

British Palace - Pera of Fire at Pera -
Constantinople 5th October 1814

About four o'clock this morning one of my English Maids came into our Bedchamber to say there was a fire near the Palace. Mr. Siston immediately got up, but as fires occur very frequently I remained a few minutes longer ^{in bed} when the Maid returned & asked if she should drop me: for that the House in which lived the Wife & Children of our Maitre d'Hotel was burnt to the ground, - as I knew this to be on the outside of our Walls I rose very quickly. I was astonished to find the House & Garden illuminated by the surrounding flames, - I ascended the Gallery (commanding the extensive view described by Lady Montley Montague) & saw that a line of wooden Houses on one side of our Wall were in flames, - the street immediately fronting our Gate, - which was filled with Houses & Shops, was likewise ^{blazing} flaming & one House on the other range of Wall

had caught fire. - I returned to my room, placed my Level Box &
writing Box with money & papers so as to be readily taken up, then I
I joined the Concourse of ^{people} persons collected in our Garden & Courtyard.
For ~~these~~ ^{our premises} not only served to protect the persons already burnt out,
with what clothes & furniture they had been able to save - but
the ^{surrounding} ~~adjoining~~ ~~streets~~ were so narrow that it was from within our
- Walls only that the Engines & Pipes could give assistance to the Horses,
on ~~the~~ ^{the} outside of them. - As to the Street fronting the Gate, that was
resigned to the devouring Element & when at last our large wooden
Gate took fire, - from the heat alone, ^{for the flame did not touch it -} I never saw a more tremendous,
& I may add, sublime ^{spectacle} ~~sight~~ than was formed by the long line of
flames in front, & the increasing blaze on each side. - one means of ~~the~~
checking fires in this Country is by pulling down the adjacent Houses,
which, as they are generally of wood & slightly built, is easy enough,
this was attempted on one side of our wall but without effect -

The Carpenters had done more than usual justice to their work.
During this, several fire Engines stood idle in the Court, attended by the
Bombardiers, distinguished by small metal caps on their crowns,
but what was my surprise when, upon calling a Dragoman
to enquire of one fellow, who had his arms across, why the Engines
were not worked? I was answered that no money had been yet given;
Nor do one of them ever put forward a hand till money is given.
I could almost have seen them lacerated with pleasure. The House
more burning like paper, & the miserable owners wringing their hands;
our own Engines, (on a much larger scale,) had been broken by
rough usage at the beginning & our people, assisted by Mr. Lister &
the family, had employment enough in keeping melted the only
two of our offices still remaining of Wood, these were a large
shed used as a kitchen, & a Magazine for Charcoal. - for the last
great fire that approached the Palace had consumed all the
offices. - Mr. Lister had fortunately rebuilt in stone - some his
annual

The ~~Rank~~ ^{Title} of Sultana does not seem to be perfectly fixed or ascertained. It is not given exclusively — as many persons say — to the first of the Grand Signors ~~Whores or Concubines~~ ^{Wives} that produces a Son, — nor indiscriminately to all the Women in the Sultan's Harem. — When any of these ^{Wives} ~~Women~~ are pregnant she obtains a degree of rank, & may be called Sultana as her Child — if she produces it, becomes a Prince or Princess; — but should she miscarry, or the Child die immediately, or be deadborn: — it depends upon her degree of favor with the Sultan whether her rank continues. — This circumstance of ^{the, shepherds of his Wives of the Sultan} ~~the Child of one of his becoming Prince & Princess~~ gives rise to a wide regulation, as well as to a barbarous custom; — Since the period when the Wife of Majazet was insulted, after his defeat by ^{Tymor} ~~Tymor~~ ^{Tymor} ~~Tymor~~, there has existed a law against the formal marriage of an Ottoman Emperor — but as this seemed to lead to the Monarch's cohabitation with an unlimited number, & their Children educated & portioned as Prince & Princess — the expense was incalculable. — It was then fixed that no greater number than seven should ever rise to the privilege of Wives, (the present Sultan moderately confines himself to five) — but should his inclinations wander to a beautiful Slave, — exclusive of the above number, — means are said to be taken, by some one of the Physicians, to prevent her having living Children: — if she proves refractory, or in any other

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liberty to use it should her Husband forget the honor he has then received. — This honored Husband is of course refused a Harem, & he cannot, like common Men, multiply his Wives.

