

**GEORGE CASTRIOT,**

**SURNAMED SCANDERBEG,**

**KING OF ALBANIA.**

**BY CLEMENT C. MOORE, LL.D.**

## PRELIMINARY NOTICE.

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THE high encomiums passed by Dr. Johnson, in the 122d number of his *Rambler*, upon Knolles's *History of the Turks*, induced me to procure that work from England. In reading it, I was much interested and entertained by the account given of Scanderbeg, the heroic prince of Epire, and great enemy and scourge of the Turks. The idea afterwards occurred to me of connecting in one series the portions of the life of Scanderbeg dispersed in different parts of the *History of the Turks*; and of thus forming an account of an extraordinary person, whose life and exploits afford a real narrative as interesting, if not more so, than most of the works of fiction with which the press has so long abounded, and with which the minds of the young, of both sexes, are so much occupied.

In order to extend my sources of information, I gave direction to a bookseller to import for me any life of Scanderbeg that could be procured. In the course of a few months, I thus obtained a small folio volume, entitled "The Historie of George Castriot, surnamed Scanderbeg, King of Albanie, containing his famous actes, his noble deedes of armes, and memorable victories against the Turkes, for the Faith of Christ. Comprised in twelve bookes: By Jaques Lavardin, Lord of Plessis Bovrrot, a nobleman of France. Newly translated out of French into English by Z. T. Gentleman. London, Imprinted for William Ponsonby, 1596."

Upon looking over that work, it was evident that the author of it, and Knolles, in his History, had both drawn their information from the same source; and this I subsequently found to be stated in the two works themselves, for in a marginal note of Knolles to the portion of the history that treats of Mahomet the Great, it is said—"The great wars betwixt Mahomet and Scanderbeg are at large written by Marinus Barletius in thirteen books, De vita, and gestis Scanderbegi, from whence this History is taken; and were done betwixt the years 1450 and 1467." And to the translation of Lavardin is prefixed "a catalogue of the authors from which this Historie hath been drawn." This catalogue consists of nineteen names, at the head of which stands "Marin Barletius, priest of Scutarie in Epire; from whom the most part of this Historie is drawne word for word." And in "an advertisement, to the reader," it is stated that other writers "could not so truly and exactly set downe the truth of matters as they are here delivered in this Historie by the Latine author; who being native of the same countrey with Scanderbeg, and living in the same age and time that he did, is to be reputed the best witsse and most perfect reporter of his deedes."

My business in this work has been to concentrate Lavardin's history by rendering the language more concise; by omitting many observations which would naturally present themselves to intelligent readers; by giving only the substance of many long speeches of which the language cannot be correct after being turned from Latin into French by Lavardin, and from French into barbarous English by the translator of Lavardin; by omitting the account of the

taking of Constantinople, in which Scanderbeg was not engaged; and by leaving out unimportant matters which seem only to retard the progress of the story. The uncouth antiquated language of the English translation, it is hardly necessary to state, has been changed to a more modern style.

I am aware that the character and exploits of Scanderbeg are treated in a very cavalier and incredulous manner by Gibbon.\* But it seems unnecessary to attempt the removal of particular objections, when that author has himself stated that, "With such unequal arms, Scanderbeg resisted twenty-three years the powers of the Ottoman empire; and two conquerors, Amurath the second, and his greater son, were repeatedly baffled by a rebel, whom they pursued with seeming contempt and implacable resentment." Again, Gibbon says, "His sepulchre was soon violated by the Turkish conquerors; but the Janizaries, who wore his bones enchased in a bracelet, declared by this superstitious amulet their voluntary reverence for his valor."

As to the silence maintained by Italian writers with regard to Scanderbeg's expedition into Italy, it is thus mentioned by Lavardin: "I cannot in this place but greatly wonder, and in some sort also it doth not a little grieve me, to see the ingratitude of writers to those persons whose valor hath so well and excellently deserved. For whereas diverse of all sorts have written very diligently, and recorded the summe of this warre betweene *Ferdinand* and the *French*; yet is there not any of them that hath spoken so much as one word of *Scanderbeg*, as though he had not bene (I may well speake it) the principall and chiefe cause

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\* Rom. Empire—Chap. LXVII.



of the happy successe of that warre ; nay (if I may lawfully saie the truth), the true defendor of the Crowne of *Ferdinand*, and the deliverer of him out of the hands of his enemies. And hereof I need give you no other testimonie, then the liberall and bountiful recompence and reward given him by the king ; for besides that he acknowledged and held him for his father as long as he lived, he gave him also in acknowledgment of his desertes, and the rewardes of his vertue, the towne of *Trana*, and two other townes of as good reckoning in *Apulia*, which the posteritie of *Scanderbeg* did continually enjoy ; after that the affaires of *Epire* (from the death of *Scanderbeg*) fell to decay and ruine, and they do in part also enjoy them at this present, as may well be seen even to this day.”\*

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\* Translator of Lavardin.

## LIFE OF GEORGE CASTRIOT,

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### BOOK I.

*George Castriot*, or *Castriotto*, surnamed *Scanderbeg* by the Turks, among whom it was his lot to dwell many years, was the youngest son of a Grecian prince named John Castriot, who reigned in Epire, a country lying on the Gulf of Venice, and now called Albania; which name it also formerly bore as well as that of Epire.\*

The family of Castriot had its origin in Macedonia, and anciently ruled over Epire with renown.

John Castriot far surpassed his predecessors in prudence and magnanimity. He was of a hardy and invincible courage, and excelled in the qualities of mind, as well as in the comeliness of his person. His wife, named *Voisana*, is celebrated as a woman worthy of such a husband. She was daughter of "the noble king of the *Tribullians*,† renowned for her beauty and wisdom, "and for the excellencie of her spirit, farre surpassing that of other women."‡ She is said to have been the mother of nine children, five of them daughters, named *Mara*, *Jella*, *Angellina*, *Ulaica*, and *Mamisa*; and the rest sons, namely, *Reposius*, *Stanisius*, *Constantine*, and *George*. This *George*, the youngest of them all, was born in the year 1404, and is the subject of the present work.

It would be idle to mention the prognostics of Scander-

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\* In the course of this work, the two names are used indifferently; and the inhabitants sometimes called *Epirots*, sometimes *Albanians*. The exact divisions of the territory I cannot state.

† Translation of Lavardin.

‡ *Ibid*.

beg's future greatness which are by some related to have preceded his birth. But there can be no doubt, from the accounts given of him, that, being yet a boy, while he discovered great respect for religion, he took pleasure in manly and martial exercises ; and, together with uncommon bodily perfections, possessed a mind which promised such future excellence as to excite general attention and wonder.

After the Turkish monarch, Amurath the Second, had reduced Greece to his obedience, and had afflicted Macedonia with a long and tedious war, by which it was brought to extreme misery, John Castriot, despairing of being able to offer any effectual resistance to the Turkish arms, sued for peace. This was granted to him upon condition of his delivering up all his sons to the Turk as hostages. George, together with his brothers, was accordingly put into the hands of Amurath, in reliance upon his promise that they should be well and honorably treated. It is stated that the loss of George caused greater distress, not only to his father, but also to the common people, than that of all the other brothers ; and that some persons appeared to entertain a presentiment that Amurath was about to nourish a domestic enemy, who was to bring confusion upon him and his family. No sooner had the Turk gotten these young princes into his power, than he violated his faith, and, to the great grief of their parents, he caused them to submit to the rites, and to be instructed in the tenets of the Mahomedan religion. At the same time, their names were changed. George was surnamed *Scanderbeg*, which signifies *Alexander the Lord*, or *the great*. An ample allowance was, however, granted to them for their maintenance.

The gentle disposition and tender age of Scanderbeg, he being but nine years old, rendered him more agreeable to Amurath than any of his brothers. He was provided with the best instructors in every department of learning. And, being endued with a prompt and ready intellect, he soon ac-

quired the Turkish, Arabian, Greek, Italian, and Slavonian languages. As his bodily strength increased, he delighted in nothing more than to improve himself in warlike exercises, "without letting any one thing to overpass him wherein he had not some knowledge and insight."\* Sometimes with his sword, sometimes with his bow and arrows, both on foot and on horseback, he gave daily proofs of wonderful readiness and agility, continually aspiring to some action beyond the powers usually possessed by one of his age. As soon as the strength of his limbs became equal to the impetuosity of his courage, and that he could show himself able to endure the toils of war, he constantly engaged in shows of combats and martial strifes; making these exercises a prelude to his future glory and renown. At the same time, "he framed himself to gain the favor and good-will of all men, but especially of the prince."† At length, when arrived at manhood, with full strength of body and a goodly stature, he accustomed himself to all such labors and hardships as might be endured by a powerful and able-bodied man; such as hunger, thirst, cold, heat, watching, and the like. And by these daily practices, he rendered himself accomplished in all martial virtues, and fit to be employed in any military service.

Amurath now raised him, being still very young,‡ 1422. above the condition of a private person, by conferring upon him the dignity of Sanziack, which is next in degree to that of Bassa. At the same time, he was intrusted with the command of five thousand horse. His brothers were also invested with similar charges, and sent abroad into various countries, where, by their conduct in military services, they procured for themselves an exalted reputation.

Scanderbeg had scarcely attained the age of eighteen years, when, together with other forces, he was sent into

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\* Translation of Lavardin.

† Ibid.

‡ Eighteen years old.—*Simondi*,

Asia,\* where, with great valor and good fortune, he made his first essay in arms. Thenceforth, many broils occurring in those parts, rarely any expedition was undertaken in which Scanderbeg, with his regiment, was not employed. On all which occasions, his promptness, courage, and good fortune were conspicuous. And the happy success of the expeditions in which he was engaged was by all men, without contradiction, attributed to him. "And to him alone, by the favor and acclamations of the soldiers, was adjudged the triumph and the glory of the enemy vanquished."†

There appears to have been somewhat in the character of Scanderbeg, during the early part of his career, which prevented his brilliant actions from exciting envy, and which gained the good-will of all other men, as well as of the sultan himself, who bestowed upon him, not only gracious commendations, but munificent gifts and extraordinary favors.

After a short abode at court, Scanderbeg was again sent into Asia, in consequence of new troubles which had arisen there. He was now, with universal approbation, invested with the supreme command of the army which went upon the present service. In this expedition he surpassed all his former exploits; quickly vanquishing his enemies; and, as proof of his worthy deeds, over and above the testimony of his soldiers, bringing with him great numbers of prisoners; the spoils of the slain; many of the ensigns of the enemies, and multitudes of engines and instruments of war. All this triumphant success was achieved with scarcely any loss of his own troops; who, notwithstanding the numerous trophies gained from their enemies, scarcely exhibited any marks of injury to themselves. Amurath is said not to have so much wondered at the happy success of his actions, as to have admired his wisdom and prudence.

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\* Lavardin, in the margin, says *Natolia*. The Turkish capital, until the taking of Constantinople, was Adrianople in Europe.

† Translation of Lavardin.

In consequence of this victory, greater forces were placed under his command, and he was sent back and ordered to remain in the same "Marches," until he should have reduced certain towns and districts in those quarters to subjection under the Turkish power. Fortune did not forsake the young soldier ; but every thing speedily succeeded to the utmost of his desire. Having fulfilled the duties which he had to perform, and the Ottoman empire being enlarged beyond expectation, his renown began to extend even among foreign nations.

Being returned to Adrianople, although no foreign enemies were heard of, he met with an adversary at home, to all appearance, more dangerous than any against whom he had ever been opposed. An adventurer came from Scythia who defied and challenged the whole Turkish court, demanding if any one dared encounter him in arms and prove himself in fight against him. The order of combat which he proposed was, that both champions should be stripped to their shirts, and, being inclosed in a straight and narrow place, should with their swords alone decide the issue of the contest. It is not possible to ascertain what prompted this barbarian to offer a fight so brutal and disgusting ; whether he followed the dictates of a reckless and savage nature, or whether he thought, by proposing so horrible a danger, to deter all from accepting the challenge, and thus, without endangering himself, to retire with glory, and, perchance, with reward for his show of valor. In order to animate some one of his servants to this combat, Amurath proposed a great recompense to whoever should engage in it and come off conqueror. There was no one who did not abhor the thought of obtaining honor by means so detestable. But the courage and lofty spirit of our Albanian overcoming every consideration, he advanced towards the Scythian, and, among other things, told him that although such kinds of fight were fit only for fierce and savage beasts, and that

valiant men might and ought to decline them, yet, that for once he would contemn and neglect the safety of his own person, and make a present of his blood to Amurath and to his own companions. To whom the Scythian answered in a contemptuous manner, calling him boy and child; for he was so young as to appear but a beardless youth. The place for the combat being then arranged as the barbarian had demanded, they were both stripped entirely naked, and thus leaping into the lists, they excited, by such an unwonted spectacle, an extraordinary interest in the minds of the beholders. "And howbeit" (to use the language of Lavadin\*) "that *Castriot*, both by his voice and by his countenance, did bewray in himself a wonderful resolution and assurance, notwithstanding, an incredible kind of care intermingled with grief did assail the hearts of the regardants, and at one instant both the age and the comeliness of his person, joined with a gracious and pleasing carriage of all parts of his body, had drawn them both to honor and to pity him. Goodly, high, and eminent was his stature; his arms so seemly as the like had scarce been seen: his neck strong and somewhat bending, such as is much commended in great wrestlers: his shoulders large and marvellously well spread: his visage of color fair and white (and as it were stained with a little taint of purple): the cast of his eyes straight and pleasant, without blemish or imperfection, and in all points corrépondent and agreeable. These corporal perfections did him great service to his other virtues and the good qualities of his mind, which seemed to be augmented and increased by them."

Each was armed with a short dagger; for the straitness of the place of combat did not admit of a longer weapon. A universal silence prevailed. Both of them standing on their guard, and each ready to assail his adversary, the

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\* The orthography is modernized.

Scythian made the first onset, and directing his dagger against the belly of his opponent, thought to have stabbed him. But Scanderbeg, bending his body like a bow, seized, with his left hand, the arm of the barbarian, and with the other hand so cut the monster's throat that he fell to the ground with his tongue still quivering in his mouth, while his huge carcass nearly filled the place of combat. It was speedily removed by those who stood near; and the courtiers, full of joy and exultation, flocking round the victor, led him unhurt into the presence of Amurath, to whom, with his hands still bloody, he presented the head of the Scythian. Whereupon, the rewards promised to the victor were delivered to him, which he received with apparent unwillingness, protesting that he had not risked his life for the sake of gold or silver, but to maintain the honor of the court, and to punish the arrogance of the barbarian.\*

Not long after this, he performed another exploit which it may be well now to recount. At a time when Amurath made an excursion into Bithynia, more for pleasure than for any serious business, Scanderbeg made one of his train. There were, at this time, in the city of Bursa, once the capital of the Turkish empire in Asia, two Persians named *Iaia* and *Zampsa*, of a fair and goodly stature. They presented themselves to the Turkish sovereign, arrayed in sumptuous apparel, and asked for employment in his service. Each was so loud in the praise of the other, and their manner was so vaunting and self-sufficient, that it appeared to indicate audacity rather than true valor.

At length, *Zampsa*, the younger of the two, told the sultan that, in order to make proof of their courage, they challenged all his followers to take arms, that it might be

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\* "So great (saith Lavardin) was the modestie of this brave Epirot, that thereby he allured unto him more and more the good-will of each person: the naturale bountie and dexteritie of his gentle heart abolishing the envie and hatred which the excellency of exceeding vertue doth usually engender in men of his sort and calling."



tried whether he and his brother were worthy or unworthy to serve under the command of his majesty. They were horsemen, and armed only with a sword, lance, and shield, without any other armor for their bodies, and said that they would combat thus appointed. Amurath looked around to see if any one would accept the challenge ; and finding that none came forward, he at length addressed himself to Scanderbeg, and invited him to enter the lists.\* He needed little encouragement to induce him to engage in the conflict. Having kissed the sultan's feet, according to the Turkish custom, he called for horse and armor, and advancing, with great applause of the people, into the midst of a large plain appointed for the combat, and calling his adversaries to him, demanded of them what law of combat they meant to observe. It was agreed that *Iaia* should first try his fortune, and that if he proved victorious the fight should be at an end ; but that if he were vanquished, his brother should take his place and continue the combat. The sultan's servants who accompanied Scanderbeg objected to the inequality of these conditions, affirming that it was not reasonable that, if he proved victorious over one, he should, though weary or wounded, have to encounter a second enemy fresh and sound. Scanderbeg, however, did not refuse these terms ; and when the ground was cleared of people, the trumpet gave signal of battle, and the champions putting spurs to their horses, made a full career at each other. The Persian fixed his lance in his adversary's shield, and couching close with all his force, thought to have unhorsed him ; but, instead thereof, he shivered the staff of his own lance. The Albanian, on the other hand, who only ran at the head, alto-

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\* The words of Amurath are thus reported : " What is thy cause of stay (my sonne) in whom all vertue and valure doe abound so exceedingly ? This doth belong to thee, and the glorie of this victorie doth tarrie for thee. Go to then, once againe at this time let the gallantise and bravery of thy youth, and thy invincible arme, be made yet more famous and memorable, by some notable act in this spectacle."

gether missed in his course ; so that, both having run in vain, they held on their career, passing by each other with the intention of betaking themselves to their cutlasses.\* But *Zampsa*, not waiting for the issue of the contest between the two combatants, advanced and couched his lance against Scanderbeg ; who perceiving the danger in which he was placed, and that he had no time for expostulating with his assailant on the treachery of his conduct, prepared to meet him, and pressing upon him with his lance, pierced him through the throat. Scarcely had this adversary fallen to the ground ere *Iaia*, rushing towards Scanderbeg with sword in hand, and uttering a horrible cry, was on the point of slaying him ; but quickly wheeling his horse about, and returning upon *Iaia* with his sword also drawn, he sustained his onset ; and, after two or three mutual blows, Scanderbeg lighted upon his right shoulder near to his neck, and with one blow gave him so deep a wound that the horse trailed along the body of his master nearly divided in two. Thus these two stout and hardy warriors, to the great joy of the beholders, were vanquished by the hand of one man. But had they escaped death in the conflict, they would not have escaped the wrath of Amurath for their base and treacherous conduct towards his champion. Castriot was conducted to the sultan charged with the heads of both his foes, in token of having gained a double victory. His former exploits seemed to be forgotten in the glory of this last achievement. The sultan, the great lords, and his companions in general, honored him with many and great presents, and styled him their avenger, and the author of their honor and renown.

No one thenceforth enjoyed greater credit and authority with the sultan, and no man was more beloved by the soldiers ; inasmuch as he was courteous, friendly, and familiar in his behavior towards them, not arrogating to himself

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\* "Courteux."

any honors which were due to all in common. He liberally distributed among them whatever money came into his possession, rendering himself so popular that every one was willing to range himself under his ensign, and, for his sake, to encounter any dangers.

While his affairs were in this state, news reached him of the death of his father, John Castriot, in Epire.\* These sad tidings, as was natural, filled his mind with exceeding sorrow; but he permitted no outward sign of mourning to betray the grief that lay concealed within his heart. For he was wont so to carry himself towards the sultan as though he were his own father.

Upon the death of John, Amurath, as though he were the lawful heir of the realm of Epire, immediately dispatched thither Sebaly, one of his great captains, with a strong force, who seized upon Croia, the chief city, and other places of importance. And thus, without effusion of blood, Amurath obtained possession of all the fortresses and strongholds of the kingdom.

