

early age, and his eyes glistened as he recounted his gallant exploits and the fine manner in which he would lead up his troops to the assault of a town.

In the mean time Ali's mother, who had resisted the attacks of her confederated enemies with various success, fell at once, by one blow of fortune, into the lowest abyss of misery. The inhabitants of Gardiki, a large town situated at no great distance from Argyro-Castro, amidst the wild mountains of Liapurià, made a secret expedition by night against Tepeleni, and succeeded in carrying off both the mother and daughter: Ali himself narrowly escaped the snare by a fortunate absence in a marauding expedition, or, as others report, by his attendance at a marriage feast. The women were carried to Gardiki, and there treated in a manner unbecoming the most rude and savage barbarians, being kept in close confinement during the day, and at night led round the city by a guard to every house in rotation, and subjected to the brutal passions of its masters. They continued more than a month in this dreadful situation, when their misfortunes excited commiseration in a bey of the family of Dosti\*, whose turn it was to receive them into his dwelling. This generous man, with a few confidential servants, conducted them, at the hazard of his life, out of the city, and brought them in safety to Tepeleni, where they found the indignant Ali just preparing to attempt their liberation with a large body of troops which he had collected together. The Gardikiotes, when they discovered the flight of the captives, pursued them, but in vain: after which they returned home, and burned to the ground the mansion of their benevolent preserver.

This stain upon the honour of Ali's house was considered indelible but by blood. The authority of his mother, and the never-ceasing entreaties of his sister, who inherited all her mother's spirit (and who, as

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\* It is a curious circumstance that the ablest general with whom Ali ever contended, and who commanded against him in the siege of Gardiki, forty years after, was of this family, named Demir Dost or Dosti.

the old governor of Tepeleni told us, had she been a man, would have fought with Ali inch by inch for his dominions) were exerted to keep alive, within his heart, the flame of vengeance. The former on her death-bed conjured her son, with her last breath, never to rest till he had exterminated the guilty race; and the latter, in all her conversations with him, ended every speech by the expression that she never could know peace of mind, or die with satisfaction, till she had stuffed the couches of her apartment with the hair of the Gardikiote women. After a lapse of forty years the vengeance of these furies was executed to the full by Ali's stern decree—the guilty, but unfortunate Gardiki is no more, and Shāinitza's head reclines upon the raven tresses of its daughters\*.

Soon after this adventure Ali was desirous of leading forth the troops which he commanded, and of trying his strength with the enemies of his house. Naturally of an ardent temper, and impatient of controul, he burned to escape from those trammels of dependence in which he was kept by his mother, and at length extorted from her an unwilling consent that he should take the field. He was fortunate in his first attempts, but had neither troops nor money enough to prosecute his success: he was then defeated in his turn, and wandering about the country to escape his pursuers, was indebted for his safety to the benevolence and fidelity of several individuals.

On his return to Tepeleni he was received with the most indignant reproaches by his mother, who it is said threatened to clothe him in female attire, and shut him up in the harem or apartment of the women; and when, after the most ardent solicitations, he gained from her fresh supplies, and permission again to try the fortune of war, she

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\* The temper of this woman is said to be most cruel and inexorable. Once, when the emissaries of her brother had carried off a beautiful virgin from the town of Kalarites, to be imprisoned in his detestable harem, the women of the place formed a deputation to Shāinitza to entreat her intercession with Ali, to restore the damsel to her disconsolate parents. Her answer to their request was, "Get ye gone. She would have married a ploughman, and now she will lead the life of a queen."

added, in the true laconic style, that she expected to see him return upon the shoulders of his troops, either as a conqueror or a corpse.

In the campaign which ensued, his evil genius at first predominated: he was defeated in battle, but in his retreat, having entered within the ruins of a deserted monastery, he there accidentally discovered a treasure that relieved him at once from his distresses, appeased the anger of his mother, and enabled him, young as he then was, to connect himself very advantageously in a matrimonial alliance. He now determined to make one last and desperate effort against his ancient foes. He raised fresh levies, and departed eager for revenge, at the head of a considerable force. In this expedition however he was accompanied both by his mother and his bride. The former still held the reins of government, endeavouring to curb the impetuosity of her son, and direct him by her counsels and experience. Still every thing appeared unavailing; the confederate beys of Argyro-Castro, Gardiki, Kaminitza, Goritza, Chormovo, and some others, brought an overwhelming army into the field; the Tepelenites were routed and dispersed amongst the mountains of Mertzika, whose barriers alone saved them from the fury of the conquerors. At this critical juncture, when the star of Hissas seemed inclined to set in darkness, Ali planned and executed a manœuvre which shews at once his sagacity and decision of character in those trying circumstances which tend to call forth all the latent energies. Himself, his mother, and his wife, were quartered in the house of some friendly partisan, amidst the remains of his little army, collected together after his defeat. Knowing that a very considerable detached portion of his enemies were also encamped lower down upon the plain, and that the chiefs of Argyro-Castro and Gardiki, the most powerful of his opponents, had retired to their respective cities, he at once determined upon his mode of action.

Leaving his bed about midnight he gave strict orders to his wife that she should keep the door of their apartment locked, and that when his mother came, according to custom, very early in the morning

to inquire after her son, she should answer that he was asleep and wished not to be disturbed. He then departed alone and unprotected, gained the camp of the confederates, and soon after the dawn of day stood in the presence of those who sought his life. Astonished at his appearance they demand the motives of his conduct; when the young chieftain with a modest but undaunted air thus addresses them: "The life and fortunes of Ali are in your hands; the honour and existence of his house depends upon your will: here I am, driven to despair: I have fought till my means are exhausted; I now throw myself into your power, and you must either destroy or support me against my enemies: but do not deceive yourselves and suppose that you would derive benefit from the death of Ali: my enemies are in fact your own, and they seek my destruction only to be enabled more easily to place the yoke upon your necks. The chiefs of Argyro-Castro and Gardiki, already too formidable for the liberty of their neighbours, will profit by my fall to gain the sovereignty of the whole district. Tepe-leni, strong by nature, fortified by art, and garrisoned by my faithful Arnaouts, might, if I were supported, present an invincible barrier against their ambitious designs: but if they once gain possession of this fortress they will not only have the means of annoying their neighbours, but of securing themselves from all retaliation. Destroy me then, if you please, but be assured that my destruction will be the prelude to your own." Ali well knew that he had no danger to apprehend from thus placing himself in the power of his foes. The voluntary suppliant of an Albanian chieftain, is sure, not only of protection in his presence, but of an escort on his return: this security is accorded even to a robber, or to the greatest outcast of society. The grandeur of Ali's resolutions, his manly open countenance, the fame of his valiant deeds, the name of his family, and, above all, the jealousy which he artfully contrived to insinuate into the minds of the beys, excited in all an interest for his welfare, and determined them not only to spare his life, but to range themselves under his standard.



In the mean time his mother came as usual to his chamber door, and was answered by the wife according to her instructions. In about an hour she returned and received a similar answer: this being repeated a third time, she began to be alarmed, and suspecting that all was not right, ordered the door to be broken open. Not finding Ali within, and learning in what manner he had departed, she tore her hair, and rushing out of the house in wild disorder, took the same route her son had taken, shrieking violently, and calling upon his name till the mountains echoed with her cries. No long time elapsed before she met the object of her search returning to her presence at the head of those very troops who had espoused his cause, and whose assistance enabled him so effectually to make head against his remaining enemies, that he obtained a peace, strengthened the fortifications of his native place, and secured his family and fortune. It is from this decisive act that he dates the commencement of all his future glory.

Ali now resolved to take the management of affairs into his own hands; he no longer suffered his mother's interference in war and politics, but confined her to the apartments of the harem. Her death, which happened soon afterwards, has been ascribed by some to his jealous policy: but this accusation I totally disbelieve. From a consideration of his character and a review of his acts, one would be inclined to think that no fear of remorse, no tie of humanity, no impulse of affection, would be an obstacle to him in the perpetration of any atrocity. Yet, after all, Ali has scarcely ever shewn himself, like many oriental tyrants, wanton in the waste of cruelty: let his own interest indeed be concerned, let his safety in the remotest degree be threatened, and woe be to the victim whom he suspects, or the criminal whom he has discovered. But I cannot consent to brand his name with the crime of matricide. Crimes of the deepest dye he has committed, but the fierceness of his nature seems to relax when he is approached by the objects of natural affection; and to his children and their offspring he appears most sensibly and cordially attached. I have read in an

account which pretends to be genuine, that he shot his favourite nephew in one of the apartments of his palace of Litaritza. But mark the difference! I once spent an hour in that very apartment with Ali's chief physician waiting for an audience. This gentleman, in whose arms the young bey expired, gave me the particulars of his death, which was the consequence of a fever: he informed me that the vizir was so doatingly fond of the youth that he could scarcely be induced to quit his bedside, and so inconsolable at his loss that he had never once entered into the room from that time to the present: and this relation was amply confirmed to me by others. I feel the more anxious to rescue Ali's fame from those unmerited aspersions, because my duty to the reader and my regard for truth will necessarily lead me to exhibit his character sometimes in very unfavourable points of view; so that I can scarcely help reproaching myself with a species of ingratitude, when I recollect the good offices and protection we received in his dominions. Such feelings however receive some alleviation from the consciousness that Ali would consider himself flattered by that picture from which an Englishman starts back in horror. In Turkey the life of man is estimated by a very different standard from our own, and those deeds which we should designate as crimes of the blackest dye, would be extolled by their perpetrator as acts of the most refined policy. Another thing, now I am upon this subject, let me be permitted to mention. In all the anecdotes relating to this extraordinary personage, no pains have been spared to sift the truth from what was false or doubtful, and to penetrate into the real motives of his actions, nor have any been introduced into these pages but such as I had the means of authenticating fully to my own satisfaction. Could the reader see but half the stories I possess respecting Ali Pasha, collected both from friends and foes, he would be convinced that I might have compiled a history of his life, in comparison with which that of Jonathan Wilde himself would have appeared like the memoirs of a Saint.

