelmed the Turks with kind proceedings, and they have ignominiously expelled us from Seyde and Cairo, they have plundered us in Aleppo, burned us in Smyrna, and they menace us in all the ports of the Levant.

And let us not hope, by pursuing a moderate conduct, to ameliorate our situation among them. Peyssonel has deceived France in his account of the Turks; but it is not the less true, that our respect at the Porte has never been such as has been represented to the government. To omit the insults offered to our ambassadors Marcheville, Cezy, and Lahaie-Ventelet, in the reign of Louis XIII. and at the commencement

ment of that of Louis XIV.; the stratagems made use of against Nointel and Ferriol at the ceremonial of their audiences; the infamous assassination of the drogman Brue in the camp, and under the eyes of the vizir, during the embassy of Desalleurs; and the still more infamous assassination, in the very city of Alexandria, of the consul Boriès during the legation of Vergennes; the bitter draught they gave this last ambassador, by hanging, with an atrocious derision, the Frenchman *Linche* before the gate of his palace, and by menacing himself with more ignominious treatment, if he would not answer for the restitution of the ship *the Sultana*, which had been taken by the Maltese; to avoid touching on a series of other facts, in which the national dignity has been cruelly exposed; if it were possible to overlook the absurd brutality of the Turks, it is sufficient to have observed what has passed in our days, to perceive that the Turks are wanting in the most common respect.* This ferocious nation scorns

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* The ceremonial of the last audience has been modified in a manner more conformable to the rights of nations and to European dignity. Our ambassador has at length obtained that he should not be bound by two *capidgis* on his entrance into the hall where the throne is; but he failed in preventing the absurd message called *telchis*, by which the vizir entreats the sultan to admit the European minister to come before *his face*.

that *urbanity* or politeness of cabinets which is a perpetual homage to the dignity of nations, and which, till the declaration of war, moderates the insulting language of hatred and pride. It is acquainted only with the vile sentiment that arises from fear and the power of bayonets. But France has never appeared to the Othoman Porte under a similar aspect. This advantage is reserved for the powers that know how to strike great blows, and to the neighbouring powers in preference to all others. The Imperial minister goes to Constantinople preceded every where with the greatest respect; and ours is every where treated with the greatest disrespect. The English, the allies of Russia, and who have acted with the most scandalous partiality towards her in the two last wars, are *managed;* and the French, who have always shewn themselves the obliging friends of

face. This request, being in due form, and sealed with the Imperial seal, is conceived in the following terms. *An infidel, naked and hungry, is here, who asks permission to lick the dust off your feet.* The sultan answers by a *khati-cherif* in form, dated from *his Imperial stirrup, that they should give him to eat, that they should clothe him, and bring him in to me.* In fact, he is made to partake of a rich dinner; they then proceed to clothe him, in the midst of the court, with a vast pelice, in order that his European clothes may not defile the eyes of the *khalif* of the Mussulmen; and, *being thus fed and clothed,* he is conducted forcibly to the foot of the throne of his highness.

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the Porte, are sacrificed on every occasion. Lastly, to mention only one circumstance, — the Russians reign at present over the haughty Othomans, and, of all the people of Europe, they alone seem to have found the way to their heart, because they have sought it sword in hand.

These facts are certain, and they prove irresistibly that France ought to change her conduct towards the Turks. Past experience proves that it can obtain by fear what it could never have obtained by love.

France has twice demanded of the Turks a public reparation of the injuries they had done her: twice was she obliged to employ force to obtain it. Lahaie-Ventelet, in the reign of Louis XIV. received a box on the ear from the grand vizir *Keuperli.* That ambassador had the resolution, or, if you will, the cowardice, to dissemble this outrage; he contented himself with demanding the respect due to the law of nations; he asked, if they wished to insult the French nation in his person; and complained with moderation of the little respect shewn to the king of France in his minister; he pressed upon the old connections that united them; and said, that he did not come to sue for a new friendship, but to ratify and confirm the old one. The vizir answered, that he knew how to treat *infidels,* and caused Lahaie

to be thrown into prison. Louis XIV. being enraged, determined to revenge, in a striking manner, the insult done to his minister; and he made the Mussulman arrogance bend to his will, by sending troops into Candia, into Hungary, and by detaching from the Toulon fleet the squadron of Duquêne, who cleared the Mediterranean of the Barbary corsairs, and continued cruising as far as the Dardanelles. All the historians of that time write that resentment had misled the politics of that prince. — Cowards! they ought to have written that he was the only one of our kings that knew how to sustain, among foreigners, the dignity of the nation. Under no reign, and at no time, has the French name been decorated with equal glory.