Voisana, the widow of John Castriot, after the death of her husband, remained at home with her daughter Mamissa, and she had a small portion of land in Macedonia assigned to her by Amurath for her support. It is said that she died at a great age, before the return of Scanderbeg into Albania; who, finding his sister Mamisa still unmarried when he recovered his kingdom, provided her with a husband, and restored her to her former dignity.

Scanderbeg concealed not only his grief for the death of his father, but also the resentment which he felt on account of the wrongs done unto him. Amurath, on the other hand, not doubting that his treacherous conduct would be very ill borne by Castriot and his brethren, who were residing in his court, continued his disloyalty towards them. He made

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\* In 1422.—*Siemondi*.

way with the three oldest ; causing them, as many have affirmed, to be secretly poisoned.\* After this, he turned his thoughts upon Scanderbeg, considering in what manner he might secure himself against the danger which his suspicions represented to him, without depriving his realm of one to whom he looked, as to another Hercules, in all perilous and difficult adventures.

There appears, after this, to have been a mutual distrust between Amurath and Scanderbeg ; the former endeavoring to conceal his evil purposes under specious offers and fair promises ; and the latter lulling the suspicions of the sultan by a show of affection and loyalty. The anxiety and grief felt by Scanderbeg continued to increase more and more ; and he considered it necessary to be very cautious with regard to his personal safety. The more suspicious he was of the designs of the tyrant, the greater was his care to gain the affection of the common people and of the soldiers. But being continually engaged in the tumults of war, his renown increased so much, that envy grew up with it ; and some of the courtiers, not being able to endure in a stranger the appearance of so great excellence, which every day became greater, took advantage of every opportunity to speak ill of him to Amurath, and to inspire the belief that his liberality towards those about him, and his endeavors to obtain popularity, were only prompted by a desire to rise to power and authority. Such discourses did not fail of making an impression upon the sultan, especially as the munificence and liberality with which Scanderbeg was charged were manifest and notorious ; and the advanced age of Amurath inclining him to be fearful, jealous, and suspicious, he saw every thing in the worst light, and apprehensions arose by degrees in his mind, not only with respect to the realm of Epire, but for the sovereignty of his own empire. His

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\* Knolles says positively, " he poisoned all the three elder brethren."

guilty conscience also stirring within him, he began at length to entertain a secret hatred towards Scanderbeg, and to watch for some opportunity to cut him off secretly; for, as he had no pretence for open violence, he dreaded, by such means, to effect his destruction, lest he should thus alienate from himself the hearts of the multitude; and, by such undisguised tyranny, deprive his kingdom of the services of foreigners of talent, to whom the Ottoman empire owed so much of its greatness.

But these domestic intrigues were, for a while, interrupted by the weight and importance of foreign affairs; for war was declared against George, Lord of Misia, commonly called the Despot of Servia. It is said that Amurath was induced by two reasons, which at first sight appear contradictory, to commit the charge of the expedition to Scanderbeg: the one, that he could find no other commander so fortunate in war; the other, that he hoped that, in consequence of his readiness to expose himself to all dangers, he might at length meet with some mishap. Castriot was, consequently, sent against the Misians.

At this time Castriot did not venture to deal with the Christians as moderately as he was wont to do when sent against them, lest he should excite the suspicions of Amurath, who was already but too much inclined to regard his actions with a jealous eye. He frequently defeated the Despot; returning, after all his conflicts, victorious to Adrianople. And when the Despot had renewed his forces, and began again to make head, Scanderbeg being anew dispatched against him, vanquished him in battle, and put his army to flight; and, having razed many of his strongholds and fortresses, led back his own forces laden with the spoil of their enemies.

Notwithstanding the important services rendered by Scanderbeg to the Turkish state, Amurath continued his evil designs against him; in pursuance of which, he caused

a solemn joust and tournament, both on horseback and on foot, to be proclaimed, offering great rewards to those who should be victorious. This he did in order to expose Scanderbeg to the great perils which would be attendant upon these exercises. But all his schemes proved abortive; for, though numbers both of subjects and strangers, hardy, active, and able men, daily presented themselves, Scanderbeg, who continually showed himself among them, carried off the prize in every rencounter, to the great admiration of all men, as though he were fatally predestined to be victorious.

The distrust of Amurath increased in proportion to the fame of Scanderbeg, until, inflamed with anger and hatred, he became anxious to have him dispatched in some secret manner. Scanderbeg was well aware of the disposition of the sultan towards him; and being convinced that, if he remained about the court, he could not long avoid the snares which were laid for him, he set himself to devise some means of escape from the service of the sultan, and of returning to his own country, where his presence was vehemently desired. Of this secret purpose he never by word or act gave the slightest intimation to any man living, although many of his own countrymen lived on terms of intimate friendship with him; and many came to him in behalf of the chief and principal persons in Albania, offering him their aid to wrest his kingdom from the hands of the tyrant. But, well knowing the inconstancy of mankind, and being aware of the great peril of the undertaking, he wisely continued to dissemble the purpose which he still kept in view. The chief difficulty which presented itself to him was, how to recover possession of Croia, the principal city of Epire. It was defended by so large a garrison of the Turks, and its situation was so strong, being placed on the crest of a high and rugged mountain almost inaccessible on every side, and also fortified by art, that to attempt to take it by assault,

would have appeared the effect of madness or folly. His only hope of success depended upon some secret art or device.

While in this state of suspense, Scanderbeg prudently advised his countrymen to beware of rushing upon any desperate enterprise by which they might rivet more closely the chains already put upon them: reminding them that their present servitude was not very grievous, and promising to use all his influence with Amurath to have it alleviated as much as possible. Thus he continued, with great wisdom and discretion, to repress the imprudent ardor of his countrymen, until some opportunity of rendering them effectual aid should present itself.

The time was approaching for Scanderbeg to carry his design into effect. The Despot of Mysia, whose discomfiture has been mentioned above, having been reinstated in his sovereignty by the aid of his friends and the revolt of his people from the dominion of the Turk, Amurath determined to march against him in person. This he accordingly did, at the head of a force against which the Despot was unable to contend, but fled into Hungary, leaving all his strongholds in possession of his enemies. It is said that the sultan, in this expedition, availed himself of the aid and counsel of Scanderbeg more than of any other of his officers. Amurath had scarcely brought back his troops to Adrianople, and licensed them to depart to their homes, ere new disturbances were threatened on the part of the Hungarians; for, at the instigation of Pope Eugenius, Uladislaus, king of Hungary, took arms for the purpose of re-establishing the Despot of Mysia. The Turkish emperor thereupon speedily reassembled his forces, to the number of eighty thousand men. He ordered the Bashaw of Romania, named Carambey, together with Scanderbeg, to march, at the head of twenty thousand men, into Hungary, there to meet the Christian army before it could enter the territories of Mysia.

He himself, with the main body of his army, and the baggage, followed on by easy marches.

The army of the Christians amounted to thirty-five thousand men, commanded by the renowned Huniades, commonly surnamed Jancus, whose name alone, it is said, more than once vanquished the Turks. The Bashaw, hastening forward, encamped near to the river of Morava. Huniades, with ten thousand chosen troops, passed the Morava, and attacked the Turks. This appeared to Scanderbeg to be the opportunity he had so long sought, for carrying into effect his design of liberating his country.\* Even at the commencement of the battle, he began gradually to retreat with his hands, and at length converted his retreat into an undisguised flight; by which example he struck terror into the rest of the troops and a disposition to follow his example. The Bashaw, much alarmed at seeing one so noted for bravery take to flight, and perhaps suspecting treachery, charged the enemy more faintly and with less boldness than he would otherwise have done. The Hungarians, in consequence of this, easily broke and scattered the forces of the Turks, who abandoned their arms and baggage, and only sought safety in flight. Huniades, continuing the pursuit, made a great slaughter of the enemy, without much loss of his own troops. He plundered the camp of the Turks, and took many prisoners. The Bashaw, and a few of his followers, with difficulty escaped. It is thought that Scanderbeg had a secret understanding with Huniades, and that by his instructions he aided him in giving this great overthrow

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\* The revolt of Scanderbeg from the Turks is, by Knolles, stated to have taken place in another battle fought not long after. But he says, "Out of this Battel (or as some others report, a little before, out of the Battel of *Morava*) fled the great Captain *George Castriot*." I have followed Lavardin: as it seems probable that he inquired more particularly into the acts of Scanderbeg than Knolles did, whose business was with the general history of the Turks. At any rate, it is a matter of very little importance.



to the Turks. Scanderbeg had, a little before this time, imparted his design to some trusty friends, and especially to his nephew, a son of Reposius, named Amesa,\* a young man of singular courage and great promise. In the confusion of the Turkish army, Scanderbeg kept a vigilant eye upon the Bashaw's principal secretary, whom, during the flight, he, with his nephew Amesa and other of his faithful friends, closely followed. When the opportunity presented itself, he set upon the Turks who accompanied the secretary, and slew every one of them. Having fast bound the secretary, he carried him to a place suitable for his purpose, and there compelled him, much against his will, to write counterfeit letters, as from the Bashaw his master, to the governor of Croia, ordering him, in the name of Amurath, to deliver forthwith the command of the city and of the garrison therein to Scanderbeg, the newly-appointed governor. Many things were artfully interwoven with the substance of those letters, in order to give them the greater appearance of truth and probability. As soon as they were written, the secretary was also put to death, together with as many more Turks as came in Scanderbeg's way, that these transactions might be kept as long as possible from the knowledge of Amurath, who, from hearing no news of Scanderbeg, would naturally conclude that he had perished in the general slaughter of the Turks.

Scanderbeg arrived with wonderful celerity in the upper country of Dibra, or Dibria, in the borders of Epirus, about 70 miles from Croia, accompanied by 300 Epirot soldiers gathered to him out of the battle. The Dibrians were noted for their activity and valor, and much esteemed by Scanderbeg on account of their fidelity, and for the many services which they had rendered in the protection and defence of the state under John, his father, when molested by

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\* In the translation of Lavardin written *Amece*.

the Turks.\* Scanderbeg had ordered his march so as to arrive at the town of Dibra in the night. He secretly sent for some of the principal people to come to him. Having made known his purpose, he was greeted with the most unbounded demonstrations of joy and affection; and every aid and service which could be rendered, was proffered with the utmost alacrity.

He remained but one day at Dibra. Of the 300 men who accompanied him out of the battle, he selected a few whom he purposed to take with him to Croia, as though they belonged to his private service. The remainder, together with other 300 select soldiers from Dibra, he directed to go, by secret ways under the direction of skilful guides, through the woods and mountains, and approach as near as was possible to Croia, without being discovered; and there to wait until he should get into the town, and be able to admit them also, in order to oppress the Turkish garrison.

Early in the morning, before the break of day, it being towards the end of autumn, he, with a small company of attendants, took the way towards Croia. As he approached the city, he sent before him his nephew, Amesa, in the character of his secretary, with two attendants as servants, to give notice to the governor of his coming. This young gentleman being of a sharp wit, and well spoken, and possessing great courage, so well dissembled, that both in habit and speech he had the appearance of a native Turk; and being received into the city, he was conducted to the governor; whom having saluted in the Turkish manner, he delivered his message from Scanderbeg with so good a grace, and such an air of truth, and what he said was so implicitly

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\* Dibra was the only town or fortress in the parts of Epiré towards Macedonia, with the exception of Sfetigrade. The people of that portion of the kingdom being dispersed among the mountains and valleys, without any walled inclosures, protected themselves against the incursions of their enemies by favor of the natural defences of the country.

believed, that the governor, before the arrival of Scanderbeg, or that he had read the letters brought by him, began to make preparations to leave the place. When Scanderbeg arrived, and delivered to the governor the packet of letters, he made no question of the truth of their contents, but immediately resigned to him the government of the city, and the next day, with all his household, departed from Croia towards Adrianople.

Scanderbeg having thus obtained the government of Croia, was, both by the Turks and the inhabitants of the city, received with great satisfaction. The Turks were pleased with his manners, which were popular and familiar, and the Croians began to conceive secret thoughts of the real purpose of their prince. It was agreed upon between Castriot and a few of the citizens, that they should rouse the minds of the young men of the city, and, when the time served, excite them to take arms. It was enjoined that no sign of the intended movement should appear until the men-at-arms who lay concealed near the city could be introduced within the walls. In the dead of the night following they were accordingly admitted. Having disposed his forces in such manner as he deemed most advantageous, Scanderbeg gave the command to begin the assault upon the Turks. The sentinels upon the walls were first dispatched, and others put in their place. The private houses were then entered, and slaughter made of the Turkish garrison, with the aid of the armed citizens who joined in the attack. The massacre is related to have continued until Scanderbeg was induced by the entreaties of the Turks to put an end to his proceedings until the following morning, in the hope that his victims might be induced to embrace Christianity. In the mean time, he set guards throughout the city, and sent word of what had taken place to the Dibrians; exhorting them all to take arms, and to solicit their allies and neighbors to assert their liberty, and to

expel the garrisons of their enemies, before they should recover from their astonishment, and while Amurath was ignorant of what had happened, and occupied in the war against the Hungarians. He made the Dibrians to understand, that as soon as he should have cleared the city of the Turks, and made the necessary arrangements therein, he would join them with the best and bravest troops that he could assemble.

The next morning he caused it to be proclaimed with sound of the trumpet, that all who were willing to be baptized, and would come to him unarmed, should have their lives spared, and be admitted equally with other citizens to all places of charge and dignity; but that all who refused these conditions should be considered enemies, whom any one was at liberty to put to death. The greater part of the Turks chose to encounter the threatened destruction rather than abjure their religion, and fell by the hands of the Christians, or by their own act. Castriot was induced to spare some, by their entreaties not to be forced through fear to assume the show of a profession which they could not make with sincerity, and to grant them life and liberty. This clemency, however, availed them little; for on their departure from the city, they were without mercy set upon by the Christians.

Those who consented to be baptized, were well provided for at the public charge. A strict watch, however, was directed to be kept upon them, until such time as they should appear to be well settled in their new faith.

Of those who had found means to conceal themselves until the first commotion was past, some, upon making their appearance, were put to death: the rest were retained prisoners by such citizens as were of a more mild and merciful disposition, having large sums promised by the prisoners for their ransom.

The city of Croia being thus happily recovered, the standards and ensigns of the Turks torn or burnt wherever

found, and all vestiges of their former presence effaced, Castriot dispatched some of the principal persons of the city to the places within its jurisdiction, to acquaint the inhabitants with the success of his doings, and to rouse them to arms. But they needed no one to excite them; for they had almost all taken arms, waiting only for some one to be their leader. Wherefore, upon the arrival of Scanderbeg's messengers, quickly forming a good and sufficient troop of enrolled soldiers, they went forward to incite others to do as they had done; putting to the sword all the garrisons of the Turks which they encountered. When a sufficient number of the Epirots were gathered together, from different quarters, they returned to Croia; and Scanderbeg uniting all his forces, immediately proceeded by forced marches to Dibra, where he found Amesa with another good troop of soldiers, and all things settled and quiet; for he had, before the arrival of Scanderbeg, expelled the garrison which the enemy had in that place. In the general destruction of the Turks, the governor of Croia, while on his way to Adrianople, was also attacked and slain, together with all his retinue, and his baggage seized and plundered. Scanderbeg's first care was, to station 2000 good troops upon the frontiers near to Sfetigrade, as well to intercept the escape of any enemies from within his territories, as to prevent any incursions which might be made from without, by the forces of the Sultan; for in that quarter was the entrance into Epire most easy from Macedonia and Thrace. He himself with the remainder of his troops went into lower Dibra. And here he met, amongst others, a person highly renowned for the nobleness of his blood, and the greatness of his courage, Moses Goleme, who subsequently became a principal sharer and assistant in many important and difficult enterprises.

He then approached the places and fortresses adjoining, which not being surrounded by walls, nor defended by large

garrisons, offered him but little resistance. Thenceforth, the inhabitants of the country universally rose up in arms, with purpose to follow him whom they called the Protector of their liberty. The shout of liberty was heard from the mouths, and the desire of liberty was felt in the hearts of all.

Many Turks, according to some accounts, having assembled themselves from divers quarters, made an attack upon the Christians; but being defeated, those who remained alive surrendered themselves up to the mercy of Scanderbeg, who left it to the pleasure of his soldiers either to spare or to slay them as they thought fit. The greater part of them were put to death, a few only being reserved, in expectation of obtaining from them great ransoms. Scanderbeg then divided his forces, and sent some of the principal young men into different parts of the country, in order to stir up their friends and defeat their enemies. Amesa with about 200 men was ordered to enter Croia, that being the place of greatest importance and the principal garrison. He himself ranged about into all quarters, sometimes on one side of the country, sometimes on the other, and carefully attending to every thing, spent several days in the recovery of places, and in strengthening by his presence the good-will and affection of all parties.

After the recovery of Croia, the object of greatest importance was to get possession of the other fortresses within his realm which were held by strong garrisons of the Turks. With this view, he sent orders to those whom he had dispatched into divers parts, to increase their numbers as much as possible, and then to repair, as speedily as they could, to Croia. Scanderbeg himself returned there, and awaited the arrival of his forces. He was not obliged to remain long; for his troops, greatly augmented in number, were there not long after him. He was joined by many noble captains, well accompanied, among whom were Musache de Angeline, his nephew by his sister Angellina; the

two Streeses, Goique and George, also nephews by his sister Jella; and Gyne Musache, the husband of Ulaicus. Stephen Cernoviche, who had married Mara, sent him large succors both of men and money. All his sisters had been married to nobility of the country, with the exception of Mamisa, who was given by Scanderbeg to Musache de Thopie, after he had recovered his realm, and restored it to peace. The forces, which continued to arrive, at length amounted to more than twelve thousand men. Scanderbeg, feeling much encouraged by the zeal which his friends and subjects manifested, and seeing them eager and ready to march, resolved, first, to deliberate in full council upon the state of his affairs, and to address some words of exhortation to his army.\*

The modesty of the address made by Scanderbeg to his people was highly applauded; and the course which he advised to be pursued, implicitly followed. Moses, with three thousand horse, was sent forward to Petrella, and was soon followed by Scanderbeg himself, with the remainder of the forces. Petrella is a strong city, twenty-five miles from Croia, situated upon the top of a steep and rocky mountain, like the other cities of Epire, and well furnished by the Turks with men and munitions of war. Notwithstanding the strength of the place, Scanderbeg had good hope that the Turkish garrison therein, terrified by the fate of Croia, and the slaughter of their countrymen in the surrounding regions, would be induced to yield up the town upon reasonable conditions. With this end in view, Scanderbeg, after he had established his camp, sent one of his men, a faithful and intelligent fellow, who had followed him out of Hungary, to offer the garrison, upon condition of their delivering up the place, the option either to enter his service upon liberal terms, or to depart in safety with bag and bag-

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\* In Lavardin a long speech is given.

gage, and a large sum of money to be divided among them. This messenger performed his task with great ability. He set before the garrison of Petrella the example of Croia; exhorting them to bear in mind what that city had suffered, and to think how the dead bodies of their fellow-soldiers were exposed to the dogs and wolves in every corner of Epirus, the truth of which they had learned from divers Turks who fled for refuge into the town. Nor did he fail to remind them that Amurath, having lately lost a great battle against the Hungarians, and being engaged in other wars, had no leisure to turn his attention towards Epire. He concluded by offering the conditions above mentioned. After a short delay, the governor accepted the proffered terms: all but the tender to him of a large sum of money, lest he should be suspected by the sultan of having been bribed. The Turkish governor, accordingly, with his garrison, evacuated the city; and were supplied by Scanderbeg, agreeably to his promise, with provisions and money for their journey, and sent under a sufficient convoy safely out of Epire.

