

all this, of great merits; people courted by a fame that does their bidding as to who will sing the praises thereof. I confess that it is a happy circumstance to be praised by the praised.<sup>o</sup> It would be pointless for nature to bestow the greatest privileges on a person without also giving him a speaker to sing his praises.<sup>(13)</sup> All this may invite the question of why I should therefore not place one of these patrons prominently at the front door?<sup>o</sup> To that I only answer: my brat is too naughty to be placed in anyone else's arms.<sup>o</sup>

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Since the *critique*, like colocynths, however thickly sugar-coated by velvety wording,<sup>o</sup> always leaves a  
[ bitter taste,

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(13) 'No one can make a start, however outstanding his abilities, if he lacks scope and opportunity and a patron to support him.' Pliny, Book VI, Letter 24.<sup>o</sup>

then how sourly will I be regarded! I am sorry for it, yet comforted by knowing that I never meant to stand in any person's light. 'I desire all those into whose hands this little commodity shall come, to take the same liberty with me as I have taken in judging the opinions of others. They shall no sooner make me see the error of my ways than I shall follow their admonitions. Lastly, if I have said any thing contrary to piety, or morality, or to H.S., or the common agreement of the Jewish, Christian, or Mahometan synagogue, church or mosque, or in conflict with any kind of truth, or decency, then consider it unsaid.'<sup>10</sup> (14)

Should the reader find something to his taste, may he turn it to good account – if to his dislike, may he cross it out with a heavy angry stroke – if something  
[ he questions, that he put it between two

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(14) Grotius, *De jure belli*, etc., in proleg.

( ) or ?? : however, should he, assuming him an acquaintance, resolve to remonstrate with the author in person, to enter into any kind of discussion, elucidation, explication, contestation, or altercation,<sup>o</sup> he might as well save himself the trouble. The author is not wearing the right cap for it.<sup>o</sup> In sunshine or moonlight, come rain or shine, he has no intention of concerning himself with it.

Pass it on.

P.S. This Preface has been set rather an octave too high for the work. Perhaps the effects of the fever?<sup>o</sup>

to last but a short moment.° I am willing to believe that the Turks' abhorrence of everything bearing the slightest likeness to an image ruined its mosaics.° But for the rest one can only wonder at the fresh and undamaged condition of a structure so ancient, and one of the largest known on the face of the earth. All around this church are fountains for performing ablutions before proceeding to prayer (one of the Mahomedan religious prescriptions). I have known *Effendis*,° people who one would otherwise take for a sort of *esprits forts*,° who were so squeamish in this doctrine, that in circumstances when it no longer depends on the will to keep the body in a state of purity, they would plug certain *emunctoria* with a wad of cotton before going to the mosque.°

Beside these mosques stand 1, 2, 4 or 6 tall, spired turrets, *minarets*, their construction one of matchless daring, considering their height in proportion to  
[ their width. Around these *min-*

*arets* are 1, 2, 3 galleries from which as many sextons call the true believers to prayer: for Don Quixote has remarked with truth that the Turks do not use bells.<sup>o</sup>

It is in this quarter of town, which is the most striking, that the great lords have their residences, *konaks*, all possessed of sizeable yards. Generally there is a very great hall in the middle of these houses, with circles of *sofas* on daises in the four corners.<sup>o</sup> Most columns in these halls are of a slender shape and Prussian-blueish veined. Some windows open onto gardens with small fountains, and paths laid out with little cobbles displaying variegated patterns, and trellises and fencing boasting a profusion of gilding.