The second circumstance took place under the Regent. At that period, as in our days, we had been overwhelmed with injuries in the ports of the Levant. Our envoy saw all his complaints at first eluded, and shortly after rejected with haughtiness: he was in despair, and wished to quit Constantinople with all the French. All the means dictated by prudence he had employed to no purpose, in order to prevail with the Turks. At length he had recourse to a vigorous proceeding; he advised the government to send a squadron to Tenedos to cruise at the entry of the Dardanelles. This squadron

squadron arrived, and cut off every communication of the Black Sea with the Archipelago. All the Alexandrian vessels, which presented themselves to ascend the canal, were stopped and conducted to Tenedos. Constantinople was alarmed. The divan at first sent messages to the ambassador to beg him to cause the squadron to retire: it afterwards sent menaces. The French minister continued firm, and answered, that, as those vessels always appeared without a flag, he knew not to what nation they belonged. At length the people threatened the seraglio, and the Grand Signior hastened to appease the Regent by offering every satisfaction required.

This mode of unexpectedly attacking powers is certainly attended with great inconveniences; but moderation with the Turks is attended with still more. Moderation towards foreigners is a matter of course with governments, and the Turks, in politics, know not how to act but by fear. The divan, besides, dare not, to please an European power, brave the opinion of the soldiery. The government follows here, more than any where else, the impulse of the people. The will of the sultan does not do every thing as some think it does. Here despotism is organized, and has its hierarchical degrees. The firmans are unsuccessful in the metropolis against the will of the *U'lemas*, and in the pro-

vinces against the jatagan of the janisaries. The virtue of these diplomas has been for a long time vain and nugatory. The powerful Turks kiss the firmans with respect, and tear them to pieces.

We must not flatter ourselves that we shall find more assistance in the pachas than in the divan; — men without any idea of administration, wholly puffed up with their dignities, not knowing the dignity of their master and being ignorant of their own; and, by the scandalous abuses which they commit, making the contempt of other nations a point of their religion, giving themselves up, to please the people, to superstitious practices, and, above all, being occupied by the care of hoarding up money; such men can never resolve to sacrifice their habits and their opinions to our conveniences. Thus we see that the best-intentioned pachas dare protect us only weakly.

We must, therefore, employ with the Turks an instrument which has taken hold, at once, both of the mass of the people and of the government; and that instrument is *fear*. I declare, that, by employing this powerful mover, an ill-planned proceeding might bring on a rupture. But is this much to be dreaded by us? What would we do with the Turks, and what do we expect from them? We wish, without doubt, to preserve our commercial settlements in Turkey; but we shall preserve them only

only so long as we shall be effectually protected; and we shall be effectually protected only in proportion as we shall change our mode of proceeding with the Turks. In politics, what can we hope for from them, since they have no longer any weight in the balance of Europe?

We are attached to the Porte by old illusions and by new illusions. It is time that the government should be undeceived. Nations can sometimes be generous; but, in the ordinary course of things, governments ought to be personal. It is not well for one power to grant another a friendship and favours *gratis*; but, according to our political system, whatever we do for the Turks will be lost to us.