The easy recovery of this town has been thought to afford an evidence of the favor of Providence towards Scanderbeg. For, although Petrella be small in circuit, its position on the top of a high mountain renders it impregnable. It was also well provided with men, arms, and other munition. Yet, in the winter season, at which time an attack would have been most desperate, it yielded to him without resistance.

When Petrella was thus gained, Scanderbeg made no delay, but having put therein a sufficient garrison, he neither entered the town himself, nor permitted any so to do, except the soldiers appointed to defend the place, although his men, at the time, were suffering much from the severity of the cold. He immediately directed his course to Petra-Alba, distant from Petrella thirty miles, and as much from Croia, in such haste, says Knolles, as if the city had been



running away from him. Lavardin calls it a castle in Œmathia, on the summit of a mountain, near to the river of Œmathus. As soon as Scanderbeg had encamped before this place, a messenger was sent to him with an offer to surrender the place upon the same conditions which had been granted to Petrella; which being agreed upon, the place was without delay given up, and the agreement entered into faithfully performed by Scanderbeg.

Petra-Alba being thus recovered, and all things in it well ordered, Scanderbeg proceeded, without delay, to Stellusa, distant from Croia fifty miles. It is a small place, but strongly and very delightfully situated upon the top of a high hill in Œmathia, surrounded by pleasant and fruitful plains. Scanderbeg encamped near this stronghold a little before sunset, and remained quiet that night. In the morning he summoned the place, offering the same conditions which had been received by Petrella and Petra-Alba. The greater part of the garrison were desirous of accepting these terms; but Desdrot, the governor of the town, with a few others, resolutely refused them; whereupon a fierce contest arose between the two parties in the garrison. At length, the majority set upon the governor and his adherents, and delivered them, fast bound, to Scanderbeg, at the same time yielding up the fortress. Those who had thus betrayed their commander, being afraid to expose themselves to the vengeance of Amurath, either remained with Scanderbeg and became Christians, or were provided for without a change of religion, or well rewarded, and suffered to depart where they would.

There remained yet the city of Sfetigrade in possession of the enemy; for the weaker Turkish garrisons in Epire, when they heard that the strongest places were recovered by the Epirots, soon delivered themselves up to Scanderbeg. Sfetigrade, which in the Sclavonian language means *The Holy City*, is situated on the frontiers of Epire, in the upper

country of Dibra, like an eagle's nest, upon a high and steep hill. To this city Scanderbeg advanced, with all his forces; and having pitched his tents and arranged his camp, he demanded a parley with the inhabitants of the town. He endeavored at first to gain the place by composition, as he had done the rest; and to that end directed his messenger to declare what had happened at Croia, Petrella, Petra-Alba, and Stellusa: especially to set forth his liberal treatment of the garrison of the last place, and to say that the governor thereof, who was in his hands, should, together with his partisans, be executed in their sight, unless they delivered up the city. To this message, the governor, not being certain of the disposition of his men, was doubtful what answer to return. He therefore first received and entertained the herald with courtesy; after which, addressing himself to his soldiers, and styling them valiant and faithful men, he demanded of them what answer should be returned to their enemies. Whereupon one of the soldiers, a rough, bold fellow, brandishing aloft his sword, is reported to have made answer to this effect:—  
“Captain, since you call us valiant and faithful, and consider Scanderbeg as our enemy, this my sword shall make answer for us all. Why should we be told of what has happened at Croia and Stellusa? Do they think to break down the courage of brave men? The minds of men are as various as their countenances; and each man should judge for himself. We gave no laws to them of Petrella nor of Stellusa, nor will we receive any from them. Let us take care that we be not corrupted by the examples of those base and infamous slaves. Courageous and independent minds not only disdain to be imitators of what is disgraceful, but are unwilling to be directed by others even in honorable actions. Let Scanderbeg slay, before our eyes, the governor of Stellusa and his companions. Do you think that we shall die in their bodies; that our spirits shall be

extinguished in theirs; or our blood spilt in them? Happy are the bodies, and worthy of all honor are the souls of those men who, in their desire to maintain their faith and preserve their liberty, equally despised gold, silver, the sword, and all that the miserable nature of man covets most or is most afraid of. Herald, return to our enemy, and carry to him this message from a private soldier. Tell him that, if he intend to impose terms upon us, let him show us the strength of his arm, which is not dreaded by men of courage. He may bring us into subjection, if God be not for us; but I am sure he shall never do it by persuasive words. Nor does your Scanderbeg show himself the man which he is said to be—of a kind and gentle spirit, ready to forgive, and no less just to his enemies than to his friends. Why is the governor of Stellusa kept prisoner, who, for his king, for his faith, and for his liberty, bravely, and as became an honest man, spoke his opinion? Why is he to be butchered by the hands of the executioner? He does not deserve to be put to the sword and to suffer death who has so nobly hazarded his safety for the preservation of his liberty.” When this speech, which had been attentively listened to, was ended, the soldiers, thronging around the speaker, and beating together their swords and targets, gave a great shout, in token that they approved of what had been said. The governor, being encouraged by the disposition which his troops manifested, sent away the herald with no other answer than that of the common soldiers. When this answer of the soldier was returned to Scanderbeg, he smiled, and said, “He is, no doubt, a valiant soldier, if his deeds correspond with his words; but, God willing, we will send him also to keep company with those happy souls of the Stellusians.” He then ordered the governor of Stellusa and the other captives to be brought before him, unto whom presenting a crucifix, some consented to be baptized, to the great grief of the other Turks. Deadrot,

the governor, and the others, who refused to change their religion, as a terror to the defendants, were in their sight put to death. Whereupon the soldiers of the garrison gave a shout from the walls, and bitterly railed upon the Christians.

The governor of Sfetigrade set all things in order for the defence of the place, sending out of the town the Christians and former citizens who had been suffered to remain. He also spoke words of commendation and encouragement to his men; and after having made his arrangements, he quietly awaited the attack of the enemy. A diversity of opinions, with regard to the manner of carrying on the operations against Sfetigrade, existed in the camp of Scanderbeg. Some were for deferring all operations against the city, on account of the advanced season of the year and the inclemency of the weather. Others thought that an immediate assault should be made by a chosen body of men. But a third opinion, advanced by Moses Golemus, a valiant captain, finally prevailed; which was, that the forces to be maintained upon the borders of Epirus for the purpose of repelling any attempts of the enemy from abroad, might serve at the same time to keep in check the garrison of Sfetigrade until Scanderbeg should find it convenient to return to the siege. Moses was, accordingly, left with three thousand troops before the city to perform this double service. Scanderbeg then, with the rest of his army, returned to Croia, "having," says Knolles, "in the space of a little more than one month, to his immortal praise, recovered his kingdom, and driven the Turks out of every corner of Epirus, excepting only Sfetigrade; which city also, not long after, was, by composition, delivered unto him. During all this time, from his first coming into Epirus, he never slept above two hours in a night, but with restless labor prosecuted his affairs. He ever fought against the Turks with his arm bare, and that with such fierceness, that the blood did

oftentimes burst out of his lips. It is written, that he with his own hand slew three thousand Turks in the time of his wars against them. But of his great and worthy victories obtained against the two mighty Turkish kings, *Amurath*, and *Mahomet* his son, more shall be said hereafter in due time and place."

A council being held upon the return of Scanderbeg to Croia, there was a diversity of opinion as to the future proceedings of the army. Some were very unwilling to intermit the war, but wished to follow up their victory, and invade the enemy's territory, in hopes of winning something from the Ottoman empire. Others alleged the unfavorable time of the year for such an expedition, as the snow, and frost, and rains would render the service extremely distressing to the men; and the fields, during the winter, would afford no sustenance to the horses. Scanderbeg yielded to the latter opinion; both to manifest the care which he had for his troops, and to take advantage of this time of rest to put his country into a better posture of defence. He accordingly dismissed his troops, after having first expressed to them his grateful sense of their conduct. He told them that he did not know which most to commend, their virtue or their good fortune, which had gone hand in hand and mutually aided each other: that, from what they had already done, he drew a presage of the future glory of Albania, and of their honor and renown: that it was hardly the thirtieth day since he (full of doubt and uncertainty after his long absence) set foot again in his native country, while in the possession of infidels and miscreants; of whom, Sfetigrade excepted, not a vestige was left remaining in the province. He told them that they ought, before all, to render thanks to God, that he had so blinded the understandings of their adversaries as to induce them to deliver up, without resistance, the possession of such good and strong fortresses: that their patience and endurance of hardships,

and their steady perseverance in the pursuit of the object they had in view, spite of the severity of the weather and the inclemency of the season, merited great praise and commendation : that he admired the spirit of those who were unwilling to lay down their arms ; but that, if no harm was likely to result from a little delay, it would be well for them to take care of their bodies, and to remember that they were but men. He bade them therefore to retire, while crowned with victory, to breathe and refresh themselves ; for that they should have wars and military expeditions in abundance. After touching upon the probable course that would be pursued by Amurath, and what their own manner of proceeding ought to be, he observed that the feast of the Nativity of Christ our Saviour was at hand, and that he did not feel inclined to attempt any thing, during those festal days of life and light, by which any should be deprived of life, but that all should rather offer up daily vows and prayers and thanks unto God for their liberty, their state and empire, their wives and their children, and for themselves, thus freed from the bondage of their enemies. He concluded, by assuring them of the good hopes which were excited in him by the presence of so many valiant youths and brave captains ; and of his desire to do all in his power to reward their services, and procure them honor and reputation ; for which reason, he desired that all should utter their thoughts, and freely open their minds unto him.

Hereupon not only persons of the lower classes, but some even of the better sort, were so emboldened by the liberality of his speech, that they flocked around and urged upon him various petitions : some desiring the pay of horsemen and some of footmen ; others asked for money and horses, or for rents, revenues, and livings ; and many were importunate to have restored to them the possessions of which they had been despoiled by the Turks upon the change of govern-

ment which took place when Amurath made himself master of Epire. What could be conveniently done without contention was freely granted to them: what could not be immediately executed without injury to others, was deferred to a future time.

When the officers were dismissed, and Scanderbeg, with his own train, had entered into the town, the first thing he did was to cause Amesa and some other of his companions who came with him from Hungary, and a number of Turks who yet remained in Croia and other places, to be admitted into the communion of the Christian faith by the sacrament of holy baptism; which had not been performed with respect to the Turks, in consequence of the haste with which it was necessary to prosecute the war. This ceremony taking place during the feast of Christmas, it was celebrated with much joy for many days. The inhabitants of the country, both publicly and privately, sent Scanderbeg, as was customary, many presents. The princes his neighbors also, as they had not long before presented him with gifts serviceable for war, now sent to him things suited to a time of peace and public tranquillity—such as furniture and valuable household articles—knowing well that he had brought nothing with him into his country besides his arms.

Scanderbeg did not long enjoy this repose, for, in the midst of the festival, news came suddenly from Moses that a number of Turks, who had fled from Epire into the neighboring province, intended to surprise him. Upon this news, Scanderbeg himself hastened to join Moses, lest that general should be inclosed between the invading forces and the garrison of Sfetigrade, or be obliged to abandon the watch which he kept over that city. This alarm, however, was found not to be attended with any great danger. It was occasioned by the remnants of the garrisons of Petrella, Stellusa, and Petra-Alba, which had escaped out of the hands of the Epirots, and who perceiving all to be quiet in

Albania, that Scanderbeg had broken up his camp, and was passing the winter at Croia, and that Moses with his troops was near to Sfetigrade on the frontiers of the land, rallied together near Alchria, a small town in Macedonia under the dominion of the Ottomans, and joining to them a number of others, they marched directly towards Sfetigrade, both with the desire of revenge and in the hope of performing some service by which they might in the eyes of their master obliterate the ignominy of their former conduct. Although the Prince of Albania was not himself much moved by this rumor, yet, in order to avoid the appearance of negligence and of abandoning Moses, he mounted suddenly on horseback, and accompanied by those who with him were celebrating the feast, and about a hundred horsemen of the town, went forward to meet the threatened danger. As soon as the Turks perceived the approach of Scanderbeg, they retired in such haste as to leave no trace behind them of their attempt. This their folly, however, was the cause of great mischief to their land. For Scanderbeg, incensed at their audacity, took a thousand horse of the troops of Moses, and made such an inroad into the Turkish borders as provided his soldiers with victuals and munition for the residue of the winter, so enriching them that they desired no better pay: which was so usual a thing with this enterprising prince, that it grew into a common saying in the courts of princes, that the spoil of Amurath's dominions was Scanderbeg's revenue.



## BOOK II.

WHEN Amurath became acquainted with the particulars of all the disasters which Scanderberg had brought upon him, it is said that he at first was so overcome as to remain for a time without uttering a word. But his feelings at length burst forth into violent exclamations, complaints, and threatenings. Tidings continuing to arrive from different parts of Epire of the successes of Scanderbeg; how that Croia was taken by him, that he had obtained possession of other important places, the garrisons of which were slain and dispersed, and that, in fine, the whole estate of his ancestors was recovered by him with incredible favor and goodwill of the nations; the grief and vexation of Amurath was still more exasperated. Still he resolved, setting aside all other things, to bend his thoughts solely towards the war with Hungary. The opinions of Amurath's counsellors were divided in regard to the course to be pursued. Some were for bending at once the Ottoman strength against Scanderbeg, that he might be crushed before his power should be established. Others, again, were in favor of prosecuting the war with Hungary, without suffering it to be interrupted by the revolt of Scanderbeg.

Amurath finally agreed with the Hungarians upon a truce for ten years, with other conditions which it is unnecessary here to mention. He did not, however, immediately proceed to take vengeance of Scanderbeg, but suffered the winter and spring following and part of the summer to pass over before he aroused himself.

Scanderbeg, having taken leave of Moses, returned from Dibra to Croia, where he passed the greater part of the winter in attending to the affairs of the state and to individual con-

cerns. Upon the approach of spring, he took with him Amesa and a few horse, and went forth to levy forces ; and having mustered six thousand men, he went direct towards Sfetigrade. But this demonstration proved of no avail. Neither the difficulty of the siege nor the obstinacy of the defenders was diminished. Neither threats nor promises could avail any thing. He was without artillery ; and even if he had been supplied therewith, it is not probable that it would have enabled him to reduce the place. And it appeared to be a course of great imprudence and temerity to make an attempt which threatened not only the certain peril of his forces, but their probable ruin and destruction. Wherefore, in accordance with the opinion of the majority, he for the present abandoned the proposed attempt upon Sfetigrade, and resolved to turn his arms elsewhere. But, before departing, he proceeded to lay waste the environs of the town, in order to distress the inhabitants thereof. It is, however, reported that some of them came secretly to Scanderbeg, and entreated him that, in regard of their past services to John his father, he would not utterly destroy every thing, by which proceeding he would do more harm to them than to the Turks ; and that these and other motives which were urged induced him to grant their request, seeing he had no reason to doubt the faith of men who were Christians, and who had been the subjects of his ancestors.

There was a country called Mocrea in the vicinity of the dominions of Scanderbeg, which was exceedingly pleasant and well peopled, and containing many large towns and boroughs. Towards this country Scanderbeg led his army, and, taking possession of it, added it to his dominions, thus extending beyond the bounds of his father's empire. There was not an enemy to be found in all the country ; for the Turks, before that, had either been expelled or had voluntarily retired from those parts ; and the inhabitants, of their own accord, enrolled themselves in the service of Scander-

beg, and marched under his ensigns and the eagles, in time past, well known to them.\* Passing on from Mocrea, sometimes showing himself gentle and lenient, and at others severe and terrible, he daily added to his conquests, and thus increased the extent and richness of his dominions; at the same time continually taking order for one thing or other, appointing guards for the passages, and providing for the garrisons. He frequently visited Croia, and examined all other places of importance: being seldom idle or quiet, but riding to and fro, he made himself acquainted with mountains, hills, forests, thickets, caves, dens, and secret lurking-places. All which care was with the view of rendering himself more able to defend the country against the expected invasion of the Turks. The little leisure which he had was employed in making inroads into the territory of his enemies. He avoided nothing more than to suffer his men to be corrupted by idleness, having continually in his mouth this saying of Fabius Maximus: That it was not good for an army to continue long in one place; but that frequent change of their place and camp was far preferable, and would much better fit them for military service.

These things could not fail to reach the ears of Amurath. Messengers came to him from Pharsalia and other parts of Macedonia, filling his palace with clamor and outcries. It was reported that Scanderbeg had gotten possession of many places, and was daily pursuing his conquests with his wonted fierceness and severity: that both the one and the other Dibia had voluntarily surrendered themselves to him, killing with their own hands the Turkish garrisons, or delivering them up prisoners to their new lord. These marches of the Upper and Lower Dibia of old appertained to John Castriot, who had been constrained to yield them to Amu-

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\* "For in his standards, which were Guelles, he bore an eagle with two heads sable. These being the ancient armes of his family."—*Translation of Leveardin.*

rath. Those who brought these accounts to Amurath set forth that, in consequence of the revolt of the Dibrians, the Christians would soon become masters of Sfetigrade, being seated in Upper Dibria, and consequently unable to procure supplies from the surrounding country: that Mocrea and other places which were not of the dominion of John Castriot, had declared for Scanderbeg. By all these accounts, Amurath was of necessity stirred up to arms. After having assembled his council, and fully deliberated upon the state of affairs, he gave orders that a powerful army should be levied; by which he thought to extinguish the name of Scanderbeg, and avenge himself for the revolt of the Albanians, and the many injuries which he conceived himself to have suffered from them.

Scanderbeg also, on his part, was certified of the designs of the Turk, not only through persons unknown to him, but also by some of his friends, of whom he still had many about Amurath. Being wonderfully bold in exposing himself to all sorts of danger, he at the same time discovered singular prudence and wisdom in all his conduct. For as he foresaw that he should have to maintain a very severe struggle in the defence of his dominions, into the heart of which the war would probably be brought, and that his own resources might be insufficient to carry him through the contest which awaited him, he determined to seek the aid and alliance of the neighboring princes and nobles.

In order to facilitate this object, he deemed it most advisable to invite them to a conference in some convenient place. He accordingly chose a town appertaining to the Venetian dominion, named Lissa or Alesia, distant somewhat more than twenty-two miles from Croia. This place was thought suitable, not only on account of the convenience of its situation, but because the government of the Venetians was generally liked for its mild and gentle character. Those who were thus invited showed no backwardness or delay,

for none refused to attend the conference, and all exhibited the greatest alacrity and zeal in the cause of Scanderbeg.\*

The princes and nobles being assembled in the great church of Lissa, Scanderbeg addressed a speech to them, which, it is said, was much approved and highly applauded by the assembly. He was unanimously chosen the commander-in-chief of the armies, and to his sole direction was committed the conduct of the war. He was esteemed most worthy of the honor bestowed upon him on account of his skill and science in military affairs, his great prudence and deliberation, his long acquaintance with the manners and customs of the barbarians, and his wonderful judgment, which was confirmed by long use and daily experience. From all these considerations, an assured hope of success was entertained by those who displayed this confidence in him. His allies all voluntarily taxed themselves for the support of the war, except the Venetians, who would not bind themselves to pay a stated subsidy, but promised to be ready at all times to afford any aid which might be required.