Ali being now free from all immediate danger, determined to pursue

that path which at this time frequently conducted its followers to the highest honours of the state\*. He became a leader of banditti, and in his capacity of kleftes so infested the mountainous districts of Zagori and Kolonia, that Kourt Pasha of Berat took up arms to defend the country, defeated his band, and captured their chief. His youth and the beauty of his person recommended him strongly to the favour of his conqueror, who, instead of treating him like a rebel, retained him in his court and honoured him with his confidence: nor, if reports be true, was the wife of this pasha insensible to the charms of the young hero. In a war which soon afterwards broke out between Kourt and the pasha of Scutari, the most powerful of all the Albanian chieftains, Ali distinguished himself by so many acts of bravery and ingratiated himself thereby so much with the soldiery, that Kourt's hasnadar or treasurer, a man of deep policy and great experience, strongly advised his master either to put him to death or to secure his fidelity by giving him his daughter in marriage†. •The first part of this counsel was incompatible with the pasha's notions of honour and his humane disposition; the second was rejected, on account of the indignity of taking a needy adventurer into alliance with one of the first families in the Ottoman empire, whose pedigree could shew at least ten individuals dignified with the title of vizir. A middle course therefore was pursued, and Ali being honourably dismissed from Berat, was sent back to his native place with presents of considerable value: the daughter of Kourt, much to her dissatisfaction, for she had seen Ali and heard of his valiant deeds, was affianced to Ibrahim Bey, whose family was equal to her own.

It was impossible for a youth of Ali's disposition to remain long inactive. Being at peace with his neighbours, and scarcely strong

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\* Sometimes indeed this exaltation was upon a gibbet; so true is the old adage—" Ille crucem sceleris pretium tulit hic diadema."

† Exactly similar advice was given to Augustus by Mæcenas with respect to Agrippa. Τηλικύτων δαυδὸν πεποιήκας ὥστε ἢ γαμβρόν σου γενέσθαι ἢ φονευθῆναι. Dion Cass. c. liv. 6.

enough to commence offensive operations against them, he resumed his former occupation of kleftes, and ravaging the mountains of Epirus was taken prisoner by the pasha of Ioannina. Earnest application was now made to this chieftain by his own beys, as well as by the pasha of Delvino, and some other governors of the neighbouring districts, to consign the young robber over to condign punishment, and Ali had an hair-breadth escape from death in that very capital where he was destined to reign as sovereign. The pasha long hesitated, but conceiving it more consistent with good policy in the turbulent state of his own territories and of Epirus in general, to permit his prisoner to live, he not only liberated him, but supplied him with the means of carrying on his future operations. These he employed in embodying a large band of freebooters, who committed so many depredations in the various districts of Epirus, Thessaly, and Macedonia, and rendered the country so unsafe for merchants and travellers of every description, that the Porte found it necessary to take cognizance of their outrages, and sent an order to the derven-pasha of Rumelie to attack and exterminate the offenders.

The derven-pasha at this time happened to be that very Kourt in whose service we have seen Ali once engaged. He marched against the banditti with a considerable force; but the tried courage of these wild Arnaouts, their intimate acquaintance with the mountain passes, and above all the abilities of their chief, were more than a match for the vizir, who thought it advisable to attempt by negociation what he was unable to effect by force of arms; and he accordingly desired a conference. The acuteness and natural eloquence of Ali were as conspicuous in debate as was his valour in the field. He recovered the good will and confidence of Kourt, who he knew was about to march against some rebels of the Porte, and persuaded him not only to secure his pardon at Constantinople, but to accept of his services for the war: in this his military skill and courage contributed mainly to the success of his protector, who not only represented his conduct in a most fa-

vourable light at Constantinople, but gave him a high military command at his own court. This however he did not retain long: the daughter of Kourt, who had been married against her own inclination to Ibrahim, made overtures to Ali which were answered by him with proportionate alacrity. Ibrahim soon became suspicious of their intrigues and laid a plan to surprise them in the hour of dalliance. Ali's good fortune again prevailed: he received notice of his enemy's approach, made his escape with great precipitation, and fled: a wall of great height is shewn to this day at Berat which he scaled in his flight. Arrived at Tepeleni he did not think it prudent to remain so near the powers whom he had offended; on which account he entered into the service of the pasha of Negropont, who, being a stranger, and having just entered upon his government, was glad to purchase the assistance of so experienced and brave a palikar as Ali Bey. From this engagement he reaped considerable advantages in point of wealth, which enabled him on his return to Tepeleni to commence the execution of those projects which he always meditated, and to become a robber on so extended a scale that the magnitude of his crimes should hide their natural deformity. His first attempt was too daring for his means: he endeavoured to take advantage of internal sedition in the great city of Argyro-Castro and to introduce his own troops into the place; but his designs were opposed by a momentary concurrence of all parties, and he was obliged to retreat. He next fell upon the town of Libochobo, on the other side of the plain, upon the mountain chain of Mertzika, which, being unprepared to resist him, submitted to his arms; in a similar manner Lekli, Giates, and some others were subdued. He now determined to attack the strong place of Chormovo, the inhabitants of which had irreconcilably offended him, not only because they had been amongst the earliest confederates against his family, but, as it is said, because some of its citizens instigated and accompanied the Gardikiotes in the expedition wherein they carried off his mother and sister.

His operations against this city strongly indicate the character and



disposition of the man, his settled principle of revenge, and his preference of artifice above open force. Whilst he was collecting troops for the enterprise, the Chormovites in alarm sent their two primates, named Gicca Dillos and Gicca Allio, to Tepeleni, requesting to know the cause of his threatened hostilities, and the methods by which they might be averted. Ali received the deputies with great civility, replying that he had no cause at all for hostilities against Chormovo, but merely of complaint against certain families, whom he named, and assured them that if these persons were expelled from the city, and their habitations burned, he would not molest them. The primates then returned, assembled the citizens, and gave in their report. To save their country, the families thus designated, unanimously consented to expatriate themselves, and retired to Argyro-Castro, having first received ample compensation for their houses and effects. The primates now returned to the presence of Ali, and informed him of the result. His reply was—"I am pleased with your conduct; you have shewn yourselves my friends indeed: go back to your fellow citizens, and say, that in a few days I will pay them a visit in person, and as I wish not to put them to expence, will bring with me only 200 men: in the mean time take back with you some of my people, for as yet I can scarcely trust those who have so often deceived me." Accordingly the poor primates were obliged to accept this guard of honour, and soon afterwards Ali paid them his promised visit, accompanied not by 200, but by 1200 of his best troops. He was nevertheless received with every demonstration of feigned joy, magnificently treated, and his troops put into the best quarters possible. These, however, after a lapse of four or five days, began to pick quarrels with their hosts, for which many of them were severely reprimanded, and even punished by their hypocritical master, who asked how they dared to insult the good people of Chormovo, his excellent friends, who had invited him so kindly into their city? Soon afterwards he called the principal inhabitants together, and thus addressed them: "My good friends, I feel greatly for your situation, as my residence amongst you must embarrass your

finances : I will therefore relieve you by retiring, with the greatest part of my attendants, to the monastery of Tribuchi\*, where you shall come to me, that we may draw up and sign articles of friendship and alliance."

Accordingly, to the convent he went, and next day about one hundred of the principal citizens were summoned to attend the conference. The treaty, for the appearance of greater solemnity, was to be drawn up and signed in church, and the hegumenos, or prior, in full robes, was seen standing at the great altar with all due preparations for its formal execution. It is a custom with the Greeks never to enter into a place of religious worship armed : they unfortunately, therefore, deposited their weapons at the church door as they advanced towards the priest ; and these were all seized immediately by Ali's orders. In the mean time the solemn farce of the treaty was acting at the high altar, when one of the Chormovites having occasion to quit the church, perceived the seizure of the arms, and ran back to his friends, crying out—" that the priest might stop proceedings, for the infidel had betrayed them." His troops then rushed in, tied them together with ropes, and dispatched them to Tepeleni : they then marched, under the conduct of Ali, and fell upon Chormovo itself, massacred a great multitude of its unfortunate inhabitants, sold the women and children into slavery, and razed the town down to the ground. Having taken one man, the head of a family named Prifti, particularly obnoxious to Ali, he ordered a spit to be run through his body, and roasted him alive : it is asserted by many that he performed the inhuman office of executioner with his own hands : but this is not true ; it was done by his foster-brother, named Usuf-Araps, the son of a black slave in his father's harem.

By this horrid act of vengeance he spread a terror of his name

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\* Dedicated to the Panagia, in the mountains, only a short distance from Chormovo.

throughout the surrounding tribes, many of whom submitted without resistance to his power. Being now comparatively wealthy, he began to practise that art to which he owes so many of his subsequent successes, the art of bribery. By means of his emissaries at Constantinople he procured a commission for attacking Selim Pasha of Delvino, who, for some reason or other, was obnoxious to the Porte, and made himself secure of being appointed to the vacant pashalic. Resorting to his favourite measures of deceit, he carried with him only a small band of troops, under pretence of flying from his enemies: with these he was received into Delvino, and gained the confidence of the unsuspecting Selim. He then contrived to surround him with his own creatures, fomented cabals amongst the officers and soldiers of his guard, and at length assassinated the pasha and arrested his son, whom he carried off, when the people of the city rose upon him with indignation and compelled him to retreat. They were however obliged to ransom his prisoner for a large sum of money, which at this particular crisis very materially contributed to the aggrandizement of the captor: for a new Derven-Pasha of Rumelie having been just appointed, Ali, by aid of large bribes, was nominated his lieutenant. In this post he determined to pursue his favourite maxim—"Get money, and that will procure all things." Instead of attempting to clear the district of banditti, he traded in licences, which he sold regularly to the kleftes, receiving not only a certain sum, but a share of the booty they might obtain. These worthies now pursued their course with such unbridled insolence and rapacity, that in a short time the country became quite impassable, and the Pasha being recalled, lost his head at Constantinople, for the fault of his lieutenant. Ali himself was obliged to expend a great share of his illicit gains to secure his indemnity; but so high did his character now stand for bravery and success, that in the year 1787, when war broke out between Turkey and the allied powers of Austria and Russia, he was invited to

fill an important command in the army of the Grand Vizir, Usouf: under this general he behaved with great gallantry, and was considered one of the most promising officers in the Ottoman service.

An event however occurred in this campaign which led to the early development of his ambitious views. His favourite nephew Mahmoud, whom I have before alluded to, was taken prisoner by the Russians. It is said, and I believe with truth, that in the negotiations which ensued respecting his release between Ali and Potemkin, each of these ambitious men contrived partially to discover their particular projects of aggrandizement to the other. Certain it is that an interchange of presents took place, and a regular correspondence between them was commenced, from which Ali entertained strong hopes of being acknowledged sovereign of Epirus when his friend should be seated upon the throne of Constantinople. This correspondence which Potemkin held with Ali, as well as with many other Greek and Turkish chieftains, became known to Catherine and probably precipitated his fate.