All historians have repeated with emulation that the Turks never knew how to choose their time for making war; and that this want of foresight had been one of the principal causes of their defeats. In fact, we see, by perusing history, that, since Francis I. and Henry II. we have never been able to get the Porte to enter into a formal agreement with France; that, since the reign of Henry IV. there has been no diversion made by it in our favour in the long wars which our kings have had with the princes of Austria; that it has always chosen, in order to declare itself, the time when Europe was in peace, on the principle

that all the Christian princes are its enemies; and, that if they were in arms, they would be reconciled together, in order to overwhelm the faithful *believers*. This opinion seems incredible, yet it is not the less true. Abdul-Ahmid has, himself, in these latter times, imbibed it; and it is known, that his highness said to Sélim Ghérai, one of the last Tartar Khans, in the following terms, at the commencement of the war with the Russians, when Vergennes endeavoured to draw the Turks into it by brilliant promises, *Believe me, my brother, that the Othoman empire has no friends among the infidels.*

But, if the Turks have never been of any assistance to us, can we entertain any reasonable hope that they will be one day of some use to us?

The whole world knows that our connections with the Porte receive their date since the reign of Francis I. The ambition of Charles V. compelled the French king to call the Turks to the assistance of oppressed Europe. The treaty which he concluded with *Suleyman* II. is the only one that has had politics for its object.

Those concluded by Henry IV. Louis XIV. and Louis XV. in 1604, 1673, and 1740, were only mere commercial treaties, in which, it is true, there is mention made of the ancient friendship between the two empires, but no expression

pression of which authorizes the inference of the least political engagement. However, very intimate connections subsisted between us and the Porte till 1756. There exist in politics only interested friendships, and ours, with the Porte, was founded, before that period, on the mutual advantages of a powerful diversion, in case of an attack, on the part of Austria, then the great enemy of Europe, and more particularly our common enemy. From the geographical situation of the two empires, both the allied powers had, besides, no cause of dispute; and, when one was attacked, the other could easily assist it. This alliance was, therefore, at that time, very convenient. It is true, that, at the bottom, it was illusory on the part of the Turks, but it was at least a *bugbear* which we presented to the eyes of Europe, and which, on occasion, gave us a fancied power. Our alliance with Austria, in 1756, misplaced the two weights of the political balance, and turned out the Othoman diplomacy, founded on the practice and firmness of our maxims. The ambition of Russia then became fatal to the Sublime Porte. The Turks accused us of their misfortunes; they expected nothing farther from us, and their friendship disappeared. Our rupture with Austria re-animated their hopes, and excited, for some time, a general infatuation; but that

that infatuation has been dissipated on the signing of the treaty of Campo-Formio. Our occupation of the Venetian possessions has alienated all hearts from us.

Ought we, however, to renew a broken alliance with the Turks? A recent event proves, that we shall never succeed in procuring them to subscribe a treaty advantageous to us. But if we could conclude the most advantageous treaty with them, is it becoming our dignity to hazard a new alliance with a power, whose decline and fall we may, it is true, protract, but which we can never prevent?

The ascendency of science over barbarism is irresistible, because it is in the nature of things; and, if the Turks continue to repulse instruction, while Europe perfects itself around them, they must necessarily sink under it.

But the ignorance of the Turks is a vice inherent in the nature of their government. It is the work of the U'lemas, who have only sufficient knowledge to perceive that they cannot reign but in ignorance; it is the work of Islamism, which proscribes printing, the great vehicle of public instruction.

This ignorance is so profound, that the greater part of the Turks in place are ignorant even of the extent of their empire. A captain-pacha asked

asked lately a *baile** of Venice, whether the Russians were the neighbours of the republic? *Yes*, answered the baile, *there is only you between us.*

Since Tott, we have done, in order to civilize the Turks, every thing that was possible to do in favour of an allied people. We thought them, in their barbarism, as ductile as the Russians, and we have wished, after the example of Peter the Great, to elevate them to the height of Europe; but all our efforts have been in vain: all those which we might make would be so still, because this people derives all its manners from its *belief*, which it is utterly out of our power to change. Europe will forgive us our future conduct, in favour of our good will.