After the business of the assembly was concluded, and prayers had been offered up and processions made for the strengthening of the league, Scanderbeg was by some accompanied to Croia, and the rest betook themselves to their own homes. The city of Sfetigrade had been so closely pressed by Moses, that it had surrendered to him, and he and his troops had been recalled, except those with which he garrisoned the place, and a few who were left upon the mountains in order to maintain a careful look-out.

The troops thus recalled did not amount to more than five thousand men, as Scanderbeg had previously licensed many to depart. But commissions were now made out, and

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\* The names of those who attended are given by Lavardin, but I think it useless to repeat them.

officers appointed, and dispatched to various parts in order to levy forces.

During these transactions in Epire, it must not be supposed that Amurath remained at ease and unoccupied with the care of the war against Scanderbeg, upon which he had resolved. He caused an army of 40,000 men to be raised, and committed to the command of Haly Bassa, a leader of tried valor in action and of approved wisdom in council, and who, by his merit, had risen to great military honor; whose high reputation, as well as that of his troops, inspired the Turks with full assurance of an easy triumph over the Albanians, and caused among them as much appearance of exultation as though Scanderbeg were already taken prisoner, and was going to execution. With respect to the inhabitants of Epire, they were much alarmed by the rumor of the Turkish preparations. The country people, driving their cattle before them, betook themselves to the walled towns for protection; and the townspeople strengthened their fortifications and stationed guards, as though the enemy was close at hand. The aged men and the women encouraged those who could bear arms to exert themselves in their defence, and offered up prayers and vows to Heaven for the preservation of their country.

As to Scanderbeg, he was not at all moved by any of these things; neither by the prospect of a Turkish invasion, nor by the greatness of the enemy's preparations, nor by the terror of his own subjects; but made light of the threats of Amurath, and derided the fears which they excited. He nevertheless put every thing in readiness throughout his dominions for the reception of the enemy, and so encouraged and inflamed the hearts of his soldiers that they wished for nothing more ardently than for the approach of the enemy. It is supposed that he had information of all Amurath's designs by means of secret friends at the Turkish court.

Having ordered every thing for the safety of his country,

he began to levy an army at Croia. Most of his subjects of Epirus, who were capable of bearing arms, then repaired to him. The confederate Christian princes, also, his neighbors, many of whom were his kinsmen, furnished him with great supplies. Other devout and warlike Christians also resorted to him from far in great numbers. Out of this multitude, which might have afforded him a very large army, he selected 8000 horsemen and 7000 foot: the remainder, with the exception of such as he placed in certain frontier garrisons, he licensed to depart home again. It was matter of great wonder, to both the friends and foes of Scanderbeg, that he should take the field with so few forces, when he might have had so much larger an army under his command. But Scanderbeg himself was wont to say, that the *quality* of an army was more to be depended upon than the *size* of it, as will be noted hereafter.

Before commencing his march with this small army of 15,000 men, Scanderbeg addressed his men in an animated speech, by which he stirred them up to an ardent desire for the combat; and then, having given orders for their pay, and divine service having been devoutly celebrated, he proceeded to the lower Dibra, and encamped, towards sundown, about eighty miles from Croia, near to a mountain full of woods, or rather to a forest of lofty trees, directly in the way which it would be necessary for the Bashaw to take, of whose approach he had received notice by means of his espials. Within this wood he placed Gnee Musachee and Amesha, with 3000 horsemen, in ambush; and gave them orders to lie close until they should see him completely engaged in battle with the Turks, and then to rush with their utmost force upon the rear of the enemy. Scarcely had Scanderbeg placed his men in ambush, before the Turkish forces made their appearance; and the Bashaw came and encamped near to the Albanians a little before the setting of the sun, and remained there that night. Many fires were kindled in

his camp, and sounds of great mirth and joy were heard. Scanderbeg, on the contrary, ordered all to be silent, and no fires to be lighted in his camp; and directed those who were not wanted on guard, to take their rest: whereby he rendered the Turks less vigilant, as they supposed him to be intimidated and discouraged. During the night the Turks approached his camp, and used insulting language towards his soldiers; but he commanded all to remain quiet, and take no notice of the barbarians. When the moon rose, he first caused his troops to take refreshment; and he then drew them out, and, that he might obtain some knowledge of the strength and order of the enemy, directed his horsemen to engage in light skirmishes with the Turks. He then, in the morning, arranged his army in the following order.

On the left wing he placed Tanusee, with 1500 horse and the like number of foot. In the front of the cavalry he intermingled a number of archers on foot, that the battle might be begun by them, and that the rest of the infantry might be able to come speedily to the charge, and to retire if hard pressed, notwithstanding the engagement of the horsemen. Moses, who commanded the right wing composed of Dibrians, ordered his battle in the same manner. But in what manner soever the Dibrians might be arranged, and whether foot or horse, they were sure of performing their duty, and seldom failed of being victorious. Between the wings were arranged the remainder of the forces, bending inward, in form of a crescent, commanded by Scanderbeg himself. A thousand horse were likewise in the front of his division; for, as the forces of the enemy were devoid of infantry, it was not deemed advisable to expose his troops to the first fury of the onset of the enemy's cavalry. Next to these 1000 horsemen were placed nearly a like number of archers on foot, who were well trained and skilled, to accompany the horse, and shelter themselves under their sides; by which means they were able both to guard themselves and



to annoy the enemy, who were not aware of any such mode of attack. George Strese, a valiant knight, was also there, accompanied and surrounded by the soldiers and youth of Croia, having so disposed them that he might be able to encourage them by his example, and to witness their conduct.\* After the squadron of archers, followed the main body of the infantry, composed of bands armed with pikes and targets, led on by Aydin, the brother of Gnee Musachee. Uranocontes, a sage and experienced warrior, commanded the rest of the horse, with the rearward and reserve. This was a strong and close battalion, composed of the flower of the old soldiers, holding themselves firm, like a bulwark, for the support of the other troops.

When Scanderbeg had thus marshalled his army, he would not permit the trumpet to give the signal for battle, until he saw the Bashaw ready, and advancing to the fight. He feared lest the impetuosity of his men should cause them to rush forward, and break their ranks, and thus to fall into confusion.

The Turkish commander, looking upon the arrangement of the Christian forces, advanced, uttering contemptuous speeches. "Ever, ever," said he, "do the greater devour the less;" and he laughed outright at what he called the foolish pomp of the Christians, marching so formally and foolishly, as he thought, to their own funeral.

One of the Ottoman legions came forward boldly before the others; but being speedily and closely charged by the forlorn hope of the Christians, they suddenly gave way, and retreated quickly within their trenches; but the Prince of Albania, suspecting some Turkish stratagem, sent forward a body of horsemen to stay the furious pursuit of his own soldiers, and to bring every man back into his place. The same thing occurred in the left wing, and, when all were

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\* I cannot understand the precise place assigned by Lavardin to these troops.

again in their places, they prepared themselves for a general engagement.

When the fight began, the wings were fiercely led on by Tanusee and Moses ; and Castriot, with like fury pricking forward cheerfully with his cavalry, assailed the battalion of the enemy which he had selected. The ambush also broke forth from the woods with loud cries and shouts, before the forces of the Bashaw had all joined battle ; whereupon many companies of the Turks—particularly of those in the rearward—betook themselves to flight ; and thus the front ranks, being hemmed in by the wings of the Christian army, were exposed to be slaughtered by the centre legion. One battalion of the enemy, for a long time, kept the event of the engagement doubtful. This battalion was composed of the flower of the army, and, as was afterwards known, surrounded the general, Ali Bashaw. Aydin, who commanded the main body of infantry, having charged the Turkish centre, was met by a determined resistance on the part of the enemy, who continued to pour in new forces, until Uranocontes, with the reserve, fresh, and in high spirits, fell upon them, and decided the battle. Few of the enemy, in this part of the conflict, escaped the swords of the Christians, except 300, who, begging for quarter, and casting away their arms, were spared by order of the Christian prince. The troops, after their success and worthy exploits, came, with loud acclamations, into the presence of their commander, where they found all things as they could wish ; for the Croians had entirely broken the battalion of the Bashaw, and, after a dreadful slaughter, they pursued the Turkish commander, who saved himself with the relics of his army.

The fight continued from sunrise until 9 o'clock ("the third hour"). Twenty-four ensigns of the Turks were taken, 2000 of the enemy made prisoners, and 22,000 slain. The loss of the Christians was very small. It is said there were missing but about 120, though the number of the wounded

was much greater. In this severe battle, nothing was omitted or overlooked, on the part of the Christians, that might tend to victory. With regard to both officers and soldiers, it has been affirmed that lions were led on by lions. Many of them were old soldiers, who had borne arms under the father of Scanderbeg, and appeared to be masters in the art of war.

Scanderbeg remained quiet in his camp the remainder of that day and the following night. The next morning, elated with the success of his arms, he prepared to make an incursion into the territories of the enemy.

Having joyfully addressed his troops, he directed that the foot soldiers should mount the horses that were taken from the enemy, and that all should serve on horseback as men-at-arms; and he invited every man, under the favor of the great God, to follow him cheerfully, and reap the fruits of their valor. The soldiers most gladly accepted this invitation, and, through contempt of the enemy, were for hurrying on without order or precaution. But the prince, not trusting to the fickleness of fortune, restrained the eagerness of his men, until such time as the scouts whom he had sent out brought him word that there was no danger. Great was the booty which they obtained. Men and cattle were driven away, and nothing spared but the women and children. Even the wounded soldiers took part in the pillage; and so abundant was the spoil, that the men seemed more grieved at what they were obliged to leave behind them, than rejoiced at what they could carry away. At length Castriot ordered a retreat to be sounded, and his men retired overloaded with booty. The captains made themselves merry with the common soldiers, calling them sheep-stealers and shepherds, and asking them what Ali Bashaw, if he were now to see them, would say to his soldiers, for having been conquered by such a set of fellows.

Thus the soldiers, with mirth and merriment, and joyful

songs, dragged on their loads, until, with loud cries, they saluted the guards of their camp, who joined, and marched on before them. Having passed the following night in camp, Scanderbeg, the next morning, ordered the baggage to be trussed up, and, with his host, marched on triumphant towards Croia. The multitudes which encountered them on their way saluted them as valiant and triumphant, and wondered at the spoil taken from the enemy. The newly-made men-at-arms could scarcely be distinguished from the old. These congratulations and rejoicings continued many days. Letters, crowned with laurel, were sent to the princes and lords of Epire, together with some of the standards taken in battle; the remainder of which were hung up in the churches.

After the defeat of the Turks under Carambey, at the battle of Morava, and this victory obtained by Scanderbeg over Ali Bashaw, the Christians of Hungary and Poland, aided by Pope Eugenius and Philip, duke of Burgundy, deemed the time favorable for an attack upon the power of the Turks, with the view of rescuing Christendom from their dominion. A letter was accordingly addressed to Scanderbeg by Uladislau, king of Hungary and Poland, in the following terms :

“ Uladislau, king of Hungary and Polonia, unto the noble Scanderbeg, prince of Epirus, greeting :

“ It may be that some good hap hath deferred this our late congratulation until this present, to the intent we might at this time, together with you, rejoice in the double success of your prosperity; first, for the happy recovery of your estate, and then for that the same hath, by your wisdom and valor, of late been so notably defended. Wherefore in this we rejoice, not only in your behalf, but in the behalf of all good Christians, that it hath pleased God of his goodness, by your valor, to have given so great an increase and

comfort unto the Christian commonwealth ; forasmuch as amongst others our great evils, the loss of the Albanian people hath not been to be accounted the least, at such time as John Castriot, a worthy prince, your father, oppressed by Amurath, and by the ungrateful destinies taken out of this world, had neither the means to leave unto you his kingdom and sceptre (as unto his son, then living in his enemy's power), neither was able yet otherwise to provide for his affairs. And would to God this your father, most happy in such a son, might have till now lived, whose felicity had in that surmounted all others, if he might have seen you before his death. For as you seem unto me above all other princes in the world (without offence be it said) most accomplished with all the good graces and perfections both of body and mind, so are you endowed also with a certain divine and wonderful fortune ; under the good conduct whereof, not only the whole kingdom of Epirus may think itself in security, but all the rest of the other nations also, lately by the detestable fraud and violence of the Othoman kings dismembered from the realm of Macedon, may also recover the former beauty of their ancient laws and liberties. For (to say nothing of those things which, even from your childhood—having continually made you envied—have heretofore purchased unto you an immortal fame and glory even amongst the barbarians themselves) what can be more glorious than this victory, which (as we have heard, and believe) you, to your singular admiration, have obtained, by the overthrow and utter discomfiture of Alis Bassa, with his so great and mighty a power ? But now, O Scanderbeg (God so appointing it, who, in his deep and secret wisdom, hath reserved you unto these so dangerous times, for the publique good, and comfort of the Christian commonweal), there offers itself unto you an object of far greater glory, with a fair and fit occasion for you to revenge yourself of all the wrongs and injuries, both new and old, by Amurath, the Turkish sultan,

done, not in private to the person of yourself only, but unto the whole state and kingdom of Epirus also—and not the domestical and civil miseries of your own country only, but the publique calamities also, and those opprobrious disgraces done against the Christian faith and religion in general, now oppressed (I will not say extinguished)—and that is, if you, with your victorious forces, will succour us in this extremity of our affairs; not yet altogether desperate. Hereunto do all the princes of Hungary and Polonia, and all other men of courage, invite you—Julian, the cardinal of S. Angel, in-treateth you—with all those devout and courageous Christians, which long since here with us, and ready in arms, wish for nothing more than the presence of your victorious ensigns; which so fair an occasion (by God himself now offered), if you refuse not, will, in all men's judgment, be a sure mean to vanquish and overthrow our common enemy, the Turk, and to drive him quite out of Europe, wrongfully by him of so long time possessed. I need not therefore (as I suppose) to use any kind of perswasion unto you in this cause and quarrel, the defence whereof doth purchase unto us health, fight, and liberty; but being neglected, I fear and abhor to forbode what may ensue thereof. We Christians have been too slack and backward in helping one another; the flame hath now well near consumed us all, whilst no man thought it would have come near himself. What do we see of the Greek empire? What of the Bulgarians and Servians? Yea, mine own losses and many calamities already, and yet also to be endured, who is able to recount? The brave and most valiant princes, the surest bulwarks and defences of the kingdom of Hungary, from time to time lost, and the puissant armies, with one and the same fatal chance of war, consumed and brought to nothing, who is able to reckon up? insomuch that there is no house, wife, nor matron, in all Hungary, which is not in some measure partaker of this heaviness. All this do the Christian princes hear of, and yet

the miserable estate and condition of their allies can nothing move any one of them, but suffer us thus, as a sacrifice for the rest, to be on all parts exposed to the rage and fury of the common and merciless enemy. Only Eugenius, the most holy bishop of Rome, and Philip, duke of Burgundy, have not refused to bear a part of the burthen of this our afflicted fortune. The one hath sent hither his legate, Julian, the cardinal, with notable and puissant succours; and the other, with his fleet at sea, and come as far as Hellespontus, so much as in him lieth, doth notably hinder the Turk's passage into Europe. And one other hope there is, not now far from us, and that is your help, whereof we are so desirous—which we require of you—moved thereunto partly by your valour so well known, and partly in regard of the imminent peril and common danger of us all. And albeit we are not ignorant, how evil you may be at leisure to take such an expedition in hand, for the late troubled estate of your affairs, and your new recovered kingdom, as yet scarcely established; yet, notwithstanding, let it not withhold you, or keep you back, assuring you that as this expedition cannot be but unto you most honourable, even so this your present desert shall not be bestowed upon ungrateful and thankless men; but that which you shall now first begin and undertake for our preservation and dignity, we will from henceforth and ever continue for your glory, and for the increase of your greatness. Fare you well. From our regal city of Buda, the fourth of July, 1444." (Lavardin says 1443.)

Haly Bashaw had by this time returned with the remains of his defeated army to Amurath, who was already acquainted with the disaster which had befallen the forces sent into Epire. The Bashaw excused himself to the sultan in the best manner that he could; calling his soldiers to witness that he had omitted nothing which became a good general, and that he had been wanting in nothing towards them, nor

they towards him; but that the defeat should be attributed to the fortune of war. He entreated Amurath to make another attempt, assuring him that he would pursue measures which should change the fortune of Scanderbeg. To this counsel of Haly Bashaw, the sultan was inclined to listen; but other counsellors, and particularly Caly Bashaw, persuaded him that, while the attack upon Epire might with safety be deferred, the affairs of Hungary required his immediate attention.

The letter of the king of Hungary appeared to Scanderbeg so just and reasonable, that he felt fully disposed to lend the aid required of him. He would not, however, act without the advice of those who, on all occasions, acted with him. Accordingly, his chieftains being called together, the letter of Uladislaus was read in full council. There was no one present who did not approve of the measure proposed, through fear of the increasing greatness of the Ottoman power, the most effectual check to which appeared to be the valor and fortune of the Hungarians, whose downfall before Amurath would lead to universal desolation, and because it was deemed of the utmost importance to secure the friendship and alliance of so great a king. Wherefore, it was determined unanimously that succors should be sent to him; but there was a great diversity of opinion as to the number of the forces which should be sent, and whether it was expedient that Scanderbeg should in person lead his army abroad, or remain and take care of his own dominions. Although the mind of the prince was decided upon this subject, and remained unaltered, he was unwilling to use his influence one way or the other, and he remained silent. At length, an end was made of the discussion by the vehement earnestness of Prince *Paul Ducagin*, who addressed to them a speech, in which he freely declared that he was most inclined not to send any succors at all, but that they should bend all their force and attention to the defence and preser-



vation of their own country. He, however, maintained that it would be altogether vain and improper, if they did take part in the Hungarian war, not to send an efficient force. "Shall *Scanderbeg*," said he, "be so meanly accompanied into the midst of the *Varnian* fields, where all men in general do attend and wish for him? Shall so many princes and great lords of *Hungary*, and of the Christian army, see your chief and sovereign (whose glorious renown is now dispersed and gone into all parts before him)—shall he, I say, be seen marching before a handful of men, no otherwise than as one accompanied with so many thieves and robbers?" With regard to the question whether *Scanderbeg* should remain at home, or lead his forces in person, he exclaimed—"What! shall we send these triumphant succors unto the Hungarians without *Scanderbeg*, whose only name will yield them more succor than if all of us were with them, and he absent, whom they especially do invite, and whom all of them do demand and seek after? . . . As touching *Scanderbeg*, there is not any one of you but will confess, that it is more easy for you to find a man to govern you in peace, and to administer justice, than to conduct and lead soldiers marching with their arms. But to the intent you may not think that in this discourse I bring you nothing but great and glorious words, behold here am I, who do offer myself, with five thousand men, to the war of *Hungary*; and, if need be, do vow and consecrate my life for the service of Jesus Christ, principally, and next for the glory and reputation of all of you; and for *Scanderbeg*, his honor, name, and dignity."

