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978-1-108-06705-8 - Karamania: Or, a Brief Description of the South Coast of Asia-Minor and of the Remains of Antiquity

Francis Beaufort

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Karamania

Remembered for devising the measure of wind speed that bears his name, the naval officer and hydrographer Sir Francis Beaufort (1774–1857) also had a hand in the production of more than a thousand nautical charts over the course of his career. In 1810 he had been appointed to command the frigate *Frederikssteen* by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. His mission was to explore 'Karamania', a contemporary European term for the shores of southern Turkey. For two years Beaufort charted the coastline and investigated its classical ruins before his work was brought to an end in 1812 by a Turkish attack which left him wounded. Returning to England, Beaufort set about drawing up the charts of his survey and documenting his findings, publishing this work in 1817, complete with engraved maps and plates. Experts and laypeople received the book favourably, as it shed much light on an underexplored region.

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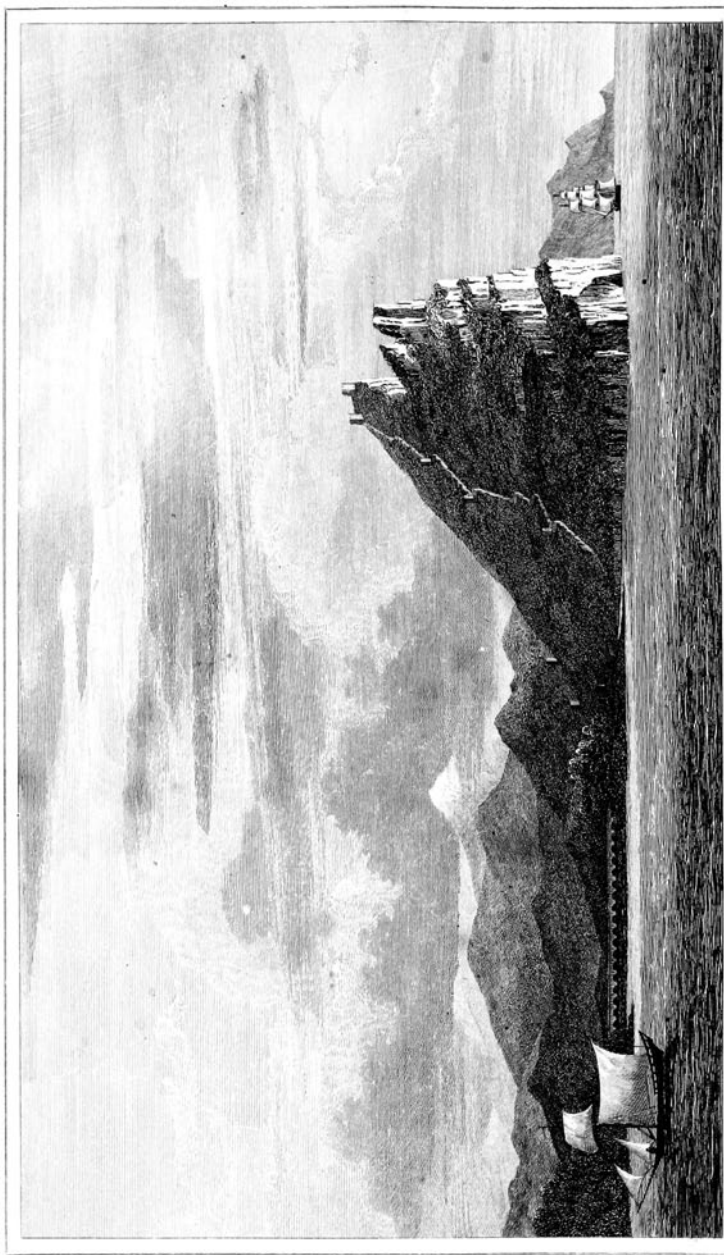
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Engraved by G. Cooke

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KARAMANIA,
OR
A BRIEF DESCRIPTION
OF THE
South Coast of Asia-Minor

AND OF THE
REMAINS OF ANTIQUITY.

WITH
PLANS, VIEWS, &c.

COLLECTED
DURING A SURVEY OF THAT COAST, UNDER THE ORDERS OF THE
LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY, IN THE YEARS
1811 & 1812.

BY
FRANCIS BEAUFORT, F.R.S.
CAPTAIN OF HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP FREDERIKSSTEEN.

LONDON:
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P R E F A C E .

THE name of KARAMANIA is commonly applied, by Europeans, to that mountainous tract of country which forms the southern shore of ASIA-MINOR; but, however convenient such a general appellation may be, as a geographical distinction, it is neither used by the present inhabitants, nor is it recognized at the seat of government. A kingdom of that name, or rather Karaman-ily, did indeed once exist; it comprised the antient provinces of Lycia, Pamphylia, and the two Cilicias, with parts of Caria and Phry-

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gia; and was so called from Karaman, the chieftain by whom it was founded. But, after various struggles with the growing power of the Turks during the course of two centuries, it was finally subverted by Bajazet the Second; and the inland town of Karaman affords, at this day, the only remaining vestige of the name.

The names and boundaries of the ancient provinces above-mentioned are also entirely obliterated; and the limits, even of the present states, cannot be ascertained with any precision. Sheltered from all effectual control of the Porte by the great barrier of Mount Taurus, the half-independent and turbulent Pashas, amongst whom they are parcelled, are engaged in constant petty hostilities with each other, so that their respective frontiers change with the issue of every skirmish.