But, since the experience and the misfortunes of the two last wars have failed to convince the Turks of the necessity of studying the art of war according to modern principles; since, in the last place they have but just rejected, with respect to artillery, the lessons and counsels of friendship; since the Othoman Porte, by an unreasonable attachment to old maxims, deprives us of every hope of amelio-

* This is the name by which the two Venetian ambassadors to the Porte are called.

rating

rating its fortune; we ought to abandon it to its fate, in the same manner as we give up a person past recovery. It does not remain to know, as some have said, whether it is productive of greater advantage to us, that the Turks should be repulsed beyond the Bosphorus, or that they should continue in Europe. It remains only to know, if we can prevent, when we please, the dismemberment of their empire.

Ambition has the appearance of reposing, but it never sleeps. The cabinet of Russia still retains its hereditary projects, with respect to Turkey. It will realize them as soon as an opportunity shall present itself. It has not lost the idea of creating itself a commerce and a marine in the Archipelago of Greece. The rivalship of the Russians and Turks is eternal: it is a mortal conflict from nation to nation. It is not only revenge or glory, the common motives for wars; it is a fight for the political existence of the social body; it is the European throne of the *Osmanlis* that is at a stake.

In this unequal contest, we do not expect a diversion from Austria. The cabinet of Vienna will second that of Petersburg in an enterprize which it has always had at heart, which will procure it countries of the greatest convenience to

it; provinces which will secure the consistency of its estates, and which will double the maritime powers, which we have but just created it.

What can we do then? We cannot assist the Turks but on the Black Sea. But dare we send a squadron into a sea abounding with rocks, with the latitude of which not one of our sailors is acquainted? And what can we do with a fleet, in a war, the chief exertions of which will be on the continent?

All that we can do in this crisis, in favour of the Turks, is to remove the war by our political influence, and thus save them the shame of displaying their weakness; but we cannot flatter ourselves with restraining, for any length of time, two nations, who are enemies and contiguous to each other; and, as soon as the Turks shall be attacked, they will be conquered.

Since, then, it is not in our power to prevent, soon or late, the fall of the Othoman empire in Europe, policy requires us to foresee and watch it, in the same manner as we watch that of an old oak, whose roots are rotten.* This catastrophe presents us with favourable

* *To watch* is what is proper for us; for, we must respect friendship, even after it is dissolved. Such are our duties.

vourable opportunities; and, should it not present us with any, it would not perhaps, in the present state of things, be a misfortune to us, and it would certainly be productive of great advantage to all the European nations: it would open new fields to agriculture, a new empire to industry, and new roads to commerce. It would connect Upper Asia and the north of Europe with the Mediterranean, and would cover again with population and cultivation the wild coasts of the Black Sea; it would banish from the finest part of Europe the endemial disorders, which have committed such great ravages upon it, and which have been kept up there for want of cultivation; the plague, which is perpetuated there by Mussulman fanaties. Those of the Turks, if they are condemned by *fate* to lose the *infidel* provinces, which are on the borders of their *dominions*, are to give the greatest *part* to their *ancient friends*, and the smallest part to their *eternal enemies*. Such is the advice of friendship and that of politics. We alone can *secure* to them that fine Asia Minor, their natural country, and the residence of *true believers*; that smiling and spacious peninsula, situated in the centre of the world, bounded on the north, south, and west, by the sea, and protected on the east by rivers and deserts. Secluded in this vast garden, the Turks enjoy in peace, far from the observation of *infidels*, all the happiness allowed them by their institutions, if it be true that mediocrity is the state most favourable to the happiness of nations, as it is to that of individuals.

ticism;

ticism; polygamy, which is the cause there of those scandalous castrations, which separate man from man himself; lastly, the scourge of domestic slavery, which nourishes there the taste for monstrous amours, and the scourge of civil slavery, which is there the source of every evil.

THE END.

ADDENDUM,

As a note on the word *usines*, in the tenth line from the bottom of page 287.

This word appears to signify *any erection upon waters*, from the following passage in Ducange Gloss. ad Verb.

"Usina, ustrina vel officina quævis ad aquas extructa."

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These are thy glorious Works, PARENT OF GOOD,
ALMIGHTY! thine this universal Frame,
Thus wond'rous fair; THYSELF how wond'rous then!
Unspeakable! who sitt'st above these Heav'ns,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest Works; yet these declare
Thy Goodness beyond Thought and Pow'r Divine. MILTON.

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