To use the words and orthography of Lavardin's translator—"This round and sharp oration of *Ducagin*, and the liberrall offer of his paines and labour, together with the great authority which the man had with all the princes of *Epyre*, and with *Scanderbeg* especially, did soone work a change and alteration in their mindes and-opinions. *Scanderbeg* him selfe was the first that approved his devise; and

after he had recounted and numbered up his merites and worthy actes in the whole course of his life before past, he sayed that there was not any one besides him in all the company that had spoken rightly, and for the reputation of them in generall. And he did often times repeate it, that most happy and fortunate should the estate of *Albany* be, if it had many such men of like devotion. This *Paul* (as we have said) was one of the most puissant and noblest princes of *Epire*; and amongst other his vertuous conditions, he was most singularly commended for a certaine true, unfayned, and perfect zeale in religion, and was held in high accompt and estimate amongst all men, being descended out of that honorable family, from which very many most famous and warlike captaines had been descended, and especially *Nicholas*, sonne of the sayd *Paul*, who farre surpassed and excelled all his forefathers and ancestours in the honour and renoune of armes. Of this man there is yet at this day extant and remaining in *Peneropole* (a towne of *Thrace*, by the inhabitants called *Persera*) a notable monument or marke of his excellent vertue, and of the strength of his arme (if I may so tearme it) immortal; and that is the reliques or peeces of an enemies target, the which in a certaine fight of late (whereof the memory is yet but new and fresh) he did with one onely blow of his cymitary cut quite in sunder from the one side thereof to the other; that the hand of the barbarian holding it then in fight was so maymed, as from thenceforward he was never able to use it any more in the warres."

The whole command and ordering of the expedition was committed to Scanderbeg, who, before he commenced the levy of his forces, dispatched the Hungarian messenger with the following letter :\*

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\* Copied verbatim from Knollen.

*“ Scanderbeg, Prince of the Epirots, unto Uladislau, King of Hungary and Polonia, greeting :*

“ Your Letters, most invincible King, I have with like joy and contentment received ; which I in the General Assembly of my Chieftanes having caused publicquely to be read, there was not any one of them which was not of opinion, but that so just an occasion of War by you offered, was forthwith to be joyfully on our behalf also embraced. And so every man doth both publicly and privately affirm, That nothing could have hapned unto them more acceptable from God, than that they might by some notable Service testifie their grateful Minds, and bind unto them so excellent a Prince ; as also to give so fit Succours unto the Christian Commonweal. In which forwardness of my people I my self took great contentment and pleasure, both in regard of your self, and in the behalf of the Publick and Common Cause ; seeing my men of War, and all other my subjects, of what state or degree soever (without any perswasion used on my part), to be so chearfully and couragiously minded in defence of the Faith, and of the Christian Religion : and so well affectioned towards your most Royal Majesty. And to say the truth, who is he (if he be not hateful unto God and man), albeit there were no question of Religion, or of the common danger, that would refuse so just and lawful a War ? for such a King, as unto whom alone we may and ought to attribute, That we Christians do not only reign, but even live, breath, and enjoy the liberty of our Speech. Who would not willingly take up Arms, and adventure himself into most manifest and certain danger for the People of Hungary ; by whom in all Ages the Christian Common-weal hath with their so many Travels, and so much of their Blood, been so mightily supported and defended ? who even from the very cradle have been continual Enemies unto our Enemies, and have as it were even vowed themselves for the Honour of

the Christian Religion and Name. Would God (most mighty and redoubted Uladislaus) it had been in my power to have brought unto you such Forces to this honourable War, as were answerable to my Courage and Desire; then happily Europe should not longer lie in this ignominious Estate, oppressed by Amurath; neither should the Fields of Varna or Basilia so often smoke with the Blood of the Hungarians; nor every Corner of Macedonia with the Blood of the Epirots; both Nations being as it were become the Expiatorie Sacrifices of others Sins and Offences; we all now by turns perish, whilst every man thinketh himself born but for himself alone. But why do I unto my self pour forth these vain complaints? Truly, it neither repenteth me of my Forces, neither (as I suppose, if it shall please God that our Forces my once meet and joyn together in so happy a War) shall the Christian Common-weal have any cause to sorrow or be agrieved with the issue and event of our Fortune. For unto those fifteen thousand good Souldiers which lately discomfited Alis Bassa on the Borders of Macedonia, my purpose is to joyn as many more unto them; with all which Strength as soon as conveniently they may, I will begin to set forward, ready to follow your Ensigns to all Events whatsoever. And so fare you well, From Croia the third of August, 1444." (Lavardin says 1443.)

When Scanderbeg had dispatched this letter to the king of Hungary, he turned all his attention to the levying of forces. The troops which had served against Haly Bashaw he reinforced with new supplies, and ordered them all to the war. He soon raised and enrolled 10,000 more. Paul Ducagin, in conformity with the offer made by him, presented himself among the foremost, with 5000 chosen men, singularly well appointed. Whereupon the domestic affairs of the province were set in order, and its wants provided for. Scanderbeg reviewed his whole army, arranged it, and ap-

pointed officers to the several corps. Public prayers were then offered up ; and “ never did the people of *Epire* (who were always more inclined to arms than to religion) so importune the divine majesty with their prayers and supplications, as they did at that time for the happy return of their soldiers, who were then to march out of their own country.”\* All things, both human and divine, having thus been attended to, the army began its march.

With great alacrity they had advanced their ensigns as far as the borders of *Mysia*, when their progress was checked by the refusal of George Whorvich, commonly called the *Despot of Servia*, to suffer them to pass through his territories. This man was advanced in years, and without religion, making a mock of both the Christian and Mahommedan faith. He was inclined to favor the Turks, on account of the marriage of his daughter *Cathagusina* with Amurath, and because of his hatred against the Hungarians, and especially against *John Huniades*, the Despot of *Transylvania*, who was in possession of certain towns and places of *Vervia*, which he claimed for himself. Upon the approach of Scanderbeg to the borders of his territory, he caused all the passes to be guarded, so as to prevent the entrance of the Albanian army. Ambassadors were dispatched by Scanderbeg to remonstrate with the despot, and to threaten force if he refused to grant a passage through his country. But he remained deaf to the entreaties and threats of Scanderbeg, who, greatly against his inclination, and with a full conviction of the dangers and difficulties to which he should be exposed, resolved to put his threats in execution. But, although he might doubtless have forced his way through the Despot's territories, yet, during the delay occasioned by this unfriendly conduct of *Whorvich*, events occurred which rendered the good intention<sup>1</sup> of the Epirots towards the Hungarians vain

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\* Lavardin.

and fruitless. Uladislaus and his army, having marched through Wallachia, and passed over the Danube, came to Varna,\* with the intention to unite their forces with those which were at sea, and thence to pass into Romania.

Amurath, being made acquainted with these movements of the Hungarians, was not at all dismayed. But, having quickly repulsed the Caramanian, and secured the country of Natolia, his only trouble and difficulty was how to transport his troops into Europe, as the sea was commanded by the fleet of the Bishop of Rome and the Duke of Burgundy. From which embarrassment, it is related, he was delivered by certain Genoese merchants upon the promise of a very great reward; it being stipulated that the army of the Turks should be transported across the Hellespont at the rate of a ducat for each man. The number of men thus transported was estimated at about one hundred thousand, all Asiatics; as Amurath distrusted the faith of his European subjects. When his army had all passed the strait, he advanced with such rapidity that in less than seven days he pitched his tents within four miles of the camp of the Christians, near to the city of Varna, by the ancients named *Dionysiopolis*. Upon the approach of the Turkish army, it was resolved by the Christians to hazard the event of a battle. The supreme command of the army was committed to Huniades, in the ordering of which he exerted and made proof of the skill and experience which he possessed in military affairs. As the description of this battle does not properly belong to the life of Scanderbeg, suffice it to say that, through the imprudent valor and impetuosity of King Uladislaus, in spite of the remonstrances of Huniades, the former was slain, and the latter taken prisoner by the Despot of

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\* The country of Varna is a champaign valley, beyond the confines of Mysia, upon the sea called Maggiore, four days' journey from Adrianople, between two promontories, upon one of which is seated Galata—on the other, Macropolis. On the left of the valley, where Galata stands, is a large marsh.

Servia, and by him put in irons, and kept prisoner until the towns claimed by him were delivered up, and the Christian army was dispersed. This battle was fought on the Feast of St. Martin's, the 11th of November, in the year 1443.\*

The news of this defeat being conveyed to Scanderbeg while he was yet upon the borders of *Servia*, it caused him great grief and mortification. But, that the conduct of the Despot might not go unpunished, he broke into the country, and wasted it with fire and sword. Upon his return towards Epire, he gathered up many of the remains of the broken forces of the Hungarians, and, having supplied them with money and provisions, he also furnished them with vessels to convey them to Ragusa, whence they returned to their own homes.

It would be rash, perhaps, to pronounce a judgment upon the conduct of Scanderbeg in this expedition, without the means of better information than can be obtained at this distance of time. But, from all that can be learned, it would seem as if his usual prudence and foresight were not manifested in his setting out with so large an armament and on so important an expedition without having secured beforehand a free and open way for the march of his army.

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\* This shows the dates of the above letters of Uladislans and Scanderbeg.

## BOOK III.

1444.

AMURATH did not reap much advantage from the overthrow of the Hungarians, which has just been related; in-somuch that his courage seemed rather abated than increased by the victory obtained at Varna. His losses were so great as to deter him from immediately engaging again in active war. But this disposition to rest was disturbed by the accounts which came from the Despot of Servia and from the frontiers of Macedonia. The forces of Scanderbeg were reported to have committed such ravages, and to have carried off such an amount of spoil, as to inflame anew the anger and resentment of the Turks. The Despot, in particular, was most urgent with Amurath to come to his protection against the hatred of the Hungarians and the incursions of the Epirots; whose resentment he had drawn upon himself by refusing to afford Scanderbeg a free passage through his territories. These representations made to Amurath had great weight with him and with his people; and it was resolved to make war upon Scanderbeg. But, as Amurath had not been unsuccessful in his attempts upon others by means of artifice and deceit, he thought fit, before having recourse to war, to employ the same methods in regard to Scanderbeg. He accordingly addressed to him a letter in the terms following:\*

“AMURATH OTHOMAN, King of the Turks and Emperor of

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\* Knolles and Lavardin have evidently translated from the same original; I have followed Knolles.



the East, to the most ingrateful Scanderbeg, wisheth neither Health nor Welfare.

“ I never wanted honourable Preferments to bestow upon thee all the while thou didst live in my Court, of all others most unkind Scanderbeg, but now I want Words wherewith to speak unto thee ; thou hast so highly offended my Mind, and touched mine Honour, that I know not in discretion what Words to use unto thee, but of late one of my Domestical Servants. For neither will hard speech mollifie the natural fierceness of thy proud disposition, neither art thou worthy of better, which hast far exceeded all Hostility. And because thou wouldest omit no occasion to provoke me, hast of late proceeded to that point of Folly, that thou hast had thine own Affairs and the Welfare of thine own Subjects in small regard, by confederating thyself in Arms with the Hungarians against me. It grieveth me to rehearse other thy unkindness, and as it were to touch those sores, if my mind would ever suffer me to forget the same, or that thine so manifold and horrible Treasons, and strange examples of a most unthankful mind, were to be covered with silence. Yet I thought good to advertise thee (although perhaps too late), lest that thy unstead heat do untimely overthrow thee, with thy unlucky Kingdom ; and then thou wouldst make humble confession of thy long transgression, when thou hast lost thyself, and left no hope of refuge in thy desperate Estate. We have hitherto sufficiently suffered thy manifold injuries ; thou hast sufficiently provoked the Majesty of the Othoman Empire with wrong and contumelious despight ; and I with patience have born all these thy contempts. Thinkest thou that my Army, by thee betrayed unto the Hungarians, shall be unrevenged ? Thinkest thou that so many Cities and Towns in Epirus, by thee rent from the body of my Empire, with my Garrisons there slain, shall be forgotten ? Or thinkest thou with thy late committed Outrages to escape my revenging Hand ? Re-

member the destruction of mine Army under Alis Bassa ; the wasting and burning of my Dominions ; and lately, the Hungarian Wars, by thee, so far as in thee was, countenanced ; with the Territories of George, the Despot of Servia, my Father-in-Law, by thee spoiled. At length amend, thou graceless man, and expect not further, whether my indignation will break out. Let not these trifling allurements of thy good Fortune so puff up thy foolish desires, and sharpen thy conceits, that thy miserable Fortunes afterwards may move even thy greatest Enemies, or myself to compassion. I would thou shouldst at length remember my Courtesies (if any spark of humanity remain in thy savage Nature), and make me not longer sorry that I have so evil bestowed the same. And although it is not the part of an honourable mind to rehearse those things which we have in bounty bestowed upon any man ; yet it is the token of a most unthankful Nature, so easily to forget all kindness past, as to need to be put in remembrance thereof. Wherefore Scanderbeg, I cannot bewail thy hap, and lament thine estate : For to let pass the health of thy Soul (which thou, a very Reprobate, esteemest as nothing), not to speak of the Laws of Mahomet by thee despised, and the holy Prophet by thee contemned, for the zeal thou hast unto the Christian Superstition ; what hast thou (which now holdst thy poor and base Kingdom in such price) ever wanted at my hands of all those things which most delight the desires of men ? Didst thou ever want Armor, Horses, a great Train of Followers and Servants, Mony, or other Superfluities, the allurements of all Ages ? Or didst thou want matter to exercise thy Valour, for increase of thine Honour ? Wast thou ever denied Preferments, Dignities, and Honours of all sorts fit for thine Age, both at home and abroad ? Was any man in my Court dearer unto me than thyself ? What growing Wit, not of Strangers only, but of them that were nearest unto myself, was better welcome unto me than

thine? With what careful instruction did I cause thee to be brought up? When thou wast delivered unto me almost a Child, I daily cherished and increased thy hoped to-wardlyness, with Learning and Nurture; I have at all times honoured thee with rich Rewards, magnificent Praises, and Honours of the Field (which of all worthy things is most glorious), so that in all Feats of Arms no Souldier was to me better known, or Captain of me more honoured. For all these great benefits, Scanderbeg, thou now shewest thyself such an one, that I may be thought not to have brought up such a man as I hoped for, but a very Serpent in mine one Bosome. But the love of thy Country did move thee; which if thou hadst asked of me, would I have denied the same unto thee? which (if thou dost well remember) I so oftentimes voluntarily profered unto thee? But thou hadst rather to gain the same by Treachery than to receive it at my Hands of Courtesie. So thine be it, therefore, on God his name, and that with my very good Will. And verily, according to my accustomed Clemency towards all them whom I have once well known, and been familiarly acquainted with, I now pardon thee all thou hast offended me; not for any thy present deserts, which are none, but because in this publique enmity it pleaseth me to remember my former kindness in private towards thee, and thy faithfulness sometimes in my Affairs; especially for that the time was much longer wherein thou servest me than the time wherein thou hast offended me. Croia and thy Father's Kingdom (although thou hast gained the same by foul Treachery) I give unto thee, upon condition thou willingly restore unto me the other Towns of Epirus, which by no right belong unto thee, but are mine by Law of Arms, by myself honourably won. Whatsoever thou hast taken from my Father-in-Law, the Prince of Servia, thou shalt forthwith restore, and make him an honourable recompence for the other harms thou hast done unto him; and for ever

hereafter thou shalt as well forbear to offer violence to any our Friends, as to aid any our Enemies. So shalt thou for ever avoid the displeasure of the Turks, and stand in my good grace and favour, as thou hast done before ; except thou hadst rather (being taught by thine own harms) then in vain cry for mercy, when thy furious outrage shall have me in Person an implacable Revenger. Thou knowest thy Forces, thou knowest the Strength of mine Arms ; thou hast before thine Eyes the fresh example of the Hungarian Fortune, so that thou needest no further admonitions. Yet I would thou shouldst write at large what thou intendest to do. Thou maist also confer with Araydin, our Servant, our trusty and faithful Messenger, of whom thou shalt understand more than are in these Letters comprised. Farewel if thou be wise. From Hadrianople."

Many of the Epirots were of opinion that it would be best for their prince to hearken to the proposals of Amurath. But Scanderbeg was of a different mind ; and after he had expressed his sentiments and set forth his reasons, they all cheerfully acquiesced in his opinion. Whereupon he discoursed much with the Turkish ambassador, sometimes privately and sometimes in full council, setting forth the causes of complaint which he had against Amurath. And having courteously entertained the ambassador five days with a cheerful countenance and unembarrassed manner, lest, being a spy, he should have to report any symptoms of fear among the Christians, and having shown him all the fortifications and the disposition of his camp, Scanderbeg dismissed him with the following answer in writing to Amurath :

"THE Souldier of Christ Jesus, George Castriot, surnamed Scanderbeg, Prince of Epirus, to Amurath Othoman, King of the Turks, sendeth greeting :

"Thou hast in times past, as thou writest, exceeded me

in many kinds of Courtesies, and at this present I will exceed thee in modest and temperate speech ; for I think there is no greater token of a base mind, than not to be able to forbear to give railing and opprobrious words even unto our most mortal Enemies. Wherefore we have with patience received and seen both thy Letters and Messenger ; and, to confess a truth, they have ministered unto me greater occasion of Smile than Choler ; whilst at the first thou shamest not to accuse me of much Ingratitude and Treason, and presently following a milder passion, seemest careful of my Soul's health, being ignorant of thine own Estate, as a studious Defender of a most damnable error. And at last, keeping neither Law of Arms, nor orderly course answering to our Affairs, dost most insolently and unadvisedly, as a valiant Conqueror to his vanquished Enemy, propound many Conditions of Peace, of such quality and condition, that mine Ears scorn to hear the same. Truly, Amurath, although thy immoderate railing might move a man of greatest patience to intemperate Speech, yet I impute the same partly to thy great Age, and partly to the waiwardness of thy Nature, and the rest to thy conceived grief, which I know thou canst hardly moderate ; and the rather, for that I have not set down myself to contend with thee in foul and unseemly Language, but with Arms, and the just Fury of War. Yet I pray thee, wherefore dost thou so exclaim against me before God and Man ? as though thou hadst first suffered wrong and injury from me, and that thou hadst not in truth first done the same. Dost thou call my necessary departing a perfidious Treachery ? my native Country by my Policy and Valour recovered, dost thou object to me as a Villany ? object the same still, and spare not ; charge me with such crimes for ever, I care not. The long Catalogue of thy kindness towards me, which thou rehearsest, I could willingly remember, if it drew not with it the woful remembrance of my greater miseries ; which if

they were to be compared together, the greatness of thy good deserts would be overwhelmed with the multitude of thy greater Tyrannies ; which I had rather thou shouldst count with thyself, than blush whilst I repeat them. Every man that knoweth them, may marvel how I had power to endure them, or that thou wast not weary at last of thy Cruelty and secret Hatred. Thou tookest away my Father's Kingdom by force ; thou didst murder my Brethren, and myself thou didst most wickedly vow to death, when I little feared any such cruelty ; and doth it now seem strange to thee, O Amurath, that an invincible mind, desirous of Liberty, should seek to break out of the bonds of so great and insolent Slavery ? How long at length didst thou think I would endure thy proud Bondage ? which for all that, I many years endured, and refused not thy command. I exposed myself to publique and private dangers, both voluntarily and by thy designment ; speeches were given out dayly by thyself, and the admonition of my Friends concerning thy deep Treachery, was rife in mine Ears ; yet for all that, of long time I simply believed both thy words and deeds to have been devoid of all Fraud, until thy cankered malice began too apparently to shew itself ; then began I also to glose with thee, wholly metamorphosed into thine own conceits, until I found occasion to recover my Liberty. Wherefore there is no cause thou shouldst now grieve, if thou be well beaten with thine own rod. But these are but Trifles, Amurath, in comparison of those things which I have laid up in hope and resolution of mind. Therefore hereafter surcease thine angry threats, and tell not us of the Hungarian Fortune ; every man hath his own resolution, and every man a particular Governor of his actions ; and so will we with patience endure such Fortune as it shall please God to appoint us. In the mean time, for direction of our Affairs we will not request Counsel of our Enemies, nor Peace of

thee, but Victory by the help of God. Farewel. From our Camp.”\*

When the Turk perused the letter of Scanderbeg, and learned from Araydin, the ambassador, the conversations which he had held with the Albanian prince, he was moved to fear more than to anger by the great confidence and hopeful spirit of the man, which he knew did not rest upon a false foundation; and he felt a presentiment awakened in him of the difficulties which he should have to encounter in the Albanian war. That he might not, however, betray to his people his inward sentiments, it is reported that, smiling and stroking his beard, he would exclaim: “Thou dost covet, unhappy wretch, thou dost covet some memorable and distinguished kind of death; and thou shalt have it, believe me, thou shalt have it; we ourselves will see thy obsequies performed. And without waiting thy commands, most mighty King of the Albanians, we will honor and grace thy funeral with our presence, lest that hereafter being in hell, thou do complain that thy end was ignoble and dishonorable.” Notwithstanding these bravadoes, the thoughts of the sultan, in the midst of his difficulties, were very uncertain and irresolute. But being informed that Scanderbeg kept the field with his horsemen only, and that he had dismissed the rest of his army, he sent Ferisey, one of his Bashaws, a man of an active and fierce disposition, with nine thousand horse, all chosen and picked troops, to make a sudden incursion into Epire, with the hope of taking Scanderbeg by surprise. He was directed by the sultan to use secrecy and dispatch, and was promised great rewards in case of success.