Whether the Zaandammers learned the art of garden design from the Turks, or the Turks from [ the Zaandammers,<sup>o</sup>

I will leave aside, but they are as alike as two peas in a pod, except that more and prettier trees feature in theirs. One of them is the *platan*, rare with us, but, as is universally known, held in high esteem by the *Turks*, to a degree that they took very ill that a foreign Envoy, moreover much respected at the *Porte*, actually felled some of these in the *Belgrade* forest.°

The climate's abundant sunshine makes shade a necessity. Who would have thought it possible to lay this at the door of *Despotism*! Sure enough the noble De Tott alone was capable of this: 'All the trees of an estate are left in the same order they are found, and the plan of any building is commonly regulated by them, be they placed how they will; (*at the Arsenal a treetop can be seen above the roof of a building*) and this, no doubt, because, in so warm a climate, the sha-

de of great trees is necessary. Under a despotic government, they must make use of those they can find, for they have not time to wait their growth.' Volume I, p. 108.<sup>o</sup> As if their slow growth were not the reason why their sowers everywhere rarely live to enjoy their foliage!

My booklet (I willingly admit it) may be of little import; yet I would feel ashamed to have filled it with such silly *tirades*.

Passing on we come to the *Bezestan*, the shopping district, entirely brick-built like a small town, where, in a word, everything except money is up for sale; where merchants from all nations seek to pull a fast one from sunrise till sunset (being closed at night, there is no such danger then).

Also found in this quarter are the coffee-houses of

whomsoever, rising immediately. Much spoiled by this, the *Turks* have come to require it as a right. *Sans façon*, without paying attention to the master of the house or the principal person present, he takes the best seat. Many a time he will even carry the *insolence* to such a point that he, though not worth a brass farthing himself,<sup>o</sup> will, after having first sat down himself, say to the master of the house (listen carefully, it is worth the pains): *otour*,<sup>o</sup> 'sit down,'<sup>(22)</sup> and mind you, he will sell this to you as a sign of politeness.

On the other hand, a low Musulman will never rise for a person of distinction unless he is his co-religionist. Their religion, they say, forbids this. On this footing their religion is highly *convenient*. How often have I not become infuriated while watching the  
[ *Janissaries*

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(22) On such occasions I have often played them the trick of *otourising* them first.<sup>o</sup>



who serve as guards to the foreign envoys in *Pera* <sup>(23)</sup> and are paid 8, 9, 10 piastres a month each, remain seated motionless on their chairs in front of these *hôtels* without even taking the pipes out of their mouths<sup>o</sup> when the envoy went out. <sup>(24)</sup> You must understand here that this does not happen out of ignorance or boorishness. Among themselves the *Turks* are all good manners, *égards*, and ceremonies: they know full well what is due to them and thus what is due to another.<sup>o</sup>

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(23) Otherwise a Turk is not allowed to be in service to an *un-Turk*. Should a Christian venture to retain one, he must promise himself much bickering; this I do not have on hearsay.

(24) However contemptuous these scapegraces may be, their pride loses out to their avarice. To satisfy the latter, the *Janissaries* contrive to identify anyone even remotely associated with a legation, and obtain drink-money (*Bachsjes*)<sup>o</sup> from him by begging on the occasion of their, or our feast-days.

ring to it, is more preferable than the word 'servant'.

Now as regards polygamy, another *gravamen* against this nation, one should first sound out if this is perceived to be a sign of savagery and barbarity, because, if it is, it would make many who are currently reputed to be enlightened and polite, *companions* of the *Turks*: if one would only be prepared to admit, valuing essence over appearance, and matter over manner, that many of the so-called people of distinction in *Europe* are given to this fault.

Polygamy proper, on the other hand, is not nearly as common in *Turkey* as all the fuss is about.° *Turkish* women, who also have more than one appetite,° are not of such a lamblike, detached, or *jealousy-free*  
 [ nature, to suffer, like little drudges,

their husband to exercise the privilege accorded to him by law to have four wives plus a whole gaggle of concubines for her to contemplate. Should he try, his house will promptly be one of squabbles, quarrels, battles and blows. Neither has *Turkish* law forgotten the women. Very attentive to the just demands of the fair sex, it has made it mandatory upon the man, lest he should neglect some of them due to his pre-occupation with his favourites, to remind each of them at least once a week that she is not yet a widow.