Ali now employed the wealth which he possessed and the credit he had gained by his military talents, in procuring for himself the government of Triccala\* in Thessaly, to which he was nominated by the Porte with the title of pasha of two tails. The situation of Triccala was peculiarly adapted to his views. It commands the passage of merchandise from Ioannina to Constantinople, and whoever possesses this country can stop all supplies of corn from the fertile plains of Thessaly, upon which the pashalic of Ioannina frequently depends for the support of its population. Here then he planted himself at a time when anarchy and confusion reigned in the last mentioned city. The authority of its pasha was at best almost nominal: its turbulent and powerful beys were not

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\* It has succeeded in site and almost in name to the ancient Tricca, concerning which vid. Strab. lib. ix. p. 437. Iliad, β. 729.

only in rebellion against him, but engaged in the most fierce and implacable quarrels amongst themselves. I have been assured by most respectable people in Ioannina who remembered those times, that it was frequently unsafe for a person to stir out into the public streets. Each head of a party had converted his house into a species of fortress, from whence his adherents used to fire upon their opponents if they approached too near; the most atrocious murders were daily committed in open day, till the very bazar itself became almost deserted: at this time however, the pasha was dead, and every rival chieftain was caballing to succeed him.

Ali employed all the agents in his power to promote these dissensions and to increase the public distress. When he thought affairs were ripe enough for his presence, he collected a considerable number of troops, passed the chain of Mount Pindus and made his appearance on the plains to the north of Ioannina. This manœuvre caused great consternation in the city: the beys, in imminent danger, stifled their enmity towards each other, joined their forces together, and advanced to meet the invader. In a great battle which was fought at the head of the lake, they were beaten and driven back into the city by Ali, who encamped before it with his victorious troops. Not being strong enough to attempt it by storm, he employed a surer method for success. He had already gained a considerable number of adherents amongst the Greeks in the city, and especially in the district of Zagori: these by bribery and large promises he engaged to enter into his views and send a deputation to Constantinople to solicit for him the pashalic. They acted as he requested: but the opposite interest proved too strong for them at the Porte, and they were made the bearers of an order to their principal to retire immediately to his own government and disband his troops. One of the deputies, most attached to his interest, rode forward night and day, to give him early information of the failure of their mission, and on this occasion Ali executed one of those strokes of po-



licy which have given him such advantage over the imbecility of the Ottoman Porte. After a short consultation with his friend, he dismissed him to return and meet the deputies, who waited a few days on the road, and then proceeded straight to Ioannina. The beys, to whom its contents had been already intimated, advanced as far as the suburbs to meet the firman. It was produced and drawn out of its crimson case; when each reverently applied it to his forehead, in token of submission to its dictates. It was then opened, and to the utter consternation of the assembly it announced Ali, pasha of Ioannina, and ordered instant submission to his authority.

The forgery was suspected by many, but some credited it; whilst others, by timely submission, sought to gain favour with the man who they foresaw would be their ruler: in short, his partisans exerted themselves on all sides, the beys were dispirited, and whilst they were irresolute and undetermined, Ali entered the city amidst the acclamations of the populace: his chief enemies in the mean time sought their safety by flight, passing over the lake and taking refuge in the districts of Arta, Etolia and Acarnania.

Ali's first care was to calm the fears of all ranks: to the people he promised protection, to the beys who remained rich offices and plunder: his friends were amply recompensed, and his enemies reconciled by his frankness and engaging affability: in the mean time he put a strong garrison into the castron or fortress, and thus acquired firm possession of the pashalic before the imposture of the firman was discovered. It was now too late to dispossess him of his acquisition: his adherents increased daily, a numerous and respectable deputation, led by Signore Alessio's father, carried a petition to Constantinople, and seconding it with bribes to a large amount ultimately prevailed in establishing his usurped dominion. Thus, according to custom, despotism succeeded to the turbulence of faction, and the people not unwillingly submitted to the change.

Soon afterwards Ali obtained from the Porte the important office of Derven-Pasha of Rumelie, which not only materially increased his revenue but gave him the means of creating an influence in many provinces of the Turkish empire. That proud family which had formerly rejected his alliance now gladly accepted his overtures, and Ibrahim pasha of Berat affianced his three daughters to the two sons of Ali, and his favourite nephew Mahmoud.

Having thus established his interest on a firm footing as well in Constantinople as Albania, and wielding the resources of an extensive dominion, he began to act upon a larger scale, and to pursue his grand plan of consolidating an independent power in Epirus, a country which nature herself seems to have marked out for independence by the impregnable mountain barriers with which she has surrounded and protected it. The means which he resolved to take for the completion of this plan, were to amass treasures, to keep agents in pay at the Ottoman court, to infuse suspicion of other powers into the minds of the Divan, to render himself useful to whatever European state was most able to return his services, and finally to seize upon the property of his neighbours whenever and by whatever methods he could. In the execution of these measures, his rapacity has been boundless, his penetration deep, his aggressions innumerable, his perfidy more than Punic, but his success complete.

After the projects of Russia with regard to Greece had failed, and all confidence in that power was lost by the insensible and cruel conduct of its agents, Ali's enemies at Constantinople endeavoured to undermine his credit, by disclosing as much as they knew or suspected of his correspondence with Potemkin : fertile however in expedients, and fearful of a rupture with his sovereign, he found means to counteract these plots, and allay the coming storm, principally, as it is asserted, by the good offices of the French minister at the Porte, whom he contrived to engage in his interests. Being now secure in his most important posi-

tion he soon found a pretext for quarrelling with his neighbour the Pasha of Artá, conquered his territories, and annexed them, as well as the whole of Acarnania, to his own dominions. Thus he secured the free navigation of the Ambracian Gulf and gained possession of many valuable ports in those districts. His next step was to open a free and safe intercourse between Ioannina and his native territory of Tepeleni. To this end he attacked and took possession of the strong post of Klissura, where the Aous or Voïussa enters that deep defile called the Fauces Antigoneæ, or Stena Aoi, which was occupied by Philip in the first Macedonian war, where he stopped the advance of the Roman legions, until the key of his position being betrayed to Flaminius by a shepherd of Charopus he was driven from this strong post and obliged to evacuate Epirus\*. The occupation of Klissura was followed by the reduction of Premeti, Ostanizza and Konitza, all capitals of most important districts which secured the whole course of the Voïussa from its source in Mount Pindus as far as Tepeleni.

We have now traced the course of this extraordinary personage by that imperfect light which his early annals afford, from his infancy to the time when he fixed his seat in the Great Despotate of Epirus. One would have thought that this success might have satisfied the am-

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\* His occupation of this pass is thus described by Livy, lib. xxxii. c. 5. "*Principio veris (Philippus) cum Athenagora omnia externa auxilia, quodque levis armaturæ erat, in Chaoniam per Epirum ad occupandas, quæ ad Antigoniæ Fauces sunt (Stena vocant Græci) misit. Ipse post paucis diebus graviore secutus agmine, quum situm omnem regionis aspexisset, maxime idoneum ad munimentum locum credidit esse præter amnem Aoum: is inter montes, quorum alterum Æropum, alterum Asnaum incolæ vocant, angusta valle fluit, iter exiguum super ripam præbens.*" The mountains forming the defile are now called, those on the north side Trebechina and Mejourani, those on the south Melchivo. The defile is about ten miles in length from Klissura (which from the remains of Cyclopæan masonry observable there I take to have been Antigonea) to the junction of the Aous with the river of Argyro-Castro, above Tepeleni. The precipices on each side are tremendous, being apparently more than a thousand feet in perpendicular height. The positions of Philip and Athenagoras must have been about mid-way in the defile, as Flaminius, when he arrived at the Aous with his army is said by Livy to have encamped at the distance of five miles from the Macedonians. (cap. 6.) Many persons have fixed upon Premeti, about twelve miles higher up the Aous, for Antigonea; but I am confirmed in my opinion of its being succeeded by Klissura, from a passage of Polybius, who speaks of these straights as being close to Antigonea: *ἐν τῶν παρ' Ἀντιγόρην τεσσάρων*. l. ii. c. 5.

bition of an Albanian kleftes! but ambition's path is deceitful as the mountain, which tempts the traveller's ascent to its false summit, and then exhibits to his view another equally precipitous and lofty, to which it served but as a base.

The remainder of his history, when it became connected with European politics and important enough to engage the attention of his contemporaries, offers itself much more readily to historic elucidation.



Plain of Paramithia and Course of the Acheron.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Account of the Suliots—Country, Government, Habits, Manners, and Customs—Ali's first Attempts against them—His Stratagem—How defeated—Anecdote of Tzavella and his Son—Ali attacks Suli—Desperate Resistance of the Suliots—Heroine Mosco—Ali's Defeat and Flight to Ioannina—Peace concluded—Ali's Policy with regard to foreign Powers, and his own Government—French Occupation of the Ionian Islands—Ali's Intrigues with Bonaparte—Attends the Grand Vizir against Paswan Oglou—War between Turkey and France—Ali takes Advantage of it—Ionian Isles pass under the Protection of Russia—Ali takes all the Continental Dependencies except Parga—Terms on which these are conceded to the Porte—Ali, for his Services, is made Rumelie-Valisee, with the Title of Vizir—Commences a second War with the Suliots—Interprets the Prophecies of the Koran to encourage his Adherents—Leads his Troops against Suli—Joined by the Traitor Botzari—Bad Success in several Engagements—Turns the Assault into a Blockade.*



**WHILST** Ali was extending the limits of his sway towards the north, the southern districts of his dominions were subjected to the incursions of a clan, contemptible to all appearance for their numbers, but impregnable in their mountain-holds, and capable, by their daring courage and enthusiastic love of liberty, of attacking him in his capital, and alarming him in the very recesses of his harem. These were the Suliots: a people which sustained the character of ancient Greece, and assumed the spirit of its independent sons. Their abode was like the dwelling of a race of genii, upon a kind of natural citadel, amidst the wild Cassopæan mountains, where the Acheron rolls down a dark and truly infernal chasm, overhung with rocks and woods of deepest gloom. The high peaks of precipices bounding this mysterious glen were surmounted by fortified towers, whilst the paths leading to the impending heights above scarcely admitted two persons to walk abreast. During the worst eras of Grecian slavery, the flame burned bright upon this hill-altar of liberty, and its worshippers breathing a purer air, and excited as it were by those stupendous energies of nature which they constantly had in view, preserved their physical and moral strength unimpaired, not only defying tyranny, but pouring down from their rocky fastnesses over the plains of the oppressor, and carrying off that booty which was considered as their lawful property. At Suli the rebellion was planned, under Lambro Canziani, to liberate Greece from the Ottoman yoke, and the conspirators had their headquarters in these impregnable fastnesses.