The Mahometan ceremony of Marriage consists in a contract signed before a Majistrate or Cadi — in common life the Husband if he dares to divorce his Wife, (not like ours for admitting that he punished her death, without accounting to the Law.) ^{he} is bound, by this contract, to pay her a certain sum of Money. — but divorces are rare.

Visit to the Harem of the Collector or the Customs.

I one day accidentally visited the Harem of this great Man — as we were to dine at Wanghndere with M. & Mad^{me} de Galat, we accepted an invitation to view the gardens of this gentleman, beautifully rising from the banks of the Mosphorns, & to see his fine House at the water edge. — The Dragoman with us asked me, if I had any desire to visit the Ladies of the Harem; I consented, & in a quarter of an hour I was invited to enter. — having no Interpreter I was introduced by a Son of the Collector, a Man about 14, for till that age the Sons are admitted, provided the Mother be alive. — but he could only introduce me, & leave us to converse by signs. — I found here two Wives that was, two females appear equally well dressed & attentive, & took their seats on the Sophas. The Slaves (or for ought I know Conventinas) sitting or mats on the floor. — One of these Women had the remains of great beauty. — she presented to me 6 or 7 handsome children — all

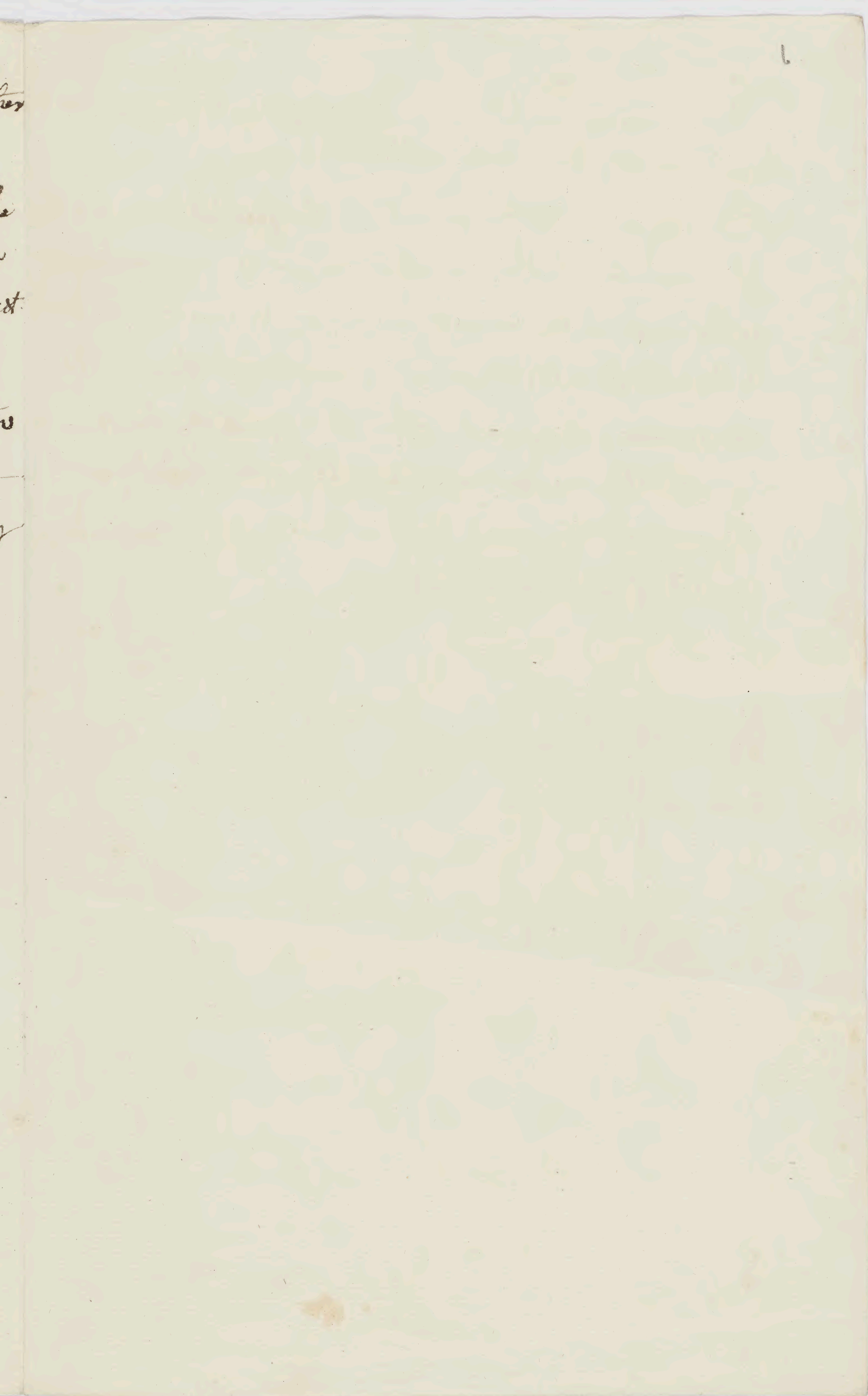
Just like Men & Women in miniature, & this family for she made
me understand that the fine Boy who conducted me was also her Son,
accounted for the early decay of her beauty, for she was still young &
lively. The other Wife though less beautiful was much younger.
they conducted me through a number of Apartments all perfectly
clean, the furniture of these rooms consist entirely in Sofas,
along the Walls, & beneath the Windows; - some of these Sofas
serve as Beds for they have no others. - I then motioned to
leave them - but they insisted, by signs, that I should see their
Garden - to this I had no objection it consisted entirely of fruit trees
& vines, with a few flowers. - the wall which was what I had
most wished to see, - had on the Top a sort of crenel Parapet
which effectually prevented the possibility of any person, not
only - from coming over, but even from looking into it. - In
spight of all the signs I could make they gathered a quantity of
fruit loaded several Baskets & sent them, by the Slaves, along
with me to the Barge. - I gave Money to the Slaves & departed.
The following day to my great surprise an officer appeared at the
Palace with a parcel for me - from the Ladies of the Harem
it contained a beautiful large & superb Shawl of ^{coloured} ~~India~~ green,
a pair of muslin trousers embroidered in ^{gold} silk, a shift, two embroidered
handkerchiefs, & two painted ones, - in the the fashion of the
Country. - My husband, who disapproved of my receiving any
valuable presents from the Turks, insisted I should send them
some return, & collected every thing I had likely to please them.