He, accordingly, with great secrecy, entered upon the frontiers of Macedonia; and, standing carefully upon his

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\* From Knöller.

guard, he advanced more like a marauder than in the manner of an open and honorable warrior. Notwithstanding all his care, Scanderbeg was made acquainted with his approach, and prepared to encounter him. The Albanian prince took possession of a straight and narrow valley named *Mocrea*, through which it was necessary for the Turkish force to pass, and filled it with hardy and resolute soldiers. The approach of the Bashaw was indicated by clouds of dust raised by the trampling of his horses. The Albanians remained quiet until they perceived the enemy entered into the valleys, and environed by high and craggy rocks full of woods, and entangled on all sides in the dense forests. Then, suddenly issuing out, they fell upon them with great violence and impetuosity. The troops of Scanderbeg amounted to fifteen hundred foot-soldiers and two thousand horse, the latter of whom were reserved for a subsequent service. The Turks, entangled in the difficulties of the pass, were assailed on every quarter by the infantry, who slew them at their pleasure. The horses of the Turks were rather a disadvantage than a service to their riders. They, however, forsook not their ranks, nor quitted the place in which they were attacked, but defended themselves with great bravery as long as there was any hope of success; and even when all hope of escape was taken from them, they almost all continued to fight valiantly to the last. A few only begged for quarter, which was granted them. Seven hundred and sixty prisoners were taken: the number of the slain was much greater. Ferisey, seeing his advanced guard inclosed, and surprised at the mercy of their enemies, whose number he supposed to be greater than it really was, retreated with the rest of his troops. As he retired, he cried aloud that it was more commendable in an expert commander to preserve some of his forces than to expose all in a situation where they were liable to be slaughtered like dumb beasts. It is true, that some represent him to have been slain in the



fight by the hands of Scanderbeg. The Albanian cavalry did not suffer the retreat of the Turks to be without molestation; for, keeping close upon their rear, they slew many loiterers and stragglers; nor did they desist until restrained by weariness.

The Turks being thus put to flight, without any great loss on the part of the Albanians, Scanderbeg, with the troops which he had about him, invaded the territory of the enemy, and gratified his soldiers by an abundant booty.

The troubles which threatened the Ottoman empire on the part of the Hungarians, prevented Amurath from attempting to wreak such vengeance as he wished upon the Albanians. But, not to let the slaughter of his troops under Ferisey go unrevenged, he committed to Mustapha the care of filling up the broken companies of Ferisey, and of increasing those forces with six thousand horse. This whole armament was placed under his command; and he was strictly enjoined to avoid, with the utmost care, falling into any ambush, or coming to action with the enemy, but to content himself with laying waste the country with fire and sword. These directions were implicitly followed by Mustapha. As soon as he entered upon the Christian territory, he sent forward three hundred horsemen, to scour the country, and reconnoitre the places where any danger of ambush might appear; and, in case of need, they were ordered to retreat immediately to the main body; or, if the occasion should offer, to entice the enemy from their lurking-places, and draw them within the reach of the main army. When these scouts had carefully examined the country round, and reported on their return that no danger existed, the Turkish commander, retaining four thousand horse, formed an entrenched camp for them, situated upon a rising ground. Some of his men he disposed as secret sentinels and watchmen upon the summits of several high hills, who, by certain signals, were to give warning of the

approach of the enemy. Having made these arrangements, he gave license to the rest of his horsemen to spoil the country. In consequence of which, havoc and slaughter were widely spread around. His orders were, that whoever did not retire into the camp upon the first sound of the trumpet for retreat, should be accounted an enemy. That pleasant country was laid waste ; the trees and plants rooted up ; the meadows and pastures, to use the words of Lavardin, seemed to bewail and lament ; the flames of the towns and villages were seen on all sides ; the corn was trampled under foot by the horses—for the season was autumn—and the husbandmen saw the prospect of losing the rewards of their labor. The men and women, however, for the most part, had retired into the walled towns and strongholds, taking with them their families and most valuable effects.

While the Turks were thus employed, Scanderbeg, although it was somewhat late before he received advice of the Turkish invasion, arrived at the valley of *Mocrea*, with four thousand horse and one thousand foot ; and his soldiers entered, with great joy, into that place so well known to them, and which was still moist with the blood of their enemies. As Scanderbeg was reflecting upon the course he should pursue, and the men were examining the places which they had before occupied, a certain Epirot, just escaped from the Turks, and covered with blood and recent wounds, came, and threw himself at the feet of Scanderbeg, imploring his protection. He then, with a bold countenance, encouraged and excited his countrymen, telling them that the fields were desolate, all things having been turned upside down by the Turks, who, scattered abroad, dreamed of nothing but prey and booty, and that they might easily, and without great danger, be surprised and made to render an account of their unadvised undertaking. Castriot was, at first, encouraged by this report ; but, after having more par-

ticularly inquired into the state of things, as to how their camp was situated, and what were the movements of the enemy, he applauded Mustapha, and commended his prudence. He judged that it would be necessary for him, in future, to be very cautious and circumspect in his movements. Whereupon, he called his army about him, and, standing in the midst, so as to be heard by all, he addressed them to this effect :

“ I have been wont, my fellow-soldiers and companions in arms, to give advice and orders in the conduct of our affairs ; but it now appears proper that we should consult together respecting the course we ought to pursue in our present circumstances. We were, at first, given to understand that the Turks, like robbers and freebooters, without any order or conduct, were wandering up and down the fields, flying hither and thither, like men totally unapprehensive of our approach. For this reason, you have, by my persuasion and means, and under my conduct, come, intending to surprise and attack them with your forces. But I need not remind you that new counsels are rendered necessary for us by the fortunate coming of this man ; you have yourselves heard him recount what our enemies are doing, and how they conduct themselves. From the manner in which Mustapha has placed and ordered his camp, and the care with which he has fortified and guarded it, you may be assured that his conduct is not that of a robber, as we were led to suppose, but of a wary and well-advised enemy. For which reason, in my opinion, it behooves you to use more caution and deliberation towards your enemies than you seem hitherto to have supposed necessary. Let us not meddle with those who are abroad foraging, lest by so doing we afford the advantage eagerly desired by the Turkish general, of issuing forth from his entrenchments, and obtaining an easy victory over us. For, it is to be feared, that while we are dispersed and out of order, thinking to pursue those who

are scattered over the country, we may be inclosed and cut to pieces. It is better that we issue forth all together, with our whole power, and assault the ramparts of their camp, which if with our wonted valor and resolution we carry, and put the Turkish commander to flight, or slay him, and get his head wherewith to terrify the rest of the barbarians (which may Almighty God in his mercy grant), there is no doubt that you may easily get the better of the rest of these plunderers, when separated from their companions and surrounded by your forces, and either kill them or take them prisoners, as you may think best. But beware, my good soldiers, lest you be tempted by the desire of pillage, to sack and spoil the camp; for many a time such greediness of spoil has been the cause of victory being taken from the victors and given into the hands of those who were vanquished."

This counsel of their general was universally approved by the army, and with the consent of all the soldiers immediately followed. The troops, being marshalled and set in battle-array, were drawn out of their hiding-places into the open fields, and discovered themselves to the Turkish scouts, who, from the tops of the hills, gave notice of their approach to those who were in the camp, by fires blazing on high. The sound of trumpets was then heard from the camp, much to the grief of the Turkish soldiers, who were dispersed abroad, and engaged in spoiling and plundering the country. Many of them, upon hearing the summons, retired within the trenches before the Christian troops could reach them. Many were unable to get into the camp, and, while laden with spoil, were charged by their adversaries. The trenches were assaulted on all sides; and, at the first charge, the carriages and baggage, which had been placed as a barricade, and the targeteers, who were set to guard them, were overthrown with great noise and confusion, increased both by the Turks who were excluded, and by the

efforts of the Christian soldiers to enter the camp with them. The Turks and Christians were so closely mingled together that darts and shot were useless. They fought hand to hand with their swords and iron masses, a short weapon often used by the Turks. It was strange to see the infidels fighting with their weapons in one hand and their booty in the other. The fury of the assault continuing to increase without intermission, and the place being filled with slaughter and dismay, Mustapha, who had kept himself in the safest part of his camp, and had rather stimulated his soldiers than acted the part of a soldier himself, seeing no hope of resistance left, escaped from the danger by the swiftness of his horse, through one of the ports which was least exposed to the enemy. The fierceness of the conflict, after that, immediately abated. Some threw down their arms, and surrendered themselves; others followed the example of their general, and fled for their lives. Many of the Turks who had wandered far in quest of plunder, hearing the distant tumult and cries raised in the camp, and suspecting the ill fortune of their fellows, also endeavored to save themselves by flight. Few of them, however, escaped; for troops of archers, lying in wait along the ways, dispatched them with their arrows. Some relate that the whole army of the Turks, except Mustapha and a few of those who were best mounted, was slain in that battle; but, in the opinion of Lavardin, those come nearest the truth who write that the number of those who fell was about five thousand, and not above three hundred made prisoners, most of whom were grievously wounded and disfigured, in consequence of the fury to which the Albanians were roused by the sight of the plunder taken from their countrymen, and the devastation of their lands. Of the victors, not more than twenty horsemen and fifty foot are said to have been missing after the battle, more of whom were overrun by the horses than slain by the sword of the enemy. The Alba-

nians thus gaining possession of the camp, the ensigns, the baggage, and the carriages of their enemies, they also made an incursion into their territories, where they obtained booty sufficient to remunerate them for the losses sustained by the depredations of the Turks.

It is reported that about this time, Lech, or Luke Zacharie, was murdered by Lech Ducagin. Zacharie was possessed of a moderate territory within the upper Zadrime, the capital of which was Dayina, or Daina. The two princes being neighbors, and Zacharie being without issue, and having no hope of lawful heirs, Ducagin, it is probable, thought he should be able to get possession of his inheritance; and he accordingly seized upon a great part of his territory as soon as the murder was committed. He could not, however, succeed to the extent of his wishes; for the inhabitants of Dayina, the capital town and chief fortress, remained faithful to their deceased prince. They, with great loyalty, defended the rights of the Lady Bola, mother to Zacharie, who was very aged at the time of her son's death. She, being very much grieved at the loss of her son, and deeming the defence of his estate too much for her to endure, retired to Scutarie, or Scodra, and surrendered to the Venetians what remained to her of her son's principality, together with the whole charge and burden of the contentions likely to arise respecting it with the neighboring princes and lords. This event was the cause of war between the Venetians and Scanderbeg, as shall appear when we have first noticed the measures pursued by Amurath after the defeat of his army in Epire.

On the return of Mustapha from his unfortunate expedition, he was loud in the praises of the Albanian prince, extolling highly his invincible prowess and matchless experience in the art of war; often repeating that it was necessary to provide a far different armament, and to make war on a much greater scale than had hitherto been done: that

the fury and rage of Scanderbeg was not to be tamed by such inroads and predatory expeditions, which only tended to encourage the Albanians, who were a spirited and brave nation : that wiles and ambushments were not likely to prevail against him who was a master in warlike subtleties ; but would always prove the ruin of those who should make use of them against him : that by such frequent victories the Christians would gradually conceive a contempt for the Ottoman name : that, in his opinion, it would be best either to abstain altogether from making any attempt upon Scanderbeg, or to prosecute it with such vigor as to insure speedy and complete success.

Amurath was not pleased with these praises bestowed upon his adversary ; yet he did not impute the Bashaw's arguments to want of courage, since Haly Bashaw and Ferisey, who had also been as unfortunate, if not more so, than he, excused his failure to the sultan. Amurath, in consequence of these representations of his generals, determined to discontinue active warfare with the Albanians until he should march against them in person. In the mean time, however, he ordered Mustapha to levy new forces, and to proceed to the borders of Epire, but not to overrun or lay waste the country, or on any account whatever to think of attacking Scanderbeg, or to suffer himself to be drawn from his post, but to be content with carefully guarding the Turkish frontier.

When Scanderbeg was informed of the approach of Mustapha, and of the death of the Prince of Dayina, both events being reported to him at the same time, he was greatly perplexed. The coming of the Turks, whom he had so often vanquished, did not trouble him so much as the murder of his intimate friend the prince, which overwhelmed him with grief. He was vexed, moreover, to hear the determination of the Lady Bosa, and that the Venetians had espoused her cause, and made the quarrel their own. He

felt himself much aggrieved by the pretension of the Venetians to any right in the estate of the deceased, since he considered the resignation made to them by that lady as of no force concerning what her son had, during his life, directed to descend to him ; and that the rash determination of the mother could not lawfully make void the will and intention of the son. For a compact had been entered into between Scanderbeg and Zacharie, confirmed by a solemn oath, that whichever of the two-survived, the other should inherit the dominions of the deceased. In this divided condition of his affairs, Scanderbeg, more watchful than ever, kept near to the forces of Mustapha, and coursing up and down with a small number of men, he endeavored, by sometimes adventuring himself too far, sometimes by pretending a hasty and disordered retreat, to draw out the Turkish general to battle. But, finding all his efforts to circumvent the wily Turk fruitless, he left the forces which he had with him upon the borders of the country, to watch the enemy and prevent them from committing depredations and violence ; and, turning his attention to the war of Dayina, he, with very few attendants, returned to Croia. When there, as he knew that the question between him and the Venetians must be decided by force of arms, he commanded an immediate levy of troops. He himself, together with some of his chief officers, rode to different parts of the province, and assembled a large army. Then, without delay, before the garrison of Dayina had time to provide themselves with corn, he laid close siege to the place, and endeavored, both by force and persuasion, to induce the inhabitants to yield themselves up to him ; for he apprehended that when the Venetians received the news of his attack, they would send succors from Italy in order to oblige him to raise the siege. Yet, that he might not exasperate the Dayinians, and render them more obstinate in their defence, he refrained from wasting the country ; nor did he



batter the walls with artillery, or attempt to enter the town by assault; but, by keeping the inhabitants from supplying themselves with food and munitions, he threatened them with famine, of which there was great danger, and with all the evils of a long and tedious blockade. The governors of the nearest provinces, subject to the Venetians, gave notice to the Seigniory of Venice of the attack upon Dayina, who ordered an immediate levy of forces of various kinds, which were sent to the relief of the town. These troops were greatly augmented and strengthened by two persons—Lech Dusman and Peter Span, both of them Albanians. They had, under oath, promised to Scanderbeg their continual service and assistance against the Turks, in which they had never failed; but their alliance with the Venetians was so intimate, that they now considered themselves bound to espouse their cause.

Scanderbeg was not daunted by the dangers which threatened him. He forthwith divided the army he had just levied, which exceeded fourteen thousand men. Only seven thousand horse and two thousand foot were destined to act against the Venetians: the remainder he left to continue the siege of Dayina, which he determined not to raise, notwithstanding the approach of the enemy. The forces of Scanderbeg were thus separated into three divisions; one of which was opposed to Mustapha, another besieged Dayina, and the third was directed against the Venetians. This disposition of the forces of Scanderbeg gave his enemies hope of obtaining advantage over him. The result, however, will show that he did not act unadvisedly.

Mustapha was greatly elated at this diversion made by the Venetians; and, encouraged by the absence of Scanderbeg, he would willingly have attacked the Albanians who were left upon the borders, had he not been restrained by the positive orders of the sultan.

While the Venetians, assembled at Scutarie, consumed

the time in making provision of things necessary, Scanderbeg had boldly passed the river Drynon, into their own territory. The Venetians could not tamely brook this bravado, but immediately marched forward to meet the Albanians. Each party claimed to have justice on its side. The Prince of Albania was contending for the possession of a town, which he asserted to be withheld from him contrary to all right and justice. The other party fought to maintain the rights of those who had placed themselves under its protection. The Albanians were encouraged by the success which had often crowned their arms. The Venetians hoped for victory, both because of the warlike preparations which they had made for the present occasion, and because they knew their resources to be such as could repair any immediate disaster which might chance to befall them. In truth, this enterprise against Dayina, appeared to threaten the downfall of Scanderbeg.

When the armies came in sight of each other, they both maintained silence, halted, and encamped. The command of the Venetian army was committed to Daniel Jurich, of Sebenca, an experienced officer. When he had appointed his men to their proper places, previous to the combat, he addressed to them a speech wherein, among other things, he set before them the miserable condition of the Dayinians; the injustice as well as rashness and malevolence of Scanderbeg in making war against the Venetians; his want of military skill in dividing his army, and coming against them with forces so inferior to those opposed to him; and the evident ruin which he was about to bring upon himself.