Four large villages constituted the principal seats of this independent clan, in a situation so singular, as probably to be unique\*. They lay upon a fine concave plain at the perpendicular height of about 2000 feet above the bed of the Acheron; a grand natural breast-work descended precipitously to the river; whilst behind them rose a tower-

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\* The distance of Suli from Ioannina is 14 hours; from Prevesa 13; from Arta 14; from Parga 8; from Margariti 6; from Paramithia 8.

ing chain of mountains, at once an ornament and defence. The Acheron, after passing through the valley of Dervitziana, first enters the Suliot chasm, where it is called the Gorge of Skoutias, from a small village of that name: a narrow path, which winds amidst the darkest woods upon the right bank, conducts the traveller in about two hours to a narrow cut across his path, called Klissura, admirably calculated to stop the progress of an enemy. This defile was commanded by a fort called Tichos, and near it was the first village of the Suliot republic, called Navarico or Avarico. From hence a gradual ascent leads to the deserted site of Samoniva; thence to Kiaffa, signifying a height, and lastly to Suli, the capital of the tribe, which was generally styled Kako-Suli, like the *Κακοῦλιον* of Homer, from the difficulties it opposed to a conqueror. Near the spot where the mountain-path leaves the side of the Acheron, to wind up the precipices between Kiaffa and Kako-Suli, a conical hill overhangs the road, called Kunghi, on which stood the largest of the Suliot fortresses, named Aghia Paraskevi\*, or Saint Friday. At the same spot another small river, flowing from the Paramithian mountains, joins the Acheron, which, descending down the romantic defile of Glyki, enters the great Paramithian plain, and empties itself, after flowing through the Acherusian lake, into the Ionian sea, near the ancient city of Cichyrus or Ephyre. (See the plan at the head of this chapter.)

Such was the situation of the Suliot republic: no vestiges of any ancient cities have been discovered within its boundaries, nor is it clear to what tribe of former ages they have succeeded, though the Selli of Homer apparently offer the fairest claim to pre-occupation of the soil†. The date of the Suliot settlement on these mountains is

\* Παρασκευή and Κυριακή, i. e. Friday and Sunday, are among the common names given to the Greek girls.

† Homer certainly places the Selli somewhere in this neighbourhood, in the 16th book of the *Iliad*, l. 233.

Ζέν, ἄνα Δωδωνᾶε, Πελασγικὲ, τηλόθι ναίων,  
Δωδώνης μεδίον δυσχειμέρω· ἄμφι δὲ Σελλῶι  
Σοὶ ναῖωσ' ὑποφῆται, ἀνιπτόποδες, χαμαῖνας·

And these very Selli appear to have taken their name, or given it, to the river Acheron, the identical

referred by tradition to the middle of the 17th century, when some goat and swine-herds having led their animals to feed upon the heights of Kiaffa, were struck with the eligibility of the situation, and occupied it with their families.

As the population of this small and humble colony increased, it attracted the attention of its neighbours, and sustained many wars with the beys of Paramithia and Margariti, as well as the pashas of Ioannina and Arta. In all these however it was defended by the inaccessible nature of its rocky site, whilst the determined bravery of its citizens enabled it to wrest numerous possessions from the hands of its opponents, and to extend the limits of its sway far beyond the boundaries of its original territory. Before their first war with Ali Pasha, the Suliots possessed sixty-six villages, all conquered by their arms. The citizens of the republic were classed in divisions called faras: each fara contained a certain number of families, and was commanded by its own chief or captain. Of these

Kako-Suli contained 19 faras and 425 families.

Kiaffa - - - - - 4 — and 60 —

river of Suli, in very early times. See a passage in Homer's Catalogue, v. 166, where the poet says that Hercules carried off Astyochea out of the city of Ephyre, from the river Σελλήεις.

Τὴν ἄγερ' ἐξ Ἐφύρης ποταμὸς ἀπὸ Σελλήεντος.

Strabo, indeed, places Ephyre and this river in Elis, where I find no mention made of such by Pausanias or any other author: but the Scholiast intimates the probability of this being the Thesprotian Ephyre, which is frequently mentioned by Homer under this appellation, or that of Cichyrus: and Strabo himself, unconsciously enough, gives good reasons for agreeing with the Scholiast: for he says, that the expeditions of Hercules were frequent in this region, and that it was celebrated for poisons: now we know, that Hercules was the friend and guest of Aidoneus or Pluto, king of the Molossi, who reigned in this neighbourhood, from whom he liberated his friend and companion Theseus; and Homer has particularly distinguished this Ephyre for its production of poison, making Ulysses go there for the very purpose of procuring it.

Ἐφύρῃ γὰρ κέκτισε θεὸς ἐπὶ νηὸς Ὀδυσσεὺς  
Φάρμακον ἀνδροφόνον διζήμενος, ὅρρ' αἰεὶ  
ἰὲρ χρεῖσθαι χαλκήρεας.

Od. α. 260.

With regard to the names of Σελλοὶ and Σελλήεις, I know not whence they are derived; but it is probable that they may allude to some religious rites. Eustathius, in his Commentary upon Homer, observes, that wherever there was an Ephyre, there was also a river named Σελλήεις.

Avarico contained	3 faras	and	55 families.
Samoniva - - - -	3 —	and	30 —

When the inhabitants of these towns increased beyond the means of support, seven were selected out of their sixty-six tributary villages, to which they sent colonies of native Suliots, who were exempted from paying either forced contributions, or the regular tribute, which was a tenth of all produce. Thus in the village called Tzicuri five faras were settled; in Pericati two; in Villa two; in Alsocori three; in Kondati one; in Gionala three; and in Tzephleki two.

The character of this people was warlike in the extreme; and martial exercises comprised almost the whole system of their education. Their chief amusements were the dance and song, the former of which contributed to increase their bodily strength, and the latter to animate their zeal and feed their national enthusiasm: they were passionately attached to their country, which, in spite of traitors who were seduced by the gold of the pasha, would probably have continued to defy his power, but for the pressure of political circumstances. They had a chosen band of 1000 palikars, all citizens of the four principal towns; but 1500 more were embodied from the seven colonies and the other dependencies, during their contests with Ali Pasha. The plan of their warfare, as was the case in ancient times, consisted more in skirmishes than pitched battles, in daring expeditions, sudden attacks, and quick retreats: great examples of heroic devotion were exhibited by individuals; and their harangues breathed in a great degree the fire and spirit of antiquity. The women of this republic were scarcely inferior to the men in bravery, or less eager to share in all the perils of war. Troops of heroines constantly attended upon the soldiers, to carry provisions and ammunition, to assist the wounded, and, if necessary, to engage in battle. The most celebrated of these amazons was Mosco, the wife of Captain Tzavella, and mother of the gallant Foto, the Hector of this

new Troy, whose name is still celebrated in many a Greek and Albanian song. Her exploits might rival those of the heroine of Zaragossa.

The Suliots had no written law, but many customs handed down from time immemorial served to regulate their conduct: judicial affairs were generally referred to the captain of the fara, or in cases of difficulty to a council of chiefs, convened from the four towns, in Kako-Suli. To animate their men the more, the women took precedence at the wells and fountains, according to the character which their husbands bore for bravery, and if a woman had the misfortune to be wedded to a coward, she was obliged ignominiously to wait till the rest had filled their pitchers. It was found that few men could endure the torrent of reproaches that was generally poured upon them at the return of their indignant spouses. The females of this republic were held in such esteem that no man was allowed, under the severest penalties, to interfere even in their quarrels, lest by accident a woman might be killed; and whoever committed such an act was put to death as a patricide, with the execrations of all the citizens. They had an extraordinary custom in their wars of sending out a small body of troops against a superior force, and, on the contrary, a large body against a small one. In the first instance, they intimidated their foes, who knew they were prepared to conquer or to die; in the latter, they were able to secure more prisoners, and gain a greater ransom for the purchase of arms and ammunition. Like the ancient Spartans, they never inquired about the numbers of an enemy, but only where that enemy might be found.

Such was the republic with which now Ali prepared to engage: without its destruction he foresaw that all his future plans must fail, since the Suliots were not only the best soldiers in the ranks of his enemies, but were possessed of the strongest hold in the very midst of his dominions, where they gave refuge to the discontented, and from whence they issued to savage his territories whenever he was engaged



in distant warfare. The preparations for his first expedition were made in 1792. He then assembled an army of about 10,000 men, all tried Albanian troops, giving out his intentions of attacking the town of Argyro-Castro, the boys of which had been his most inveterate enemies in the early stages of his career. Under this pretext he endeavoured to lull the Suliots into a fatal security, requesting their alliance and co-operation, with the offer of double pay and rewards proportionate to their acknowledged valour. The following is a copy of the letter which he wrote on this occasion to their two most celebrated captains, named Botzari and Tzavella.

“ Φίλοιμὲ Καπιτᾶν Μπότζαρη καὶ Καπιτᾶν Τζαβέλλα, Ἐγὼ ὁ Ἀλῆ Πασᾶς σᾶς χαιρετῶ, καὶ σᾶς φιλῶ τὰ μάτια. Ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἐγὼ ξέρω πολλὰ καλὰ τὴν ἀνδραγαθίαν σας, καὶ παλικαριάν σας, μὲ φαίνεται νὰ ἔχω μεγάλην χρείαν ἀπὸ λόγου σας. Λοιπὸν μὴ κύμετε ἀλλίως παρακαλῶ, ἀλλ’ ἐνθὺς ὅπῃ λάβετε τὴν γραφὴν μὲ νὰ μαζώξετε ὅλας αὐτὰς τὰ παλικάρια καὶ νὰ ἔλθετε νὰ μὲ εὑρετε διὰ νὰ πάγω νὰ πολεμήσω τὴν ἐχθρὸς μου. Τέτην ἔστιν ἡ ὥρα καὶ ὁ καιρὸς, ὅπῃ ἔχω χρείαν ἀπὸ λόγου σας, καὶ μένω νὰ ἰδῶ τὴν φιλίαν σας, καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην ὅπῃ ἔχετε διὰ λόγου μου. Ὁ λυφές σας θέλει εἶναι διπλὸς ἀπ’ ὅσον δίδω εἰς τὴν Ἀρβανίτας· διὰ τὴν καὶ ἡ παλικαριά σας ἔξω πῶς εἶναι πολλὰ μεγαλύτερη ἀπὸ τὴν ἐδικὴν της. Λοιπὸν ἐγὼ δὲν πηγάζω νὰ πολεμήσω πρὶν νὰ ἔλθετε ἐσῆς, καὶ σᾶς καρτερῶ ὀγλήγωρα νὰ ἔλθετε. Ταῦτα, καὶ σᾶς χαιρετῶ.”