1815 Constantinople Funerals of the Turks Greeks & Armenians

The ceremony of a Turkish funeral is the most simple that is possible except in one point. The Corps is conveyed to the grave in a temporary Coffin - or wooden Box - rather out of the grave (as it is placed in a sitting posture a stone being then put in the hand of the Corps) by the few followers that attend & entombed very little beneath the surface of the ground - as soon as the grave is covered the followers disperse, all except the Priest who then harangues over the grave upon which his eyes are intently fixed. I happened once to pass through ^{the small Cemetery} le petit champ des morts during the performance of this ceremony accompanied by a Frank young Woman - who had been with me as Interpreter at the Bazaar & who spoke Turkish perfectly - we stood as she spoke loud we could hear distinctly what he said & ask an explanation. When she could cease from laughing she told me - that he was instructing the Dead Man how to conduct himself when arrived at the Gates of Paradise at which he was to knock with the Stone that had been placed in his hand for the purpose, &c. &c. she added further directions on his entering - but what appeared particularly to amuse my companion was a request of the Priest that the Defunct should give him - the Priest's kind remembrance to a Brother of his, lately Dead & whom of course he would meet in Paradise, & to tell him that all his family was in good health -

The Funerals of Greeks & Armenians - differ little from each other though essentially from those of the Mahomedans -

The Corpse is placed upon a Bier the face left bare - but the body covered with Shrouds & other trappings, in proportion to the rank of the Deceased - flowers are strewed on the breast & the sides of the Bier are ornamented with them - The Corpse is carried upon Men's shoulders attended by the Relations & preceded by a certain number of Priests who sing Hymns till they reach the grave - there the ceremony is nearly that of the Catholics -



Ready list
Journal
at Constantinople
1814

This Winter has hitherto proved even milder than the last. & that was, compared to the first - after our arrival, truly pleasant. Our Garden has bloomed with flowers of various kinds, particularly with fine Malles - & I have been enabled to produce - from the open ^{sten} ~~garden~~ a Bouquet of showy flowers, on the Marble Table of the Drawing-room, every Tuesday - which is our Publick Day -

The day before yesterday - Wednesday - being the 18th of our Queen's Birth Day - the weekly assembly was deferred ^{for} a Day - in honor of it we gave a Ball as usual. - It differed in two respects from those of the two preceding years. - The late happy Peace having united all Parties, & it being the first Ball since the Carnival commenced, our large & numerous apartments were, for the first time, nearly filled. - There were upwards of three hundred persons, & agreeably to the observation of our young Chaplain Henry Lindsay, twenty different Nations. - It was, as all large meetings in this strange Country must necessarily be, - a mixture of very extraordinary figures & costumes - but it was likewise a very gay one, & there appeared no diminution of spirit & vivacity to its conclusion. -