The speech which Scanderbeg made to his men before he drew them forth to battle, is reported to have been in a much more moderate strain than that of the Venetian general. He observed, that while the enemy were in sight it was not a proper time to inquire into the justness of his cause; yet, that since good men before going to battle,

were wont to be anxious about nothing more than to be assured that they were not going to fight against God as well as man, he was quite willing, if they felt distrustful of being in the right, or thought him rash and ambitious in undertaking the present war, that they all should truss up their baggage, and return home. But, he observed, that nothing can be more reproachful to him that is nobly minded, nor any thing more repugnant to the dignity and majesty of a prince, than, through pusillanimity, to suffer his right to be usurped by another, and to remain with his hands idle when he knows that his right can be maintained only by force of arms. He reminded them that they all knew the strict and intimate friendship which was ever between him and the Signior Lech Zacharie, and that in consequence of their mutual affection, they had entered into an inviolable agreement that whichever of them should first die without issue should be succeeded by the other in his heritage and dominions, by virtue of survivorship and the existing compact: that the Venetians had gotten possession of the lands of his deceased friend, and had left him only the heritage of tears and lamentations over his cruel fate. He asked them if he did not by that agreement hazard the renouncing of his own patrimony if he had first been taken out of this life; and he declared that there was no reason why he should, and that he would not, unless, God being against him, he was put to the worst, give over the war until he had gained possession of Dayina, since none but fools could blame him for a war to which he was prompted by such good reasons and so honest a cause. But he would not have them treat these as they would other enemies: that they had not now to deal with savage barbarians, but with Christians, against whom they should contend according to the rules of just warfare, only to repel injustice, and to be enabled to live in rest and security.

The above are but small part of the speeches reported in

the work from which this account is chiefly taken, but they are thought quite sufficient, as the words of the speakers are not pretended to be given by our author.

The moderation displayed by Scanderbeg in his address to his soldiers increased their confidence in him. They flocked around him, and with many protestations of devotion to his person, and arguments in favor of prosecuting their enterprise, manifested the greatest alacrity and ardor. "He," to use the words of our author, "praising and extolling the affection of every of them, speaking aloud unto them in manner of jesting and merriment; smiling, he told them, that nature was much to blame in that she had not placed these noble and generous spirits of the *Albanois* in a higher and better fortune."\*

Scanderbeg then caused his troops to take refreshment, and, having also done the same himself, he, about noon, with a cheerful mind, drew them out into the field. The archers and light armed troops he placed in front of the ensigns. The heavier armed foot were placed on the two wings, to each of which were added 2000 horse. The main battle was committed to the command of *Tanusee*, where a number of foot soldiers were dispersed among the men-at-arms. He appointed no reserve, in order to show the confidence he had of victory. Neither did he leave more than a handful to guard his camp. He trusted, in case of defeat, to the forces which remained at the siege of *Dayina*, to the camp at which place it was his intention to retire, should he, contrary to his expectation, be obliged to retreat; since neither the situation of his present camp nor the number of his troops would render it advisable for him to retire thither. Scanderbeg has not escaped the charge of rashness, unworthy of a great commander, in not providing for a more safe retreat in case of being defeated. He seems, on every occasion, to have so

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\* *Lavardin*.

well understood the power of his own forces, and they were so completely manageable under his command, that perhaps the charge of rashness may more properly be laid to those who censure him for his conduct on this occasion.

The right wing of the Venetians was commanded by Daniel, strengthened by a chosen guard of Sclavonians. Colla Humoy, of Scutarie, who was second in command, led the left wing. His brother Andrew and Symon Volcathagne commanded the centre. I think it best not to attempt a minute description of the manner in which the battle was arranged, nor of the various turns in the engagement itself, as I do not feel certain of understanding the antiquated phraseology of the author by whom I am guided. Lavardin says, "In briefe, all the rankes were filled indifferently with souldiers of sundrie sortes, serving rather for an hindrance and impediment, than for anie defence or good assurance." The number of the Venetian troops amounted to nearly 13,000.

The fight was begun by the Venetian pikemen and Albanian archers of the centre. The archers at first had the better of the pikemen; but when the ranks approached so near to each other that the bowmen could not fight to advantage, and the targeteers, covering themselves with their targets, and the other light armed troops came to fight hand to hand with the sword, then Scanderbeg ordered his archers to retire a little, and covering them with his cavalry, he afforded them a better opportunity to make use of their weapons. The Venetian pikemen, being armed with strong corselets, advanced so boldly as to excite in their companions a hope of victory. The wings on both sides then engaged. The Albanians exceeded in the number and quality of their horse; and the battle was fought in the midst of a large plain near to the river Drynon, so that they suffered no impediment from the nature of the country. The contest was, a long time, maintained around the general of the Venetians with doubtful success; until Scanderbeg, with a body of horse,

broke through their battle, and would have cut off all hope of victory from his enemies, had it not been for the Illyrians, who, with their wonted agility, came to the aid of the body-guard, and enabled them to keep their ground against the Albanians; yet rather as acting upon the defensive than as assailants.

The armies maintained the contest for a long time; but, at length, the general of the Venetians perceiving his soldiers in every quarter put to flight, he also put spurs to his horse, and followed the example of the rest. The troops of Scanderbeg could not pursue their adversaries with vigor, because the fight had been so long and so obstinate that their strength was nearly exhausted. Yet weary as they were, they did not suffer the flight of the Venetian troops to be without interruption; for Scanderbeg had commanded that all the ensigns should join in the pursuit even to the gates of Scutarie. Many prisoners were made by the Albanians, for Scanderbeg had ordered that none should be put to death; and when they arrived near to the town, and in sight of the inhabitants, they drew up in battle array, with their colors waving in the wind, and their prisoners exposed to the view of the townsmen.

Scanderbeg having permitted his men thus to exult in their victory, at length, when the day was far spent, ordered a retreat to be sounded, and the army took up their march towards Dayina. Scanderbeg hoped the victory he had obtained would induce the inhabitants of that town to submit themselves to him; but in this he was disappointed. When he returned to the siege with his victorious troops, he displayed the ensigns which had been taken from the Venetians, and marched the prisoners around the walls. But, when he demanded that the Venetian garrison should be delivered up to him, the answer which he received was, in substance, that they were determined to hold out to the last; and that they were in hopes that the Venetian government would not suffer

the bonds of the captives to be perpetual, nor the siege to be of long continuance. Instead of being incensed at this resolution of the Dayinians, he exhibited no marks of resentment, nor did he treat his prisoners with severity ; but, on the contrary, having behaved kindly to them, he set them at liberty, all but two of the highest quality, named Andrew Humoy and Symon Volcathagne, whom he detained as hostages. These were kept under safe guard in the fortress of Petra Alba, but liberally and respectfully entertained. It is supposed that Scanderbeg hoped thus to gain by generous conduct those whom he failed to reduce by force.

Scanderbeg next entered upon the execution of a plan by which he hoped to advance the progress of the siege of Dayina, and of the war with the Venetians.

At the foot of mount Sardonicke, called by the common country people, Marrany, were the ruins of an ancient town named Baleze, distant from Scutarie twelve miles, from Drivasta five, and fifteen from Dayina. It had of old been laid in ruins, as some say, by Attila. This place Scanderbeg determined to rebuild, thinking that, if it were well garrisoned, it would afford him the means of annoying the Venetian territory, and of preventing succors from being sent to the relief of Dayina. He without delay set about carrying this his purpose into effect, and having restored the place somewhat to the condition of a fortified town, partly by walls and partly by palisades and other fortifications of timber-work, and having furnished it with men, he appointed Amese his nephew, and Marin Span or Spaniard, an Albanian of tried prudence and fidelity, to have charge of the place and to see the work completed. This done, he without delay repassed the river Drynon, to prosecute the siege of Dayina, which he would not, on any account, suffer to be intermitted.

And here one cannot avoid admiring the courage and determined perseverance of Scanderbeg, thus to permit no dan-

gers or difficulties to deter him from his purpose ; but, while threatened on one hand by the Turks, and on the other by the Venetians, to maintain what he conceived to be his right, and to be for the honor and advantage of his country.

When the fortifications of Baleze were completed, Amese, prompted by his youthful ardor and the success which had attended him in some unimportant inroads upon the enemy's territory, resolved to take by surprise *Drivasta*, a town not far from Baleze. His heart was so much set upon this enterprise, that he did not hesitate to weaken his garrison in order to effect it ; being in hopes of accomplishing his purpose without the aid of his uncle, and before he should receive any intimation of it. Marin, who disapproved of the attempt, fearing to excite the ill-will of Amese if he openly opposed him, endeavored secretly to discourage the minds of the soldiery. But failing in this, he at length declared his mind to Amese ; representing to him, in a wise and grave manner, the rashness of the purposed attempt, and the mischiefs which might result from it.

This wholesome advice of Marin Spaniard was very ill received by Amese, and, at first, very insolently treated. He replied, that they had been left by his uncle with equal authority ; that he was not placed there to be directed, either in peace or war, by the will of another ; that he should command his own troops in his own way. After a time, however, he became more modest and moderate in his language and behaviour. He told his colleague that he would willingly be swayed by his opinion, if the protection of Baleze and the affair of *Drivasta* could not both be secured at the same time, but that neither need interfere with the other ; that the forces under their command were sufficient for both ; that he did not unadvisedly undertake his proposed attempt ; that he would be upon the town of *Drivasta* so suddenly that he should find the young men unarmed, the gates unguarded, and the walls without sentinels ; be-



sides which, that many of the inhabitants were disposed to yield to him, upon receiving a summons ; but that, supposing the enterprise more difficult than he expected, it was not his intention to expose his men by a long-continued attack upon the town. He ended by taking the hand of Marin, and bidding him to be of good courage, and to hope for the success of his undertaking. He then displayed his ensigns, and marched cheerfully forward. There were scarcely 2000 men left for the defence of Baleze. Not that any one had been compelled to follow Amese, but because the Albanians were less pleased with inactive warfare, than with the assaulting of towns and strongholds.

Although Amese had been as careful as he could to conceal his intended attempt, and hastened on with as much speed as possible, yet the news of his approach reached Drivasta before him. The inhabitants, from the beginning of the attack upon Dayina, had kept courts of guard in different parts of their town, and a number of armed men to keep watch. At first, however, they were much astonished ; and, mounting upon the walls, made preparation of such munitions as were fit to repulse an enemy. But when they saw the forces of Amese draw near, and perceived how few they were in number, their apprehension was changed to contempt. Notwithstanding the undaunted countenance of the garrison, the young chieftain advanced, with undiminished confidence, and, in the name of Scanderbeg, summoned the place to surrender. But receiving a bold and disdainful answer, he was filled with anger and indignation ; and retiring about a mile and a half from the walls, he consulted with his army in what way it might be possible, seeing he had no artillery, to bring the inhabitants of the town to terms. In the mean time, to prevent surprise, he posted scouts and sentinels around the place where he was encamped.

The townsmen, at the instigation of Andrew Angell, one of the principal citizens, and distinguished by his long expe-

rience in arms and his warlike actions, resolved to anticipate their enemies, and to attack them before they should assault the town. After addressing the forces in a speech containing the usual topics of encouragement, Andrew Angell led them forth, while they expressed their alacrity by loud shouts and cries, which were augmented by those of the troops upon the walls and by the sound of the trumpets.

The sudden and unexpected approach of the Drivastines caused great alarm among the troops of Amese. He, however, headed a troop of those whom he could most readily assemble, in order to keep the enemy in check until the rest of his men, who were scattered abroad in the country, could have time to return, and, together with those who were in the camp, set themselves in battle array, and march out to join their commander and the troops whom he had already led forward. But the wise counsel of the skilful captain of the forces of the enemy frustrated the purpose of this young and inexperienced leader. Angell, dividing his forces into three parts, sent a company of Italians and some horsemen to attack the camp on the upper side. The rest of his cavalry, being mostly archers and peasants, he directed to prevent the stragglers from re-entering the camp, and to intercept those who were within the trenches, if they sallied out. He himself, with the third troop, attacked Amese, and at the first onset overthrew his battalion and put him to flight. Nevertheless, he and his companions, making their way through the squadron of archers, saved themselves in the open country. The different bodies of the Drivastine forces having joined themselves together, they attacked the camp, and, after some resistance, drove from their trenches the troops of Amese, who fled on all sides, fighting and fleeing at the same time, towards the open plain. Angell did not pursue his enemies; but, being content with frustrating their attempt, he ordered a retreat to be sounded, and retired joyful into the town.

Amese, having gathered up his scattered forces, in revenge for this discomfiture, of which the disgrace was greater than the loss, and abandoning all hope of taking Drivasta, turned his anger against every thing without the town which he could destroy—burning the houses and cutting down the trees, not sparing any thing that served for use or for pleasure. Nothing remained but a few olive-trees, for the abundance of which the place was remarkable. These depredations, committed by the troops of Amese, did not provoke the townsmen to sally forth and risk another encounter, as they apprehended falling into some ambuscade, and having their return to the town intercepted.

When Amese had vented his fury upon the environs of Drivasta, instead of returning to Baleze—where he felt ashamed to meet Marin, for contemning whose wise counsel he was so sadly disgraced—he directed his march towards Dayina, where he experienced a much worse reception from his uncle than he would have met with from his fellow-commander. Scanderbeg, having received an account of what had passed, was grievously offended with his nephew; and as soon as he knew of his arrival he sent for him, and, in the presence of all his companions, very much to the mortification of the young soldier, reproached him with the fault he had committed. He laid to his charge the innocent blood of his companions, which, through his folly, he had caused to be spilt; calling him, with a loud voice, both rash and arrogant, for having, without any authority from him, acted so foolish a part. When, upon inquiry, he found that the expedition had been undertaken without the concurrence of Marin, his anger was greatly increased; and he moreover severely blamed Amese for adding cruelty to his rashness, by wantonly destroying the property of the citizens which lay without the walls of the town. Amese did not pretend to offer any excuse for his conduct; but, turning a little aside to his companions, he exclaimed—“ Good God! there

is nothing more infamous than a man that is vanquished ; for he must, on one hand, endure the insults of his enemies, and, on the other, the wrathful countenance of his friends !” Hereupon all the bands, gathering around Scanderbeg, entreated him to mitigate his anger, and to forgive the fault—alleging that the youth of his nephew was sufficiently punished, and his misfortune greatly aggravated, by the severe rebukes which he had suffered, and that they themselves were as much to blame as he. Such was the generous nature of Scanderbeg that he was not long proof against these intercessions, but soon suffered himself to be entreated, and his anger to be pacified.

## BOOK IV.

WHILE the Christians were thus quarrelling with each other, and Scanderbeg was lying idle before the walls of Dayina, Amurath, who was particularly informed of what was passing, both by his bashaw Mustapha, and by common report, deliberated much upon the course he ought to pursue. Sometimes he would consider that the opportunity for crushing the Prince of Albania appeared to be very favorable; then again he was struck with wonder at the invincible fortune and prosperity of the man. He, moreover, doubted whether the quarrels of the Christians were real, or only pretended. While Amurath, in his perplexity, thus remained inactive, the military ardor of the Venetians gradually abated; still, the importunities of Mustapha, who wished to wipe off the stain of his former disgrace, finally prevailed with the sultan to take up arms. The command of the expedition was committed to the Bashaw, to whom Amurath directed a letter of wholesome advice for his conduct in the war, in the following terms:—

“The warre, *Mustapha*, which thou doest so earnestly demaund, now from henceforth we doe freely graunt it thee: if those reportes be true which are brought us concerning the tumultes of the Venetians. Thy vertue and thy valour shall winne thee honour and reputation upon this enemy: yet see thou be well advised and carie thy selfe discreetly, and let not a light beleefe and vaine credulitie cause thee to take arms, which, afterwardes, when thou doest least thinke, thou shalt bee enforced to lay aside with shame and dishonour. Peradventure it is but an appearance of a counterfeit and deceitfull warre, which is now betweene the Christians; and thou mayest be deceived by their dis-

sembled contentions. Looke unto it, and consider this, that (as the common saying is) there is no quarrell so short as that of the father against the child. We (who are absent) can not give counsell to one present, nor yet do wee approve a fond desire of fight, without good cause and inducement which may move thee thereunto. "It is thou that oughtest to have an eye, and to discusse by thy selfe, particularly before thou take armes, all that which after (when thou hast taken armes) is to be put in execution. Thou hast good store of souldiours, fresh and resolute, and thy enemy is partly wearied with paines and travell, and partly weakened with his many battels. The rest we referre to thy sufficiencie and discretion, for we will not hinder thee from enterprising any thing, which shall seeme unto thee to be for our honour and advantage."

Mustapha, being thus gratified in his desire of making another attack upon the Albanians, was much elated with the hope of ending the war by one blow. So confident did he feel, that he used no precautions by which to conceal his preparations, but showed himself ready to make battle with the Prince of Epire whenever an opportunity should offer.

In the mean time Scanderbeg received early information of the state of affairs, from the garrison upon the confines of Macedonia; to whom he immediately dispatched orders to avoid, with the utmost care, giving the Bashaw an opportunity of obliging them to fight. He directed them to retire from before him into the woods and hills, and to amuse him with a show of timorous flight, in order to protract the time until he himself could arrive with the rest of his forces, whom they should join as soon as they perceived them to approach. He then prepared to march with part of his forces, towards the Turks; and calling Amese to him, he gave him in charge to attend diligently to the siege of Dayina, ordering and entreating him not to make any change in the settled plan of operations during his absence, nor to

make any attempt against the besieged ; but to take warning from his former disgrace, and not to move from before the walls of the town, but closely to block up the inhabitants, and prevent them from obtaining any relief. He then selected from the besieging forces 500 horse and 1500 foot, all picked men. The soldiers who had been foiled at Drivasta were very anxious to be among the number of those selected, in the hope of having an opportunity to wipe off the stain which they thought was upon them. He, however, did not gratify their wish ; but chose out such veterans as might most be depended upon for active service, and in dangerous encounters.

Scanderbeg had scarcely quitted Dayina, before the Scutarians, taking advantage of the approach of the Turks, which required the attention of the Albanian prince, marched out, with a train of artillery, to attack Baleze ; for they were aware that, as long as that place should be in possession of the Albanians, there would be perpetual war within their own territories. But Marin, the governor, having timely notice of their approach, he and all the garrison departed secretly, with all their effects, to join the troops before Dayina, leaving behind them nothing but the empty walls and naked ramparts. When the Scutarians first approached the place, and found every thing quiet, and no sign of inhabitants, they feared some surprise. But when they at length learned, from their scouts, that the place was really deserted, they were greatly enraged ; and, having demolished the fortifications and razed the walls, they returned to Scutarie.

Marin having joined the army before Dayina with the garrison of Baleze, a secret satisfaction was excited in the mind of Amese to see that his partner in arms was also a sharer with him in misfortune. Nor did he refrain from openly casting blame upon his uncle for the moderation shown by him towards the inhabitants of Scutarie and Dayina. The ill

feelings were already at work within this fiery youth which afterwards broke out into undisguised rebellion.

During these transactions, the forces stationed by Scanderbeg upon the confines of Macedonia were not permitted by Mustapha to remain at rest. His troops harassed them by continual inroads and attacks. On their part, the Albanians kept themselves upon the defensive, within their trenches and fortifications; only sallying forth occasionally in small parties, and quickly retreating as if through fear, in order to amuse the enemy and protract the time. Mustapha, thinking that he could not, with a prospect of success, attack the Albanians within their fortifications, and not daring to pursue them in their flight, for fear of ambuscades and other warlike stratagems with which they were familiar, placed guards to watch them in their encampment, and, with the rest of his troops, laid waste the adjacent country. At length, being informed of the approach of Scanderbeg, he assembled all his forces, and encamped within two miles of his enemies.