## TRANSLATION.

“ My friends Captain Botzari and Captain Tzavella—I, Ali Pasha, salute you and kiss your eyes. Since I am well acquainted with your courage and spirit, it appears to me that I have great need of your assistance. Wherefore I beseech you take no other resolution when you receive my letter, but assemble together all your palikars and come to meet me, that I may march to combat against my enemies. This is the very season and the time in which I need your help, and I expect to see the friendship and the love you bear towards me. Your pay shall be double that which I give to my Albanians, for I know your valour is superior to theirs. As I shall not go to war before you arrive, I entreat you to come quickly. This, and farewell.”

The **Captains Botzari and Tzavella** called a council of their countrymen upon the receipt of this epistle. It was read before them, but very few were dupes of its artifice and insincerity. They returned for answer that their warriors were always necessary at home for the defence of their country, but that anxious to oblige his highness and secure his friendship, they had given Captain Tzavella permission to lead out seventy palikars and attend him to victory.

Ali, as soon as he received this force, that he might conceal his designs from all suspicion, began his march in the direction of Argyro-Castro, but scarcely proceeded twenty miles before he halted and encamped. On such occasions it was a custom with the Suliots to exercise themselves in running, leaping, wrestling, and other manly sports; and for this purpose, they had now unsuspectingly laid aside their arms, when orders were suddenly given to arrest them. All were immediately seized and bound with fetters, except three; two of these snatching up their weapons fought desperately till they fell covered with wounds, whilst the other, a man remarkably swift of foot, made his escape, unhurt by a thousand shots that were fired after him, swam over the river Kalamas, and directing his course to Suli, arrived in time to put his countrymen upon their guard against their insidious enemy.

In fact, the pasha made his appearance in their district the very day after, with his whole army. But finding the Suliots advised of his intentions, and fully prepared to give him a warm reception, he deferred his attack until he could try the effect of artifice and deceitful negotiation. Having ordered Captain Tzavella to be brought into his presence, he promised him the most ample rewards upon condition of his procuring the submission of the republic, with the horrible alternative of being flayed alive if his fellow-citizens continued obstinate in their opposition. "Release me from my fetters then," said Tzavella, "for my countrymen will never submit whilst I am in your power." Ali however, too wary to let his prey escape him thus,

demanded what security he would give for his return if his mission should prove unsuccessful. "My only son Foto, who is a thousand times dearer to me, and more valuable to his country, than my own life." Upon these conditions Tzavella was released, and an equal number of Albanians and Suliots met at the bottom of the mountain to exchange the prisoners.

As soon as the chief arrived in Suli he convoked all the other captains in council, explained fully the conduct and motives of the pasha, assured them that they had nothing to hope from his promises or his clemency, exhorted them to prepare for a vigorous defence, and be under no concern for him or his family, every member of which would feel a pride in sacrificing his life for the safety of his country. In the mean time he contrived to gain a delay for the purposes of defence, by protracting negotiations with the pasha; and not before Suli was armed at all points did he transmit the following letter to the tyrant.

"Ἀλλῇ Πασᾷ, χαίρομαι ὅπῃ ἐγέλασα ἓνα δόλιον· Ἐγώ εἰμι ἐδῶ νὰ διαφεντεύσω τὴν πατρίδα μου ἐναντίον εἰς ἓνα κλέφτην· Ὁ υἱός μου θέλει ἀποθάνει, ἐγὼ ὅμως ἀπελπίζω θέλει τὸν ἐκδικήσω πρὶν νὰ ἀποθάνω· Κάποιοι Τῦρκοι, καθὼς ἐσένα, θέλουν εἰπῶν, ὅτι εἰμαι ἀσπλαγχνος πατέρας, μὲ τὸ νὰ θυσιάσω τὸν υἱόν μου διὰ τὸν ἐδικόν μου λυτρωμόν· ἀποκρίνομαι ὅτι ἂν ἐσὺ πάρῃς τὸ βυθόν, θέλεις σκοτώσει τὸν υἱόν μου μὲ τὸ ἐπιλοιπον τῆς φαμελίας μου, καὶ τὰς συμπατριώτας μου· Τότε δὲν θὰ ἡμπορήσω νὰ ἐκδικήσω τὸν θανάτόν τω· ἀμὴ ἂν νικήσωμεν, θέλει ἔχω ἄλλα παιδιά· ἡ γυναῖκά μου εἶναι νέα· Ἐὰν ὁ υἱός μου, νέος καθὼς εἶναι δὲν μένει εὐχαριστημένος νὰ θυσιασθῇ διὰ τὴν πατρίδα, αὐτὸς δὲν εἶναι ἄξιος νὰ ζήσῃ, καὶ νὰ γνωρίζεται ὡς υἱός μου, μήτε πρέπει νὰ ὀνομάζεται ἄξιος υἱὸς τῆς Ἑλλάδος πατρίδος μας, ἐὰν μὲ γενναϊότητα δὲν ὑποφέρει τὸν θάνατον. Προχώρησαι λοιπὸν, ἄπιτε, εἰμαι ἀνυπόμονος νὰ ἐκδικηθῶ"

Ἐγὼ ὁ ὠμωσμένος ἐχθρός σου  
Καπετὰν Λάμπρος Τζαβέλλας.

#### TRANSLATION.

"Ali Pasha, I rejoice that I have deceived a deceiver. I am here to defend my country against a robber. My son is doomed to death,

but I will desperately avenge him before I die. Some Turks, like yourself, will say that I am a merciless father to sacrifice my child for my own liberation. I answer, that if you had taken the mountain you would have massacred my son with all the rest of my family and my countrymen. In that case I could not have revenged his death. If we are victorious, I shall have other children; my wife is young. If my boy be not willing, young as he is, to sacrifice himself for his country, he is not worthy to live or to be acknowledged as a child of mine; nor ought he to be named as a worthy son of Greece, unless he can meet death with fortitude. Advance then, thou traitor, I am impatient for revenge; I, your sworn enemy,

“CAPTAIN LAMBRO TZÀVELLA.”

The pasha, as it may be supposed, was highly indignant at this answer and the failure of his insidious schemes. He did not however put the boy to death, but sent him to Ioannina, to be confined there with the rest of his countrymen. On his arrival he was brought into the presence of Ali's chief minister Mahomet Effendi, and his son Vely, who put his constancy to the proof by informing him that they had received the pasha's orders to roast him alive. “Have you?” replied the undaunted youth. “Then if my father conquers he will serve you the same.” His heroic answer pleased Vely, who is by no means of a cruel disposition, and Foto was merely sent into confinement at one of the monasteries of the island.

In the mean time the pasha prepared to attack Suli by force of arms; though an occurrence had well nigh taken place which would have rid the Suliots at once of this dangerous enemy. A band of these brave mountaineers, to the number of 200, having learned that Ali was encamped with his body-guard alone at some little distance from his main army, marched out with a firm determination to take him, alive or dead: but the pasha was informed of the plot by a traitor to the cause, and removed his head-quarters to a place of safety: the dis-

covery however animated his fury to such a pitch that he gave orders to enter the defiles, and put his troops immediately in motion.

The Suliots were obliged to retreat before superior numbers from their southern frontiers in the district called *Laka*, which lies towards *Arta* and *Prevesa*. The Turks pursued them with great spirit down the valley of the *Acheron*, but received a check at the pass of *Klissura*, being there met with such volleys of musketry from the fortress of *Tichos* by which it is commanded, as well as from behind the rocks and precipices, that the passage became nearly choked up by their dead bodies. The pasha, who had taken his station upon one of the opposite mountains called *Bogoritza*, observed a strange confusion amongst his troops, and sent to inquire the cause: when it was told him he was unable to restrain his fury, but ordered the tower to be taken at any expence, offering various rewards, and one of 500 purses to that man who should first enter *Kako-Suli*. The Albanians now fought like lions under the inspection of their chief and upon the strength of his promises; but the pass of *Thermopylæ* itself could not have been more bravely defended than was *Klissura* by the gallant Suliots, who had this advantage on their side, that they fought under cover of the rocks, huge fragments of which were hurled down upon their assailants by the very women and children. The Albanians now fell in such numbers that the dead bodies formed, as it were, a wall between the combatants, and choked up the pass: the ammunition of the Suliots at length began to fail, their fire slackened, and fresh troops of their enemies constantly succeeding, they retired towards *Kiaffa*. The Turks did not wait to carry the fortress of *Tichos*, but leaving it in their rear, set up the yell of war and rushed after the Suliots, whilst the pasha, viewing all these actions from his position through a telescope, was already in imagination master of the capital. In this attack *Pronio Agà* of *Paramithia*, a man of great courage and gigantic stature, who was attended to the war by several of his sons, all noted warriors, highly distinguished himself: so also did *Hassan Zapari*, the most powerful bey of *Margariti*.

a large Turkish town in the district of Tzamouria. Kiaffa was soon found to be untenable by the Suliots; it was therefore deserted by all the inhabitants, who took refuge in their inaccessible mountains, whilst the troops of the republic, followed by the pasha's army, retreated towards Kako-Suli. The great fort of Aghia Paraskevì upon Kunghi, which commands the Tripa, a deep chasm between Kiaffa and the capital, was at this time so thinly garrisoned as to be unable to intercept the pursuers; and Suli would have been lost but for an act of female valour which well deserves comparison with that of Telesilla and her Argives. The heroine Mosco arming all her female warriors, rushed out of the town sword in hand, stopped the retreat of husbands and brethren, headed them in a valiant attack upon the assailants, who were nearly breathless by their pursuit up these steep acclivities, and in a moment turned the tide of war. The Albanians in their turn retreated and fled; the garrison of Paraskevì, which had received a number of fugitives, made a sally to increase their confusion; heaps of stones, which stood ready piled upon the edges of the precipices, were rolled down upon the flying foe, who were again intercepted at the foot of Tichos and almost annihilated: hundreds of dead bodies were rolled into the bed of the Acheron, whose torrent was encumbered with the slain and whose waters were dyed with blood.

Arrived at this tower Mosco discovered the body of her favourite nephew, a youth of great promise, who had been killed in the first attack of the position. Animated with a desire of vengeance at this sight, she kissed the pale lips of the corpse, and crying out, "Since I have not arrived in time to save thy life, I will yet avenge thy death," she called on the Suliots to follow her example, and led them like a tigress that has lost her whelps, against those troops of the enemy who remained about the pasha in the upper regions of the valley. These being dispirited and terrified by the fate of their companions, took immediately to flight, and were pursued by the victorious Suliots as far as the village of Vareatis, which is within seven hours of Ioannina: they



lost all their baggage, ammunition, and arms, which were thrown away in the flight, besides an immense number of prisoners, whose ransom served to enrich the conquerors. Ali himself killed two horses in his precipitate escape, and when he arrived at his capital he shut himself up in his harem for several days, where he admitted no one to his presence except a few of his most confidential friends\*.