I had the opportunity to view the interior of all sorts of houses of all classes, as well as the interior of the *harems* or women's apartments – something not every traveller is allowed to savour.<sup>o</sup> I remember  
[ meeting only two lords who had –

one of them two, the other three – women in the same *harem*. These ladies, insofar as I could gather from their gestures behind the veil and the few words I understood, were more than a little saucy (perhaps my – in their eyes – ridiculous dress<sup>o</sup> and speech loosened Their Ladyships). And so my friend had need of all his *Turkish* gravitas to keep them within a hair's breadth of the bounds of decency.<sup>o</sup> Once or twice he uttered the word *doumus*<sup>o</sup> (pig). It is surely indisputable that he who manages to rule the roost over half a dozen such ladies, and have them pass their days in peaceful cohabitation, must in all matters be an extraordinarily clever man, so clever, in fact, that only very few are found. <sup>(25)</sup>

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(25)

'It is very remarkable (says Habes-

ate and reward them. Now! Lukewarm mæcenases make cold protégés, etc.

So much for the exterior of the temple of *Turkish* learning. Now let us enter. Here, theology, always as delicate as eggshell china and imposing its presence everywhere, holds jurisprudence by the hand: that is, *debarbarised*, the *Koran* is the Musulman's Bible and Code of Law. Every case, they say, has two handles,<sup>o</sup> but this one has no fewer than six. The multiplicity of viewpoints to consider in this matter baffles me. Would the reader like me to speak about it as a Jew, a Christian, or as a Musulman? To avoid stirring up jealousy, I shall, like one dropped from the Moon, make a few reflections on it,<sup>o</sup> without heeding ex-

communication or exclusion from the Church. For the rest, what little is said is *sans conséquence*, having flown from the pen of someone who, in theological knowledge, has no momentum whatsoever, and though raised for the priesthood,<sup>o</sup> is less acquainted (it is a pity to say it!) with h. writs than with the entertaining ones by Miguel Cervantes de Saavedra.<sup>o</sup>

When Mahomed began to *prophesy*, the Christian religion was nothing but renewed, rehashed, aggravated heathenism and idol-worship,<sup>o</sup> a religion suited only to fatten its priests on the sloth and plenty acquired at the cost of the sweat and poverty of a congregation they had raised in dullness, servility and superstition. Might it be impossible  
[ that Mahomed had special authority

to safeguard the by far most populous part of our earth against such pestilence?<sup>o</sup> (62)

It requires no more than a child's step to go from Reformed Christendom (by *Reformed* I mean, in my innocence, all that is not Catholic) to Mahometanism.<sup>o</sup> Ignorance and holy zeal put a heinous complexion to renegadism: to forswear one's religion, to deny J.C., what an abomination! Compose yourself, God-fearing, Christianly, candid reader! A renegade does not forswear his religion. He preserves its garment; he does not even turn it inside out, he merely puts on

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(62) 'Mahomet, who possessed the adroitness to pass himself off as prophet, and succeeded by his genius as much as by the terror of his arms to return idolatrous nations to worshipping the one God.' Cf. *Mémoires, &c.* of Count de Ferrières Sauveboeuf, vol. II, p. 115.<sup>o</sup>

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N.B. May readers kindly overlook the other, less confusing misprints that are due to the defectiveness of the Turkish Printing-works, the same reason why this book was so long in appearing, despite the assurance from my Arabic publisher Portlohah Effendi,<sup>o</sup> that I *could enter eternity on its timely publication*: a wholly Oriental expression!

☞ Apart from these errors this Book also contains a few FALSEHOODS here and there.<sup>o</sup> If the unaware reader passes over them without noticing, they will harm neither his sleep nor his health; if he does perceive them they will not lead him astray. If the public, after this straightforward *confession*, does not give me *absolution*, then I shall take it myself.

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