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Groaning under that worst kind of despotism, this unfortunate country has been a continued scene of anarchy, rapine, and contention; her former cities are deserted,—her fertile valleys untilled,—and her rivers and harbours idle. Perhaps nothing can present a more striking picture of the pervading sloth and misery, than the hardly credible fact, that, on this extensive line of coast, which stretches along a sea abounding in fish, the inhabitants do not possess a single boat.

The allurements to visit a country in such a state of civil degradation are certainly small, when contrasted with the risk of venturing among those jealous and discordant tribes. Nevertheless, it does appear somewhat strange, that, while the modern spirit of discovery had explored the most remote extremities of

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the globe, and while the political convulsions of Europe had forced the enterprising traveller into other continents, this portion of the Mediterranean shores should have remained undescribed, and almost unknown. For, beside its tempting proximity to the borders of Europe, and its easiness of access, this once flourishing region seems to possess eminent claims to attention:—it was colonized by that redundant population of antient Greece, which had gradually spread over the rest of Asia-Minor, and which had every where introduced the same splendid conceptions, the same superiority in the arts, that had immortalized the parent country:—it was once the seat of learning and riches, and the theatre of some of the most celebrated events that history unfolds:—it was signalized by the exploits of Cyrus and Alexander; and was

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dignified by the birth and the labours of the illustrious apostle of the Gentiles.

At a few of the western ports, it is true, some recent travellers had touched in their voyage to Egypt; Le Brun also landed at Adalia, on his way to the interior; and as the road from Constanti-nople to Syria crosses the eastern ex-tremity, some casual notices were to be found of the principal places in that quarter; but of the remainder of this great range of country, the only accounts extant were those of the antient geo-graphers; and of the coast, there were no charts whatever by which the mariner could steer.

This serious chasm in geography determined the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, when Mr. Yorke pre-sided at the board, to employ a frigate on a survey of the coast; and H. M. S.

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Frederikssteen, of 32 guns, being then stationed in the Archipelago, was selected for that service. After the return of the ship to England, some years were fully occupied in laying down the result of the survey, and in constructing a set of charts; which having been at length completed, are now engraving, by the direction of their Lordships, for the use of the Navy.

To settle the hydrography and to ascertain the naval resources, was the main design of the expedition; and the multiplied labours attendant on a survey of such magnitude, added to an excusable impatience for the final accomplishment of the task, in order to resume the more natural pursuits of a cruising frigate, allowed but little time for indulging in the examination of other objects. Yet the venerable remains of former opulence and

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grandeur, which every where forced themselves into notice, were too numerous and too interesting not to have found some admission among the more strictly professional remarks; and indeed they were often necessarily combined with the operations of the survey.

From such materials the following brief tract has been compiled: slight as they must necessarily be, yet as they were acquired in the public service, and as they relate to a country of which there is so little known, it seems to be in some measure a duty to lay them before the Public; not indeed with the vain expectation of satisfying curiosity, but rather in the hope of exciting further inquiry. What facts could be collected are faithfully, however unskilfully, reported: if they throw but little light on antient history, or add still less to modern

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science, they may perhaps rouse others to visit this, hitherto, neglected country, whose leisure and whose talents are better adapted to those pursuits. The professional duties and habits of a seaman, preclude that fulness of detail which the artist and the antiquary alone can supply.

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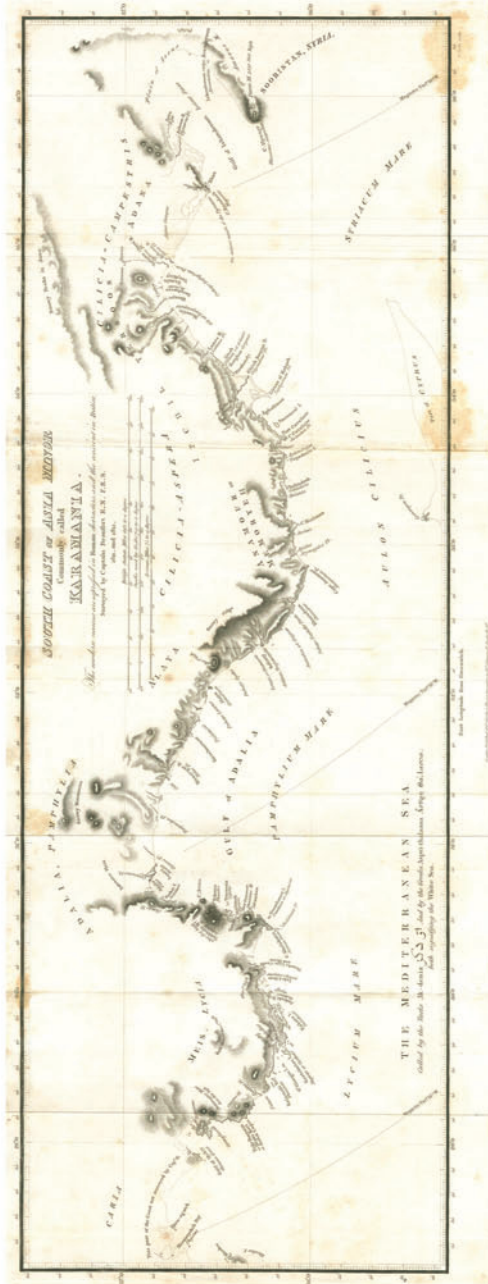
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