Scarcely a thousand men returned from this expedition with their arms: about 6000 are said to have been slain or taken prisoners, and the other 3000 having been dispersed over the woods and mountains, did not collect together again at Ioannina before the expiration of several weeks. Ali having now given up the conquest of Suli as hopeless for the present, entered into negotiation with its citizens and concluded a peace upon condition of ceding to them possession of their acquired territory as far as Dervitzianà, of restoring his seventy prisoners, together with Tzavella's son, and of paying a very large sum as a ransom for his captive troops. The beys of Paramithia and Margariti, who had been induced by his wiles to assist in this war, made a separate treaty, by which they bound themselves in future to become allies instead of enemies to the republic.

About this time the political horizon became darkened with the harbingers of those storms and tempests that so long convulsed every state in Europe. French revolutionists were very busy around Ali; great hopes were held out to make him throw off the yoke of obedience to the Porte and assume the independent sovereignty of Epirus; and it is supposed that one of his chief reasons for attacking Suli was, that he might, in case of revolt, have established himself in so impregnable a fortress. Failing however in his projects, he became wary of his new friends, and was too crafty to commit himself with his own government before he had sufficiently consolidated his power: his great aim was to dispossess the Venetians of their settlements upon the coast; for

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\* T s slaughter occurred July 20, 1792.

he plainly saw that whilst these afforded a rendezvous to the discontented who fled from his government, as well as arms and ammunition to his enemies, he never could raise that fabric of power of which he had already laid the foundation : but as yet he had neither means nor opportunity : many powerful independent clans were interposed between them and his territories : he had no marine, nor the means of forming one : he had no ports, except one for small craft at Salagora on the gulf of Arta ; neither had he the power of protecting the small share of commerce which he possessed ; for the politic Venetians had procured a clause to be inserted in their treaty with the Porte, that no subject of that state should build a fort within a mile of the Ionian coast, nor sail with any armed vessel through the channel of Corfu. In this state of things he armed himself, as he knows well how to do upon occasion, with patience : his penetrating mind could clearly foresee the future disunion of political engagements and the distraction of foreign powers. He determined therefore to wait for the appointed time, and instead of acting in opposition to his government, to use it as the chief instrument of his aggrandizement, making his own acts of usurpation appear like its equitable claims or fair reprisals.

In the mean time he turned his attention to the improvement of his capital, in which he laid the foundations of the new fort surrounding the palace of Litaritza, to the construction of roads for the greater facility of internal commerce, to the extirpation of robbers who at this time infested all parts of the country, to the formation of alliances with neighbouring chiefs, and most particularly to the accumulation of wealth, well knowing the efficacy of that powerful engine which is not unaptly termed the sinews of war : his subjects however had no great reason to bless the ambitious designs of their ruler, being ground down by his oppressive avanias, and put to great inconvenience by the diminution of the circulating medium : at present however he did not think proper to shew fully that severity of character which has since been displayed in so many acts of consummate cruelty.

At this time the convulsions of revolution agitated the whole continent of Europe, and possessions soon began to change their masters. In 1797 Ali saw the Venetians driven from the Ionian islands and their continental dependencies, whilst the French flag waved upon the shores of Epirus\*: this was the moment for which he had anxiously waited. Suspecting that the Great Republic entertained views against the tottering power of Turkey, which political circumstances at this time tended strongly to promote, he began to intrigue with its victorious general, and accordingly sent a confidential agent to Bonaparte's head quarters in the north of Italy. The French general, who had received accurate information respecting the character and conduct of the Albanian chieftain, entered with alacrity into negotiations and proposed to make use of him as a powerful instrument in the promotion of his ulterior designs. Thus these two great and crafty personages were now matched; each anxious to deceive the other and turn him to his own particular advantage. The benefits which Ali received from this alliance were certain and immediate. He gained permission to sail with his flotilla through the channel of Corfu in spite of former treaties: he surprised the two independent towns of Aghio Vasili and Nivitza, massacred the poor inhabitants in church whilst they were celebrating the festival of our Lord's resurrection, and having thus established himself upon the sea coast opposite Corfu, in the midst of the most formidable, wealthy and independent tribes of Albania, was ready to seize upon every advantage that futurity might hold forth: in fact he very soon took possession of the important fishery at Santa Quaranta as well as the large and excellent harbour of Porto Palermo, where he afterwards built a large fort, and thus drew, as it were, a cordon round the Pashalic of Delvino: at the same time his agents made a merit of these acts at Constantinople, by representing them as done solely for the advantage

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\* The Ionian isles, together with the continental towns of Prevesa, Vonizza, Butrinto, Parga, and Gomenizza, were placed under the dominion of the French Republic by the treaty of Campo Formio.

of the Porte and the subjugation of infidels; Ali himself confirmed their report by paying tribute to the Sultan for every place he conquered, and acknowledging the feudal tenure under which he held the government.

Still further to ingratiate himself with his sovereign he headed his contingent of Albanian troops, joined the Grand Vizir in his campaign against the rebel Paswan Oglou, and highly distinguished himself in the unsuccessful attack of Vidin. An anecdote is related of him at this period which clearly shews the line of conduct he had resolved to pursue with regard to his flattering but insidious court. The Grand Vizir, under pretence of bestowing public approbation upon his conduct, requested his attendance in full divan. Ali, conscious how much more he merited the bowstring than half the victims upon whom that punishment has fallen, went boldly, but surrounded the vizir's tent with six thousand faithful Albanians: as might be expected, his reception was courteous, but the conference was short. Soon after this event he received intelligence of the invasion of Egypt and the probable rupture between France and Turkey. Ever anxious to turn the course of events to his own advantage, and conjecturing that another transfer of the Ionian islands might possibly take place, he returned in great haste to Ioannina, leaving his eldest son Mouchtar in command of his troops. As was foreseen, the Porte declared war against the French republic, and a combined armament of the Russians and Turks was prepared to wrest the seven islands from a power which had shewn evident intentions of making this a focus from whence European Turkey might be attacked. Ali however, before he took part against his French allies, was anxious to know in what state of defence the Ionian government stood, and whether it was capable of resisting the force about to be employed against it; for this purpose, under pretence of giving some important information to the commandant of Corfu he requested a conference with the Adjutant General Rosa, naming him because he had resided for a long time at Ioannina, had married a wife in that city,

and was a personal acquaintance. The place of conference was at a small dogana, or custom-house, near the town of Philates: having there gained from the general all the information possible by fair means, he extorted by torture a declaration of the defenceless state to which the French in the islands were reduced; after which he dispatched him to Constantinople, under plea of his being a spy sent from Corfu to excite a revolt among the Albanians. Soon after his arrival at that city he died in consequence of his ill treatment.

The information which Ali had thus gained decided his political conduct: pretending a vehement zeal for the good of his country and the honour of the crescent, he offered a cordial co-operation with the allied powers, by undertaking the reduction of the *ex-Venetian* towns upon the continent, and his offer was unfortunately accepted.

The three great powers at this time engaged in active operations against France, were England, Russia, and Turkey. The plan pursued by them in the Ionian Sea deviated a little from its original destination. It was at first resolved that Russia and Turkey should act together in Egypt, and that England should take upon herself alone the task of expelling the French from their Septinsular possessions; in consequence of which arrangement instructions were sent out to Lord Nelson to dispatch a division of his fleet for this service under the command of the gallant Sir Sidney Smith. Proclamations were issued by his lordship inviting the islanders to take up arms in vindication of their rights and liberty, whilst a strong exhortation to the same effect was procured from the Patriarch of Constantinople, and extensively circulated. The expedition was on the point of sailing when the scheme was disconcerted by the cunning policy of one of the confederates. The Russians ever on the alert to seize any opportunity of distinguishing themselves on this theatre and of amalgamating themselves with the cause of Greece, waited only till they had obtained a passage through the straits of the Dardanelles before they declared their intention of sailing immediately for the Ionian Isles instead of



Egypt; and this they did under pretext of many strong invitations sent them by the inhabitants, who desired liberation and protection at the hands of a nation which professed the same religious faith as themselves: but that it was only a pretext, appeared evident from the circumstance that greatest part of their crews and land forces in the expedition, both officers and men, were composed of Greeks. It was however now too late for the other allies to raise objections and hazard a rupture. The English squadron was cheerfully dispatched to the shores of Egypt, since our interests were much more concerned in that quarter, and the Porte, though duped, determined to yield with a good grace and to accompany the Russian fleet with a portion of its own, though they sent the greatest part to co-operate with the British admiral.

Long before the arrival of the allied fleets in these seas, Ali who had his own interest alone in view, determined to commence operations. I have before mentioned that the strongest and most advantageous of all the ex-Venetian towns upon his coast was Prevesa; a city which is now the key of his marine, the Portsmouth of Albania. To prepare this place for an easy surrender he had long employed all his talents, craft, and ingenuity; the principal agents in his secret treacheries were, shame to say! a Christian bishop, and Captain Botzari, that distinguished Suliote whom we have before seen fighting bravely on the side of liberty and honour! By the first of these instruments he sowed dissensions among the Prevesans and gained over with deceitful promises a large party to his interests, persuading them that their good and the destruction of the French were his only objects: by the second he procured a free passage for his troops, all of whom might have been intercepted and cut to pieces in the dangerous defiles of the Cassopæan mountains. If indeed the Suliots had taken advantage of this opportunity, when Ali was engaged with Prevesa and the regular troops of France, they might have crushed that viper from whose deadly fangs they have since suffered so grievously.



The detention of one of his brigs sailing into the gulf of Arta, unless the story, as some believe, was forged for the purpose, gave the pasha a nominal pretext for attacking his former allies. Rapid in execution as he is quick in design, he put his army, consisting of about 5000 men, instantly in motion, and gave the command to his son Mouchtar. The unfortunate Prevesans, taken unprepared, had scarcely time to send their families and moveable property to the neighbouring islands; whilst many actually discrediting the report of the pasha's approach retained them unfortunately at home. General Salsette however, who commanded the French garrison, had better information, and summoned the principal citizens to take into consideration measures of defence: at this council it was determined, under the joint influence of ignorance and treachery, to throw up works and defend the Isthmus of Nicopolis, over which it was necessary for the Albanians to march in their approach to Prevesa. A great portion of the people seconded the determination with ardour, and applied themselves to the fortification of this 'Plain of Victory:' unfortunately the engineer officer who had the direction of the works died within a few days of their commencement, and scarcely time was left to throw up two weak redoubts, before the pasha's troops appeared, covering the range of hills that rises to the north of Nicopolis.