The following evening, (Thursday the 19th) witnessed a scene very different, indeed. - Doctor Lorenzo - an old acquaintance of M^r. L. & Physician to the Seraglio, at whose House at St. Saphane, I formerly mentioned having breakfasted on our voyage up the Gardonelle, - Was cruelly murdered. - His body was found by day light on Friday morning, near the

road ascending the Hill from the Arsenal, - but not in that line
that would naturally ^{or rather} ~~ordinarily~~ have taken to reach his own home.
When the body was conveyed home, & examined by Medical Men,
it was discovered that though there was a slight wound in the neck,
& several on the Body, - these could not have occasioned his Death,
nor had they even stained the ground on which he lay - upon
opening his Head, - in consequence of a circular mark round
the throat, & his neck cloth being wanting, (for it was remarkable
that he always wore a neck-cloth which, with the long ends
of his Professorian, was unusual,) - it became evident that he had
been scientifically strangled. The wounds ^{had been} inflicted after death
to impose, if possible, on the populace. — Dr. Lorenzo had
engaged company to dinner on the Thursday, - amongst others
our Dragoonman Chabert & his Wife. He was expected from
the Seraglio, - where he went every day, - at three usual dinner
hours four o'clock. - about that hour one of his Moorish Men ap-
peared to say that he had landed Dr. Lorenzo at the Arsenal -
where he was obliged to obey the summons of the Capitan-
Pasha - who was indignant, his own Physician being absent -
but would be home in a short time. Dinner was delayed from
three to four, till eight o'clock, his family in great anxiety
sent a message to the Arsenal of enquiry - the reply was that
Dr. Lorenzo had quitted the Capitan-Pasha a long time since.
They remained in a wretched state till the dawn of the
following day, when his dead body was brought home.

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While his friends were assembling for his Interment on Friday
A Turkish officer appeared amongst them from the Sultan or
the Capitan-Pasha, asking many questions concerning the
manner of the Doctor's Death, almost as if ignorant of the event. The
People of the Country - the Dragomans of the different Nations, in
particular - were most guarded & prudent in their answers to
this commissioned Enquirer - But the Strangers who were
there, talked openly of his having died by the Drawstring,
observing, that this was not the common mode of Death inflicted
by Robbers, - to be sure his money (he was in the habit of
putting a certain sum in his Pocket every day) his Watch set with
Diamonds, - a present from a Sultan, - & the Shavel round his
waist, rings, &c, were missing: - Every one knows these to be the
perquisites of the Executioners, - but his dress was entire his
yellow Boots were clean, - though the roads & streets were dirty.
His slippers, which are always thrown off on entering a house,
did not appear. - These circumstances, - together with the cha-
racter & long held situation of Dr. Lorenzo, leaves no doubt on
the mind of any one - that he had been strangled at the House
of the Capitan-Pasha - by orders of the Sultan. - Why or wherefore
are left to conjectures & these are various. - But as the Turks
do not always keep their own secrets, it may be known some
time or other, what were the reasons which induced the Sultan
to cut off, so barbarously, a respectable old Man who had, for
upwards of forty years, acted as first Physician to the Seraglio
under six successive Monarchs, & been favored by each of them.

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Lorenzo was by Birth an Italian, a native of Florence.
He came to this Country a young handsome clever Fellow.
& was very soon after, - by what means I know not, - introduced
into the ~~Sevaglio~~ service of the then Sultan.
In every changing scene he continued the friend of the Successor
though not always without danger, - In the late Revolution
& murder of Selim, - with whom Lorenzo was supposed to
be in great favor, - he very narrowly escaped following
his Master, - & he was afterwards suspected of having aided
the Death of the Successor of Selim, Mustapha - elder
Brother to the present Monarch, - But as the Sultan was
convinced he had himself - in his own defence - murdered
his Brother - Lorenzo was of course acquitted in his mind,
& soon by all the World. - The natural manner, in
such a Country as this, of accounting for his Death was
his intrigues in Court Politics. - It is not easy to conceive
that a Man of talents & address - for such he certainly was, -
could have, almost every day for forty years, attended the
Ottoman Court - be freely admitted - from his Profession, to
all the Females of the Seraglio, & that he must not have
rendered himself so useful - to the different Sultans & Valide
(Mother to the reigning Sultan) as well as to the Daughters,
Sisters, & Mistresses, as to propose through their influence, - as
well as by his own familiar access to the Sovereign, - ^{great power} to
be often tempted to exert that power in favor of his friends.

