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VOLUME 1

JULIA PARDOE



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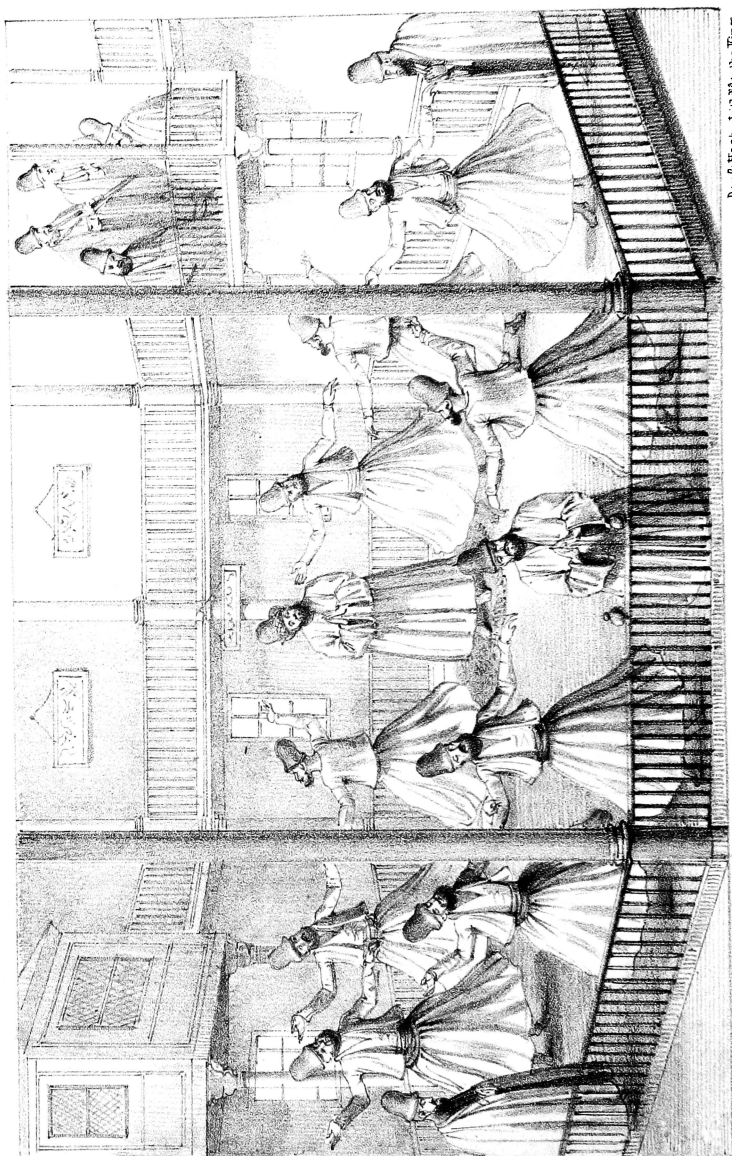
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THE CHAPEL OF THE TURNING DEVICES.

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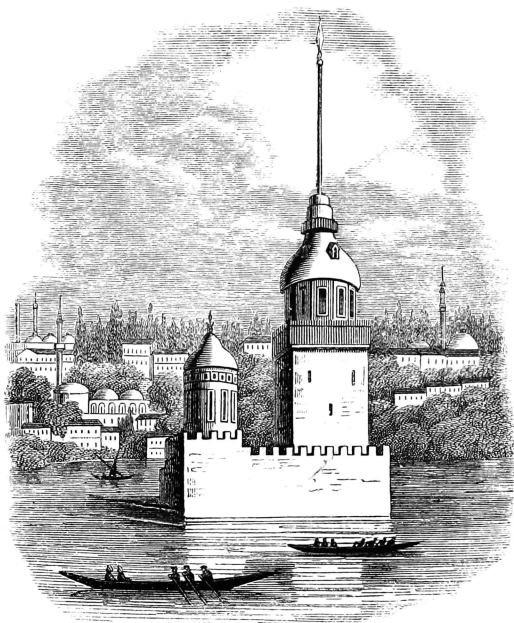
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THE  
**CITY OF THE SULTAN;**  
AND  
DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE TURKS,  
IN 1836.

BY MISS PARDOE,

AUTHOR OF "TRAITS AND TRADITIONS OF PORTUGAL."



THE MAIDEN'S TOWER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO HER  
TO WHOM PROFESSION AND PANEGYRIC  
WERE ALIKE SUPERFLUOUS ;  
AND FROM WHOM,  
DURING MY SOJOURN IN THE EAST,  
I WAS FOR THE FIRST TIME SEPARATED —  
TO MY LOVED AND LOVING MOTHER,  
I DEDICATE THIS WORK.

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## P R E F A C E.

IN publishing the present work I feel that I should be deficient in self-justice, did I not state a few facts relatively to the numerous difficulties with which I have had to contend during its compilation.