Expedition is the very soul of Ali's warfare; having ordered his tent to be fixed upon an eminence, whence he could see all the operations, and where the tent of Augustus probably stood before an action of much greater importance in the affairs of the world, he gave orders for the attack of the French and Prevesans in their position. The Albanian infantry set up the yell of war, and poured down from the heights upon their intimidated foes, whilst Mouchtar charged the French troops in one of the redoubts at the head of his cavalry: these latter capitulated after an honourable resistance, but the wretched Prevesans were soon routed and driven in precipitate flight towards the city: it was entered at the same moment by the pursuers and

pursued, and given up to all the horrors that could proceed from a savage and infuriated soldiery, who continued the scenes of murder, rape, and pillage during this and the succeeding day\*. Whatever excuse Ali might endeavour to make for this gratification of vengeance, in the impracticability of restraining his soldiers and breaking those promises which he made to them before the expedition, his most zealous partisans would find it difficult to frame one for the inhuman act which it becomes our duty now to relate. On the third day after the victory, his Episcopal ally undertook a mission to Vonizza, which lies in a beautiful recess of the Ambracian Gulf, whose inhabitants he persuaded to submit to the pasha and to cut off the heads of four Frenchmen who lay sick in the hospital. With this bloody present he was returning to his master, when he found at the punta or point at the other side of the bay opposite Prevesa, a multitude of poor wretches who had escaped from the slaughter and were hiding themselves, half-naked and famished, among the bushes that cover the spot. The unfortunate creatures crowded round him and entreated his good offices with the pasha. These he promised, gave them great consolation in the assurance of success, and advised them to return with him to Prevesa. Accordingly they accompanied him, contrary to the warning voice of a benevolent Turk who happened to be present, and who knew intimately the character of him they were about to trust. On their arrival at the city, they were, in spite of promises and assurances, thrown into prison by the inexorable Ali, and next day transported with about two hundred more victims across the gulf of Arta to his dogana of Salagora, there to suffer death in cold blood by the hands of an executioner†; the only criminal act imputed to them being their union with

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\* Had Prevesa been defended, as it ought to have been, under its own walls, such a check might have been given to Ali as would have induced many places to revolt against him, or at any rate have given time for the succours to arrive which were actually on their way from Santa Maura under a gallant young Prevesan captain named Cristachi, and which were only detained by a contrary wind.

† It is but justice to the bishop to say that this massacre, which he little expected, lay so heavy on his mind, that he took advantage of a mission upon which he was soon after sent by Ali to Corfu, to desert his patron and his native country: nor was the pasha ever able to induce him by any offers or bribes to return.

the French in opposing his occupation of their city. I was informed of a singular instance of self-command and presence of mind connected with this massacre that is deserving of record.

One Gerasimo Sanguinazzo, a native of Ithaca, happening at this time to reside at Santa Maura, and being informed that his brother and cousin, inhabitants of Prevesa, had been included in the number of these victims, collected a considerable sum of money upon his own responsibility and in a swift-rowing vessel set out instantly for Prevesa: there throwing himself at the feet of the pasha and offering him his wealth as a ransom, he procured a pardon for his relations from the tyrant who was assured in his own mind that they were beyond the reach of human mercy. Nevertheless a bouyouurdee was signed for their release, and Gerasimo, whose boat was in readiness, departed with all possible speed. Arrived at Salagora, he found, as the pasha had expected, that the work of death was nearly complete; and the ghastly heads of those who had been so dear to him lay weltering with 300 others in a pool of blood: about ten of these unfortunate Prevesans however were still alive, and waiting their doom; the wrists of the executioner being so much swollen by his exertions that it was with difficulty he could perform his bloody office. With admirable promptitude and presence of mind Gerasimo stepped forward, presented his bouyouurdee to the officer of the guard, and claimed two of these persons, whom he pointed out, for his brother and his cousin: they were delivered to him on the spot, and carried back in safety to Santa Maura.

This island, very soon after the capture of Prevesa, was in imminent danger from the designs of Ali: had he once gained possession it would have been extremely difficult for any power to have recovered it from his grasp. It was saved by one of those singular and surprising incidents which are beyond all human calculation. Whilst the fleet of the Russians, who were as dilatory in their movements as Ali was expeditious, made a long delay about the islands of Cerigo and Zante, he

suddenly appeared upon the strand of Playa, which is opposite the city of Santa Maura, with all his army, and summoned it to an immediate surrender; threatening to treat it like Prevesa in case it should provoke his attack. Fear operating with dissensions among the citizens induced many of them to promote his wishes, and the French garrison had great difficulty in preventing a revolt. In the mean time Giovanni Vlassopulo, a Greek captain in the Russian service, having been dispatched by Admiral Uczakoff in a swift sailing vessel to arrest the small French garrison upon the isle of Ithaca, accidentally heard the dangers to which Santa Maura was exposed. As soon therefore as he had executed his commission, instead of returning to the fleet, he set sail in a contrary direction, and arrived just in time to intercept Ali's flotilla, which had taken about fifty boats full of miserable Prevesans, who were endeavouring to make their escape to Santa Maura and the other islands. With prompt decision he ran alongside the commandant of the flotilla, threw himself on board dressed in his Russian uniform, and through the medium of an interpreter, commanded the release of all the boats, and the restoration of their property, under threats of the Russian admiral's displeasure. The commandant, taken by surprise, complied instantly with these orders, and Vlassopulo accompanied the fugitives to a place of safety; after this he hastened to Santa Maura, and stopped the pasha's operations by a similar manœuvre, whilst he was engaged in the very act of stipulating with the inhabitants for an unconditional surrender. No failure in his schemes ever annoyed Ali so much as this: he still continues to think, or pretends to think, that he has an undoubted right to the possession of this island, and I know some persons to whom he has declared, that he keeps an agreement signed by its inhabitants for a surrender, next his heart, and that he will keep it there till his dying hour.

The place to which the pasha turned his views for consolation in his disappointment was Parga, a name, at the very mention of which every

Englishman must now feel the blush of shame tingle on his cheek : but of this hereafter. He had written a letter to the primates of this place immediately after the storming of Prevesa, demanding their submission to his authority ; receiving no answer to this he dispatched a second epistle, to which the Parghiotes returned a firm and spirited reply, rejecting his overtures, and despising his threats: they moreover entered into a league, offensive and defensive, with the Suliots, who had by this time seen their folly in trusting to so deceitful an enemy, ever most dangerous when he seems most pacific. In the mean time the islands had all fallen before the combined forces of Russia and Turkey, and Ali, foiled in his attempts upon Parga, carried the smaller towns of Gomenitza and Butrinto, at which latter place the French garrison, as it retired, blew up the fort.

In March 1800, a treaty was concluded between Russia and Turkey, by which the independence of the Ionian republic was guaranteed, under protection of the former power, upon payment of an annual tribute of 75,000 piastres to the Ottoman Porte, whilst the continental dependencies were all annexed to the dominions of the Sultan, except Parga, whose citizens, in spite of leagues and treaties, continued to preserve their freedom, in the spirited determination to fall only under the ruins of their citadel. The following are the terms which tended to lighten the yoke of servitude imposed upon the three other cities.

That the same privileges relating to religious worship, and the administration of justice, which prevail in Moldavia and Valachia, shall be preserved to them. That no Mahometan shall be allowed to settle or acquire property in them, but it shall be lawful to establish in them a governor, who must absolutely be of the Mahometan religion. That the inhabitants shall have free intercourse with the islands, permission to rebuild their churches, construct new ones, and ring their bells without any interruption. That the Porte shall exact



a moderate tribute from the rayahs of these places, not exceeding that which was paid to the Venetian republic, and in consideration of the calamities they have suffered, no tribute at all shall be demanded for the two first years after the signature of this convention.

This destiny at first sight may not appear a very hard one, but in fact it was soon felt otherwise; for it opened a door, as might have been foreseen, to all the enormities which have since ensued, in the solemn transfer of Christian states to an infidel power that respects neither oaths nor treaties, when made with the professors of a different religious faith. The advantages thus gained by Turkey were strongly suspected to have been procured by bribery, and these suspicions were not a little strengthened by the dismissal of the Russian envoy from the councils of the emperor, who it is thought would have refused to ratify the treaty had he not been alarmed at the vast preparations making by England at this time for the expedition against Copenhagen, and perceived that it was his interest to caress the Porte. The old Count Capo d'Istria, chief deputy from the islands to the court of Constantinople, was also believed to have had far too great a share in these disgraceful transactions, and was looked upon with such an evil eye on this account in his native place, that when the rebellion broke out in 1803 at Corfu, his life would have been sacrificed to the popular indignation, and his house burnt to the ground, but for the intercession of the British resident, who saved both.

Ali was now obliged to withdraw his troops from these continental dependencies; but he conceived a hatred on that account against the Russians, the flame of which has never been extinguished in his bosom: this was not a little augmented by Admiral Uczakoff, who procured the restoration of the pashalic of Delvino to Mustafà its former ruler, from whom it had been lately taken by the Porte and given to Ali. This ambitious chieftain, however, was now gratified by the public thanks of his sovereign for his eminent services, as



well as by a present of the Kelich-Caftan, a fine ermine pelisse, and a sword richly decorated with brilliants; and, to complete his elevation, he was made Rumelie-Valisee, or viceroy of Rumelia, an office which confers upon its bearer the high title of Vizir. His residence was now fixed at Monastir, a large city about one day's journey west of the Lake of Ochrida. This unfortunate place he pillaged in the most scandalous manner, not only levying heavy contributions upon the inhabitants, but actually carrying away their very implements of household furniture, which he sent to his stores in Ioannina and Tepeleni. Amongst the plunder, as I was informed, were twelve beautiful busts of bronze, eleven of which have been barbarously melted down; but the twelfth was fortunately rescued, and is now in England. Ali at that time was no connoisseur in the fine arts.

At the place of his birth he built a fine seraglio, with an immense tower in the garden, wherein he deposited, and still continues to deposit, his wealth, keeping the keys constantly in his own possession. Those treasures, upon which he placed his great reliance for future success, were augmented by the most rigorous and cruel *avanas* upon every district over which his authority as *derven-pasha* extended. His extortions were so terrible that if he had held his viceregal office long, it is thought all this part of European Turkey would have risen in open rebellion.

Upon his return to Ioannina he determined to recommence operations against the Suliots, several of whose chief families had proved accessible to his arts and bribery. Tzavella had been dead some years, but the glory of his race was nobly upheld by young Foto, who, under the guidance and example of his mother, the heroine Mosco, had grown up into the most perfect palikar that modern Greece could boast, distinguishing himself not more by his signal acts of courage, his success in audacious enterprises, his strength of body improved by temperance and hardships, his Achillean swiftness

of foot, his expertness at the mark, and all those other qualities which are so admirable in the eyes of a rude and warlike people, than by his sagacity, acuteness, generosity of disposition, and above all, by his honour and good faith, in which he may put to shame many heroes of more polished nations.