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I favourers - & against those Persons he disliked, or who had
offended him. - nor could this continued favor exist without
having excited the envy & jealousy, not only of the ignorant
Turkish Physicians, but of the Members of the Government, -
or that he should not often have offended those unprincipled
& intriguing Greek-Princes who, by their insinuations have
so often ^{provoked} roused the passions of a Marbarous Master who, though
a Man of Talents & what is more extraordinary in a Turk, -
a Man of business, - ~~but who~~ always acts from the impulse
of the ~~moment~~ ^{passion}. - yet, in the first sickness of a Child, or a
favourite Mistress, ^{he} will repent, & even confess that he does
of having, in a fit of passion, put an end to the only Medical
Man in whose professional talents he had any confidence. -
This word has excited strong sensations. - for Lorenzo was a
Frank, & under Austrian protection; it was therefore a
daring act hardly practised. - but such is the reputation of
this Country that I was cautioned not to make it a subject
of conversation, except to his own family; - & indeed, at our next
publick evening I gently tried, but found every mouth was
the family of the Internuncio. - Mean while the Sultan
& Capitan Pasha are carrying on a farce of grief at the untimely
fate of this old favourite; the latter shed tears to the Dragoman,
appointed always to do business at the Arsenal, the first time
he had occasion to repair there after Lorenzo's Death; &
it is said there are not fewer than fifty Persons scattered

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about Pera to discover, as it is said, the assassins - but in reality
to inform the Government ^{are} ~~that~~ the conjectures concerning the
Death of Lorenzo - in the course of which Espionage some
few heads may be struck off. Several are already in Prison -
& the Capitan Pasha - who is Sovereign over Galata Pera &
all this side of the Bosphorus - immediately confined the
Guard - on pretext of negligence, & not deeming one Guard-
House sufficient for that quarter, another is erected near the Spot
where Lorenzo was found & has, from the Populace, acquired the
name of Lorenzo's Guard House - — One conjecture seems
to have arisen amongst the Females of Lorenzo's family -
he had for some time past employed an Armenian, (of
whom they thought unfavourably) partly as a servant partly
as an assistant, to who had become a great favourite with his
Master. - This Man was in the habit of carrying Medicines &
occasionally messages, to the Ladies in the Seraglio. - He was a
handsome forward & ambitious Fellow & there are doubts whether
he had not aimed himself - or obeyed his Master, in carrying on
some of the Political intrigues imputed to Lorenzo. - through one
of the Females, & might not have been betrayed by some of the
Arab attendants, - as they had occasionally felt Lorenzo's power -
or it may have been a ^{of his own} love affair. - of these Lorenzo seems -
in his youth to have steered clear - knowing them to be always
fatal amongst Mahometans or, to have conducted them with
wonderful prudence. - This Armenian attendant, whether guilty or

not fell a Victim with his Master. - He undoubtedly entered the
 gates of the Arsenal with ^{him} his Master & was no more heard of -
 it is said that his dead body was ^{seen} in a stream called Sweetwaters.
 But no dead body dare be lefted from the Water in this Country; do
 that might betray important secrets. - Should the stream, which
 seldom happens, - throw a body on shore & it can be owned - the
 relations may purchase it from the Water-Men.

Some enquiry was made amongst the acquaintances of Mr.
 Lorenzo, whether he had been seen or spoken to, in the course
 of the morning. - One Person said that he had spoken to
 him on his coming out of the Seraglio, & in the common
 course of conversation asked - what news from the Palace? - He
 replied none, unless it be an apparent increase of my favor. - The
 Sultan gave me a sketch, & caressed me more than usual,
 even the Heddar-aga (Chief of the Black Eunuchs) loaded me
 with attention. - It is a trait of the Great in Constantinople,
 probably in most unenlightened Countries, - always to double their
 caresses when they mean to ruin or destroy the object. - Another
 person was found who spoke to Lorenzo at the moment he
 quitted his Boat to enter the gates of the Arsenal, & mentioned ^{to him} ~~he~~
 that he had been sent for by the Capitan-Pasha. - His Armenian
 was with him; but from these gates they returned no more.

Mr. Lorenzo appears not to have been a Mercenary Man -
 for he died poor. - He had never married, he had a Nephew & a
 large family resided in his House, protected & supported by him -
 but there is little more than his House in town & property of St. Stephens.