The language of Turkey, in itself a serious impediment from its total dissimilarity to every European tongue, naturally raises a barrier between the native and the stranger, which is to the last only partially removed by the intervention of a third person; who, acting as an Interpreter, too frequently fritters away the soul of the conversation, even where he does not wilfully pervert its sense. But this drawback to a full and free intercourse with the natives, irritating and annoying as it is, sinks into insignificance, when compared with the myriad snares laid for the stranger, (and, above all, for the literary stranger) by party-spirit and political

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prejudice. The liberal-minded and high-hearted politician of Europe, even while he is straining every nerve, and exerting every energy, to support and strengthen the interests of his country, disdains to carry with him into private life the hatreds, the jealousies, and the suspicions, which, like rust on metal, mar the brightness of the spirit that harbours them. He does not reject a friend because his political tenets may be at variance with his own; nor overlook the amiable traits of his character, to dwell only upon his opposing prejudices and interests.

The height to which party-spirit is carried in Constantinople; or I should rather say, in the Frank quarter of Constantinople, would be laughable were it not mischievous. Even females are not free from the *malaria* which hovers like an atmosphere about the streets and “palaces” of Pera; and a traveller has not been domesticated a week among its inhabitants, ere he almost begins to believe that the destinies of the whole Eastern Empire hang upon the breath of a dozen individuals. With one party, Russia is the common sewer into which are poured all the reproach and the vituperation of indignant patriotism—with the other, England is the landmark towards which is pointed the finger of

suspicion and defiance. All this may be very necessary, and very praiseworthy, as a matter of diplomacy; I suppose that it is both the one and the other. I have no opinion to offer on the subject. I merely venture to question the propriety of suffering such anti-social feelings to intrude into the bosom of private life; and to question the soundness of the judgment which would universally create a bad man out of a rival politician; and make the opening of one door the signal for the closing of another. It is said that the three plagues of Constantinople are Fire, Pestilence, and Dragomen; judging from what I saw and heard while there, I should be inclined to add a fourth, and to designate it, Politics. Certain it is that the faubourg of Pera always reminded me of an ant-hill; with its jostling, bustling, and racing for straws and trifles; and its ceaseless, restless struggling and striving to secure most inconsequent results.

That the great question of Eastern policy is a weighty and an important one, every thinking person must concede at once; but whether its final settlement will be advantageously accelerated by individual jealousies and individual hatreds is assuredly more problematical. "He who is not for me is against me," is the motto of

every European resident in Turkey ; for each, however incompetent he may be to judge of so intricate and comprehensive a subject, is nevertheless a loud and uncompromising politician. And, if the temporary sojourner in the East be resolved to belong to no *clique*, to pledge himself to no party, and to pursue a straight and independent path, as he would do in Europe, without lending himself to the views of either, he is certain to be suspected by both.

These are the briars which beset the way-side of the stranger in Turkey. He has not only to contend with the unaccustomed language and manners of the natives—to fling from him his European prejudices—and to learn to look candidly and dispassionately on a state of society, differing so widely from that which he has left—but when the wearied spirit would fain fall back, and repose itself for a while among more familiar and congenial habits, it has previously to undergo an ordeal as unexpected as it is irritating ; and from which it requires no inconsiderable portion of moral courage to escape unshackled.

Such are the adventitious and unnecessary difficulties that have been gratuitously prepared for the Eastern traveller, and superadded to

the natural impediments of the locality ; and of these he has infinitely more reason to complain, than of the unavoidable obstacles which meet him at every step in his commerce with the natives. That the Turks as a people, and particularly the Turkish females, are shy of making the acquaintance of strangers, is most true ; their habits and feelings do not lend themselves readily to a familiar intercourse with Europeans ; nor are they induced to make any extraordinary effort to overcome the prejudice with which they ever look upon a Frank, when they remember how absurdly and even cruelly they have been misrepresented by many a passing traveller, possessed neither of the time nor the opportunity to form a more efficient judgment.

When my father and myself left Europe, it was with the intention of visiting, not only Turkey, but also Greece, and Egypt ; and we accordingly carried with us letters to influential individuals, resident in each of those interesting countries, whose assistance and friendship would have been most valuable to us. And, for the two or three first months of our sojourn in Constantinople, while yet unwilling to draw deductions, and to trust myself with inferences, which might, and probably would, ultimately prove erroneous,

I suffered myself to be misled by the assertions and opinions of prejudiced and party-spirited persons, and still maintained the same purpose. But, when awakened to a suspicion of the spirit-thrall in which I had been kept, I resolved to hazard no assertion or opinion which did not emanate from personal conviction, and I found that I could not prove an honest chronicler if I merely contented myself with a hurried and superficial survey of a country constituted like Turkey.

To this conviction must consequently be attributed the fact that the whole period of my sojourn in the East was passed in Constantinople, and a part of Asia Minor. But my personal disappointment will be overpaid, should it be conceded that I have not failed in the attempt of affording to my readers a more just and complete insight into Turkish domestic life, than they have hitherto been enabled to obtain.

Bradenham Lodge, Bucks,  
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