Ali's resolution to subdue Suli was not a little strengthened by its intimate connexion with Parga and Corfu, affording means to the Russians for sowing dissensions in his states, stirring up a spirit of hostility against his power, and dispersing arms and ammunition amongst his enemies. His principal reliance was upon the effect of his bribery and the exertions of the traitor Botzari and his fara, which had been corrupted through his influence. This man had greatly distinguished himself in the former war, and from his age and experience, was looked upon by his countrymen as head of the republic. But as the terror of the Suliot name was great throughout Albania, and the remembrance of former defeats not yet obliterated from the minds of his people, Ali thought it advisable to interest them, if possible, by some stronger motives than those of conquest or revenge. To this end he convoked an assembly of agàs and beys, the chiefs of his allies in the ensuing war, at Ioannina. There, when they were met together in the castron, he produced the Koran and a venerable sheik, or minister of religion, who undertook to interpret several of its obscure passages as prophetic of the present state of Albania, and indicating their success in the approaching contest: they were exhorted to enter upon it with that enthusiastic zeal which distinguished the first Ottoman conquerors, whilst the rewards of victory and the glories of martyrdom were placed before their eyes in the most glowing colours.

"Come, then, my agàs," said Ali, rising up from his seat, "as many as are true and faithful followers of the Prophet, and wish to preserve both life and property, let us swear a solemn oath, invoking the name of Mahomet, that nothing but death shall divert us from

warring upon Suli until that haughty republic fall beneath our arms." The assembly, urged more by fear of the vizir than by faith in his prophecies, bowed the head in token of compliance, and took the oath which he required.

Ali now lost no time in collecting together his troops to the number of about 18,000 men : having taken care to spread abroad various reports, first that he intended to lead them against Corfu, next against the French in Egypt, and lastly against Santa Maura, he marched on a sudden against Suli, took and plundered several of its external dependencies, and occupied every pass leading to its mountain holds. The people were taken in a great measure unprepared, having been deceived by the artifices of Botzari, who had for some time studiously kept his fellow-citizens in ignorance of Ali's views, converting the revenues of the republic to the use of himself and his friends, and neglecting to purchase stores and ammunition with the money he received for that purpose from Russia : now on the appearance of the enemy at the foot of the mountain this traitor deserted with all the men of his fara to the Albanian camp. He was joyfully received by Ali, whom he buoyed up with hopes that Suli would surrender on the first attack, deprived as it was of a leader, and unprovided with all the means of defence. The event however proved how little this base traitor and his employer knew what an unconquerable spirit of liberty is able to effect. The rest of the Suliots, though deserted, did not despair. They convoked a council of their captains ; they animated each other by the heroic deeds of their ancestors, whose valour had so often been invincible ; and they determined, that as they had hitherto existed in freedom, they would endure every extremity before they submitted to the yoke.

The principal leaders named in this war were Foto Tzavella, \* Dimo Zerva, Diamante Zerva, Giovanni Zerva, Dimo Draco, Cuzzonica,

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\* Dimo is a diminutive from Demetrio.

Giorgio Calespera, Chitzo Pandasi, Giannachi Sefo, Anastasio Cascari, and some others, besides the amazon Mosco, and Samuel a caloyer or monk, a man of wild enthusiastic character, who ran about animating the citizens with a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other, cutting off heads and explaining texts or prophecies, but whose courage and patriotism were more conspicuous than his prudence and discretion. The number of Suliots enrolled for the defence of their country never exceeded at any time three thousand men.

The army of the vizir marched from the district of Luro along the Ionian shore, and some skirmishing took place in the region of ancient Acherusia. The Suliots retreated before superior numbers, and the Albanians, setting up the yell of war, endeavoured in the pursuit to penetrate the great Acherontian chasm of Glyky. Here however they met with a most determined resistance; the Suliots overwhelmed their advance with huge stones from the overhanging precipices, and thousands of unerring musket balls issued from behind rocks which screened the marksmen from the view of their enemy. Whilst the contest on this side was hottest, a large body of 3000 Albanian troops under the selictar or sword-bearer of the vizir, endeavoured to pour down upon the rear of the Suliots from the mountain Bogoritzza, where they had lain in ambuscade. These were met by Foto Tzavella with about 200 of his bravest palikars and put to rout with great slaughter. The vizir then gave orders for a retreat, after having lost about 500 of his men, whilst the whole loss of his enemies did not exceed twenty\*. In his disappointment he ordered Captain Botzari to be brought into his presence, reproached him with bringing false intelligence and raising delusive hopes, and in the end commanded him to give a proof of sincerity and devotion to the cause by heading his party of traitors against their valiant

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\* It is scarcely possible to conceive how the loss on each side could be so disproportionate, nor did I believe it myself until I saw the scenes of action, where numbers must have created confusion instead of being advantage, and where the party attacked had such a superiority from its power of concealment.

countrymen. Botzari, whose life or death depended upon the nod of Ali, dare not refuse, although, as it easily may be supposed, he had but little heart for the service. Being well acquainted with all the passes of his native hills he led his band over the great summit called Raithovuni\*, with the intent of falling upon Kiaffa and Kako-Suli by surprise, whilst the troops of the vizir advanced to create a diversion and draw off the attention of the enemy. The enterprise however entirely failed: the Suliots were apprized of his approach, and whilst the main body of their forces kept Ali from penetrating the ravines, a small division met the traitors in their descent, put the greatest part of them to the sword, and drove the rest, with their infamous captain, fairly off their territories. This wretch died, as it is said, of grief and disappointment about five months after his defeat, an object of scorn and detestation to all parties, though some report that he hastened his own end by poison. Many skirmishes ensued after this affair, in which the Suliots were invariably successful, and the vizir suffered such losses in his army that he almost despaired of the event.

In the mean time the ancient spirit of Corcyrean sedition began to manifest itself in Corfu, the Russian and Ottoman interests were found to be totally at variance, and Ali did all in his power to promote and take advantage of this jealousy: he persuaded the Porte how necessary was the extension and consolidation of his own power in Epirus, to counteract the influence of the Russians in the islands, and prevent them from fomenting dissensions amongst the minor states. Hence he procured a firman from his government ordering Hassan Bey of Margariti, Pronio Agà of Paramithia, and several other independent chiefs, to assist him in his conquests; whereas it was their interest, as it was the secret wish of their hearts, to have leagued together for his annihilation.

Two of these agàs, Pronio of Paramithia and Mahmout Daliani of Konispoli, were obliged to lead 1500 men in a grand attack which Ali now meditated. The vizir himself encamped at Lippa near the sources

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\* See the plate representing the mountains of Suli, and the exit of the Acheron.



of the Acheron, sending about half his army to Cestruni (the ancient district of Cestrine) under his favourite general named Mustafà Ziguri. Against these forces the gallant Foto Tzavella marched with a body of Suliots, few indeed in number but all animated with patriotic ardour and burning for revenge upon their invaders. Having advanced within a short distance from the vanguard of the Albanians they laid an ambuscade, which they managed very adroitly from their perfect knowledge of the country, and then sent forward a few of their swiftest palikars to insult and provoke the enemy: this conduct had the effect desired; the Albanians, irritated by their taunts, ran swiftly after them, fell into the ambuscade and perished without having seen their enemies. The report of musketry reaching the ears of Ziguri, he hastened to the encounter, and as he approached the ambuscade waving his sword and encouraging his men, a shot from the musket of Tzavella pierced his heart and he fell dead upon the spot. An incident of this kind is very apt to strike with consternation the troops of a semi-barbarous people: a sudden panic spread itself from rank to rank, when a general volley from the Suliots and a fearful shout raised as a prelude to victory, put them all to flight and occasioned a loss in killed and prisoners that far exceeded in numbers the sum total of their antagonists.

The vizir indignant at this defeat upbraided his troops with pusillanimity and ordered a general attack on the morrow, that they might have an opportunity of wiping away their disgrace. The Suliots however were apprized of his design by their secret friend Promio of Paramithia, and were advised by him, if they wished to escape the danger, that they should muster all their forces and boldly meet the foe already dispirited by his late disasters. The republic followed this judicious counsel, and placed the flower of their army under the command of its two best captains, Tzavella and Dimo Draco. These excellent and experienced officers led their forces through the defiles of the Cassopian mountains, and came right upon the line of the enemy in his advance: at this moment a tremendous shower of hail poured down, which was



driven by the wind into the faces of the Albanians. The Suliots taking advantage of the moment, descended with terrific shouts upon their assailants, who scarcely stood the shock, but throwing away their arms, fled with precipitation over the mountains, where great numbers fell into the hands of their pursuers ; the main body rested not till it arrived, after immense loss, at the corps of reserve under Ali at Lippa.

The vizir, now totally dispirited, and despairing to conquer Suli by assault, determined to alter his manner of warfare, and proceed according to the method of blockade.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Ali turns the Siege of Suli into a Blockade—Brave Action of the Suliots, in which Foto Tzavella is wounded—Stratagem of the Suliots—Treachery of Ali—Letter of the Suliots—Proposal of Ali to purchase Suli—Answer of the Suliots—Attempt made to bribe Dimo Zerva, but fails—Distress of the Suliots—Assistance sent by the French—Effects of Famine—Supplies gained by a desperate Effort—Two Suliot Captains yield to the Vizir's Bribes—One of them repents—Stratagem of Strivinioti—Confederacy of the Tzamouriot Beys against Ali—How dissolved—Ali joins the Army of the Grand Vizir against Paswan Oglou—Endeavours to impose upon the Suliots at his Return—Persuades them to banish Foto Tzavella—Foto goes to Ioannina—Thrown into Prison there—Attack of the Fortress of Villa by the Suliots—The Vizir, indignant at their Valour, collects a vast Army under the Command of his Son Vely—Kiaffa taken—Foto Tzavella being released, returns to his Country—Last Action of the Suliots—Kako-Suli surrenders—People emigrate—Treachorous Conduct of the Albanians—Suliots attacked—Affair of Zalongo—Desperate Revenge of Samuel the Caloyer—Suliots again attacked—Affair of Rhiniasa—Action at Vurgareli—Emigration of the Suliots—Song of Suli—Story of the Traitor Palasca—Ali's Quarrel with the Beys of Tzamouria—Suliots return from Corfu, in hopes of recovering their Mountains—Ill treated, and regain the Islands—Enter the Russian Service—Ali alarmed at the Progress of the French Arms in Dalmatia—Recovers the goodwill of Bonaparte—French Consul established in Albania—Ali gains Pashalics for his two Sons by the Interest of Sebastiani—Rupture between Turkey and Russia—Ali reoccupies the Continental Depend-*