The place where he encamped was called Oronochea, in the upper Dibria, upon a plain of no great breadth, about six miles from Croia. Scanderbeg, with his fresh and new troops, entered into the camp of the Epirots. Where he had no sooner arrived, than he proclaimed by sound of trumpet that no one should depart thence without special permission; and immediately he set all his men at work to render his defences more secure. Mustapha likewise remained within his intrenchments. When Scanderbeg had completed his works, he made a general review of his forces. Many of the troops which were originally stationed there had been on different occasions withdrawn, so that of the old bands there remained but 3500 horse and 600 foot; and the whole number of forces amounted to about 6000 fighting men, with whom it was the intention of the Prince of Epire to encounter the whole force of Mustapha, and out of this number he appointed 300 picked men to guard the camp. He disposed



his army into two wings and a main body. In the front of each wing he placed 1500 horsemen, with a few foot soldiers in their rear; the most of his infantry he reserved for the centre or main battle, which was also covered by 500 horse. The reason for placing his cavalry in front was, that he might more effectually meet the shock of the Turkish horse.

While Scanderbeg kept his army in battle array, silent and without moving, but waiting for the approach of the enemy, a Turk, named Caragusa, advanced from among his companions into the field which lay between the two armies, and made a show of challenging some one of the opposite party to single combat. He approached near to the ranks of the Christians, and with a loud voice dared the boldest of them to measure his strength with him. This defiance was received in silence. But, at length, Paul Manessey, an excellent swordsman and expert rider, could no longer brook the bravadoes of the barbarian against his nation and countrymen, especially as his fellow-soldiers seemed to cast their looks toward him, as if he were the one whom this challenge especially concerned. With great alacrity and a cheerful countenance, he addressed himself to Scanderbeg in order to know his pleasure. The prince highly approved and commended this soldier, and told him to go forward under the conduct of the great God, and not only procure for himself immortal honor, but lead his fellow-soldiers by his example to a happy victory. Hereupon, those of his own troop flocking around, extolled him as though he had already gotten the victory. He delayed no longer than to arm and prepare himself for the fight. Then, leaping into his seat, and galloping into the open field towards the Turk, he told him to make ready for the combat. The Turk desired him to wait until he could address a few words to him; which he did, to the following effect:

“The victory must be decided between us by our valor

and our fortune, but respecting the conditions of the victory, we ourselves must take some order. If the destinies have decreed that I be vanquished, I am willing that you shall dispose of my dead body and of my spoils in whatever manner you choose, and I require the same condition with respect to yourself. And let this agreement be ratified by our generals, lest, during the heat of the combat or after it is decided, some tumult arise between the two armies." To this proposal Paul made answer that he agreed to the terms proposed; that the Turk might fight without the fear of being attacked by any other enemy than himself, whose dead body, if he fell, should be at his disposal. And, although he himself would rather that his remains should be in the possession of his own companions, Scanderbeg would never consent that the body of one who had shown himself so weak as to be vanquished in combat should be received again into his camp.

The bold reply of this cavalier, and the little account which he appeared to make of his life, so struck the Turk that he seemed to repent of having provoked the encounter. The two commanders-in-chief having ratified the agreement between the combatants, they were left alone in the middle of the field, with the eyes of all fixed upon them, and the thoughts of all anxiously and doubtfully occupied with the event of the contest; for, in appearance, the two champions were nearly matched. They were both of the middle stature, and of the same age, neither of them dull or sluggish, and yet neither too full of the fire and rashness of youth. They were armed alike, with lances and with shields which were barred with steel. At their sides they had Turkish cimeters and heavy clubs of iron. Their bodies were armed with cuirasses, and their heads with helmets. Over their armor they wore very bright scarfs\* of silk; which, although they

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\* "Camocks."—*Lavardin*.

were useless as armor, gave the combatants a showy appearance.

Being thus equipped, and manifesting in their countenances and carriage much fierceness and animosity, they took the field opposite to each other, and putting spurs to their horses, with their lances couched, the Christian knight running at the head of the Turk, struck him over his shield and pierced him through the right eye. This wound brought him to the ground, and the other speedily dismounting, spoiled him of his armor, and severed his head from his body. Thus laden with the spoils of his enemy, he remounted his horse and returned to his fellow-soldiers, who rushed forward with great joy and congratulations, and conducted him to their general. Scanderbeg received him very graciously, and bestowed upon him high commendations. In the presence of the army, he rewarded him with a rich coat-of-arms of gold tissue, and with a large estate and revenue. As the time for giving battle had arrived, Scanderbeg first made a short address to his soldiers, in which he held up to them the conduct of their victorious comrade, and exhorted them to follow the example he had given them, and to consider his success as an omen of their own good fortune.

After this address to his men, they having taken refreshment, Scanderbeg, about the seventh hour, ordered the trumpet to sound; whereupon the army immediately marched forward in battle array, and with loud shouts advanced towards the camp of the enemy. Mustapha came out to meet them at first with a squadron assembled in a disorderly manner; then with all his forces. But scarcely were they arranged in order of battle, when many of them, seized with a sudden panic, betook themselves to flight, and returned in all haste to the shelter of their entrenchments. Mustapha, when he perceived that his men were giving way, resolved to encourage them by his own example. He cried out to them to follow him, and ordered the ensigns to ad-

vance where they should see him make head; and then, couching his lance and putting spurs to his horse, he rushed forward against his enemies, firmly resolved either to obtain the victory for Amurath his master, or to sell his life dearly. Many of his officers followed him, and, little by little, the shame of deserting their leader induced others to join him; so that the fight was maintained—yet not with that vigor and spirit which rendered the issue of the contest doubtful; for the Christians from the beginning had evidently the advantage, nor did it ever cease during the battle to be on their side; so much did the courage of the infidels appear to be damped by the overthrow of their champion. Moses, sometimes advancing with his cavalry, and sometimes bringing on his infantry against the Turks, caused among them such disorder, that he without much difficulty broke in upon them. Paul Manessey, the victorious champion, fighting in the main battle, made a great slaughter. The Turkish ranks being thrown into confusion, and the greater part of the horses slain by the Albanian footmen, the Turks, with their lances in their hands, served as foot soldiers also, but at great disadvantage, in consequence of not being accustomed to that service, and because of the unfitness of their armor. Still, being prompted by shame, they maintained the fight, in hopes that their general on his part might be successful; for, being accompanied by the most valiant men of his army, and being able to make head against the main battle where Scanderbeg commanded in person, he was in hopes to retrieve the ill success of his other forces. The fury of the Turks was principally directed against Paul Manessey, through a desire to revenge their companions slain, and in hope of the reward set upon his head; but the prowess of this cavalier caused their efforts to recoil upon themselves. Being well guarded with a troop of choice warriors, he contemned their utmost violence; and at length, perceiving at a distance one of the barbarians, who had separated himself

from his own hands, and was attacking the Christians with great impetuosity, he rushed towards him without saying a word, and when near to him, discharged such a blow upon his head, which he followed up with one or two more strokes, that he unhorsed him and made him to measure his length upon the ground. The companions of the Turk, seeing him lie dead, turned their bridles, neither attempting to revenge his death nor to rescue his dead body; and the Epirots then pressing on more boldly, made them give way and retreat at full speed, while Paul pursued them with taunts and reproaches.

The Turks, having gained the open country, paid no heed to the reproaches of their enemy, but continued their flight unmolested, except by the archers, who pursued and harassed them with great obstinacy—the rest of the forces being too much exhausted to join in the pursuit. But, gathering up the ensigns and crescents which lay scattered over the field of battle, they strove with each other who should carry them to the tents of Scanderbeg; while they made the air to resound with their exclamations and their rude rhyming songs. With Scanderbeg all had gone well long before. The Turks lay slain in heaps upon the field, or reserved as prisoners with their hands bound behind them. Mustapha himself was brought prisoner in triumph upon a Hungarian horse, together with twelve other persons of distinction. He had rushed furiously into the squadron of Scanderbeg, where being inclosed and cut off from his own soldiers, he was taken captive.

It may be doubted whether in all the wars with Amurath, any exploit redounded more to the honor, both general and individual, of Scanderbeg and his forces, than this victory. It is reported that of the Turks were slain ten thousand; that the prisoners amounted to no more than eighty-two, and that fifteen standards were taken. The loss on the side of the Christians was comparatively small; scarcely amount-

ing, as is said, to three hundred men. In the camp of the enemy was found great and rich booty; the spoils of the slain were also of great value; and a number of good horses were obtained. But not content with all this, the fiery spirit of Scanderbeg still prompted him to action; and after he had refreshed his forces, he spent the rest of the day in ravaging the territories of the enemy. Having laid the country waste far and near, with fire and sword, the troops returned laden with booty, and bringing away with them great numbers of beasts and cattle. What with the quantity of spoil which they bore, and the weariness caused by their great and long-continued exertions, it was not until an hour after night had set in that they got back to their camp. The remainder of the night was passed in taking their rest, in great quiet, without any bonfires or exulting shouts, or other tokens of victory: and the reason was, that the Prince of Epire appeared more than usually sad and downcast on account of the news of the destruction of *Baleze*. All those within the camp who were discreet and sober-minded conformed themselves to the disposition of their commander; sometimes encouraging him with pleasant speeches, and sometimes breaking out into rage against the enemy. But the mind of Scanderbeg admitted no consolation, whenever he thought upon the outrageous conduct of the inhabitants of Scutarie, after the moderation which he had exhibited towards them.

The morning after the battle, by break of day, Scanderbeg, having appointed 2000 horse and 1000 foot for the defence of the frontiers, marched with the rest of his forces, his prisoners, and the best part of his booty towards *Dayina*. When he had learned from *Marin Span* more certainly and particularly the circumstances relating to the destruction of *Baleze*, he delayed no longer than to put his troops in order, and then immediately with new forces passed the river *Drynon*, and dispersed his cavalry over the

whole country, who laid waste all that came in their way, destroying the crops, cutting down the vines and the fruit-trees, and putting to death such of the inhabitants as offered resistance. Thence turning his fury against other towns of the Venetian territory, he so harassed them that they had good cause to curse the rash exploit of the Scutarians against *Baleze*. Many of the people of the country went over to the side of Scanderbeg, rather than incur the calamities suffered in consequence of his hostility.

This wasteful and cruel irruption of Scanderbeg has not escaped reprehension; he appears to have been hurried away by anger and revenge. The cold and rain at length obliged him to seek for winter quarters under the walls of Dayina.

During these troubles, the governors of the Venetian territory and the magistrates of *Scutarie* being greatly distressed, especially with regard to the forces shut up in *Dayina*, whom they knew to be reduced to the last extremity, dispatched letters to the senate of Venice, giving an account of the wretched state of their confederates.

At this time Turkish messengers arrived in the Christian camp, to treat of the ransom of the prisoners. Upon the payment of 25,000 ducats, Mustapha and all his companions were delivered up. The Turks, having been feasted and entertained as though all enmity had been forgotten, were furnished with attendants both as guides on the way, and as protectors against the violence of the Christians. The money thus obtained was all distributed by Scanderbeg among his troops, as he desired that those should be partakers of the rewards who had shared in the labors and dangers of the war. At this time the severity of the weather prevented any attempts from being made against the town of Dayina, whose inhabitants continued resolute in their determination to defend it, although they suffered great distress, and their strength was much diminished. The victorious arms of

Scanderbeg were thus stayed by the courage and constancy of an inconsiderable place. Yet he was not deterred from prosecuting his enterprise, and resolved to reduce them by famine if he could in no other way bring them to terms. But rumors were now abroad that the Venetian government was inclined to peace, for which reason Scanderbeg restrained the violence of his incursions upon their territory. After not many days, information arrived that ambassadors from the senate of Venice were on their way to treat with him concerning peace. Whereupon, he sent the chief of his nobles, with a great train, to meet them. Having entertained them sumptuously, he the day following gave them audience. The conditions offered by the Venetians were, that the Prince of Epire should raise the siege of Dayina, and suffer it to remain under the jurisdiction of Venice; and that Scanderbeg, in lieu thereof, should have possession of a tract lying upon the river Drynon, called Busegiarpeni. These conditions were no sooner propounded than they were accepted, and Scanderbeg felt well satisfied with the terms offered to him. Peace was accordingly concluded; and the business being in an orderly manner dispatched, silence was commanded, and Scanderbeg made an address to the ambassadors in which he expressed the satisfaction with which he laid down his arms, and the great respect and friendship which he felt towards the republic of Venice.

When Scanderbeg had finished his speech, he sent heralds throughout the province to publish to the people the news of this so much desired peace. The siege of Dayina was raised, and the works erected by the besiegers destroyed. The soldiers, full of mirth and joy, laying aside all enmity, welcomed the inhabitants of the town and entertained them in their tents and pavilions. Andrew and Volcathagne were immediately set at liberty; and all things which had been taken from the Scutarians, such as villages, castles, fortresses, and the like, were surrendered to the ambassadors. The day



following, the ambassadors, having been sumptuously entertained, were dismissed with many valuable presents.

Scanderbeg then, giving way to the activity and impetuosity of his nature, soon led his forces to the Turkish frontiers, with the intention of spoiling them as was his custom. The men cheerfully followed him; for, in those days, they asked no wages besides the spoil which they took from their enemies. Whence it became a common saying among the neighboring princes that the enemy's territory was Scanderbeg's treasury. Having divided his army into three parts, he spent two days in plundering the territory of the sultan. The lives of the inhabitants were not spared, except those who turned Christians, and *they* escaped only with their lives; every thing was wasted by fire and sword; so that, if Amurath had then marched against Epire, he would not have found enough to sustain his troops a single day. This desolation having been committed, Scanderbeg returned within his own confines; and with many commendations, dismissed his troops to their homes, except 3000 who always remained as a garrison upon the borders. He himself, with his fellow-citizens and his ordinary guard, returned to Croia.

When the Venetians received tidings of the peace concluded in Epire, and of the generosity of the Albanian prince, and heard the commendations bestowed upon him by their ambassadors, they were greatly rejoiced. And the senate, willing to honor the virtue and liberality of that prince, he and his posterity were, in a general council of the citizens and nobles, by public consent, created citizens of Venice, and enrolled among the number of the most noble families of the city and commonwealth. He was besides, by the unanimous consent of the senate, appointed sole governor and lieutenant-general for the commonwealth in those quarters; and letters to that effect, together with rich presents, were forthwith dispatched to him.

• During these transactions between Scanderbeg and the

Venetians, the Turks remained quiet. Amurath perceived that a war with the Albanians carried on in the manner it had hitherto been done, would only tend to increase their power. He revolved in his mind the course which ought to be pursued in order to obtain better success. At length, hearing of the peace between Scanderbeg and the Venetians, and of the spoiling of his provinces, he called his viziers around him, and opened his mind to them in the following address, which is given in the very words and orthography of the old author from whom the materials of this work are principally taken.

“Hitherto (most worthy and trustie Councillours), we haue both well nourished and much augmented the prosperous temeritie of this fugitiue: and being occupied with the vrgent necessitie of the warre of *Hungarie*, we have so long deferred the due punishment of this our hate full enemy, that by the multitude of outrages and contumelious abuses, he hath freely and without chastisement, incensed the maiestie of the *Ottoman* Empire; such as neither my eares can endure to heare reported, nor my eyes can abide the sight of. His fierce and furious madnesse (I shame to speak it), is encreased so farre and is growne to that passe, that he dareth with all his forces, to be aforehand with vs, in assaulting vs; and openly to condemne vs of faintnesse and want of courage. What availeth it heere to recount vnto you the misfortunes of *Haly* Bassa? and the like mischances of so many other Captaines and leaders? We neede goe no further to take a view and coniecture of the image of our estate, but onely by the miserable prouince of *Macedon*, which (as I vnderstand) by continuall roades, inuasions and burnings is brought to that extremitie, that from henceforth we haue little hope left to see therein any markes or tokens that it is our prouince, but filled rather and replenished with our enemies: for euen of late did he enter it with an armie leauied of purpose, spending whole daies in spoiling and dis-

peopling of the country. How long shall we endure the attemptes of this wicked and seditious wretch? Shall we suffer him so long till we ourselues be fettered, and that he put irons vpon our owne legs: it is high time that wee suppress his pernicious endeuors; for feare least by our negligence, this fire do increase: and then all too late (which my mind misgiueth me) we do begin to frame our complaints, and seeke remedie all in vaine: considering that an enimie being once contemned and neglected, of a small and meane beginning manie times doth amplifie and enlarge his forces, and lifteth vp his head to the ruine of his aduersarie. All things (my masters) doe inuite you to the warres, and do seeme to minister the meanes vnto you: for if there were no other reason to induce vs thereunto, yet neuerthelesse, the onely regard and lamentable aspect of the miseries and calamities of our subjects, were not that alone sufficient to sollicite the courages of men braue and valiant? The daylie captiuities and imprisonments of so many our friends, the smoke of our towns and vilages on all sides fiered and burnt (which do euen call and crie in themselves for a revenge), would they not make us euen to blush for verie shame if we should suffer them? Haue we so often heretofore restrained and repressed the rage of the Hungarians? haue we by continuall and memorable defaits, left *Greece* mourning in her own sorrowes and laments? haue we broken the forces of so many mighty and redoubted potentates and brought them euen to naught? and shall we now suffer (through a timeorous kind of pusillanimitie) these troubles and tumults of *Epire* to gather strength and to encrease vpon vs? shall we yet endure to see that prouince (which of late was tributarie vnto vs) now to stand in contention and to braue vs by armes? What? hath the land of *Albanie* so suddenly of late engendered another sort of Epirots? and is it possible that a new and vnaccustomed kind of enimie should issue forth vnexpected against vs? I am determind once againe,

to make triall if this nation be so fierce and vntameable : and if the hardie and haughtie courage of their obstinate and proud prince can be brought vnder the accustomed yoke of their subjection. We must not from henceforth stand vpon points of subtiltie and vaine pollicies ; nor must we any more seek to surprize this enimie by ambushments : neither doth the time now serue (by the diversitie of the Leaders and Chieftaines and by ordinarie troupes one after another) to fill their hatefull soile with the blood of our souldiers : for we see that one and the same kind of misfortune doth follow both our leaders and our armies : and whereas we made choise of them to do vs seruice, they haue serued to endamage rather our selues then our enemies. Shall we commit another armie to *Haly Bassa*, or *Ferisey*, who besides the wounds and the deformed reliques of their owne forces, haue brought vs not so much as one standard or ensigne of the enemies ? Shall we follow the vnfortunate aduise and counselles of *Mustapha* : and minister paye vnto the Christians, and ease their charge in the maintaining of their forces : while he is carried onely with a desire to extinguish and free the infamie of his bonds and imprisonment ? We haue bene so often vanquished, taken prisoners, ransomed : and in briefe so often beaten and discomfited, that we haue reason from henceforth to abhorre, and to be ashamed of our owne estate and condition : we must now therefore take vpon vs the charge of this warre, with our best meanes and the vttermost of our endeours. It behoueth vs to vndertake it with such forces, to employ so great a puissance, and to march into *Epire* with so mightie an hoast ; that the countrey may be scant able to containe it, nor yet to sustaine the force and violence of our armie. By this meanes without any losse or bloodshed, shall we purge and clense all the countrey : and by a notable discomfiture of our enemies (being either expelled and chased quite away, or vtterlie subdued and vanquished) we shall re-establish those townes in their auncient

forme and fashion : which by the disloialtie of this fierce nation, hath bene withheld from vs : or if the peruerse obstinacie and obdurate stubbornesse of this people (as it is likely and usuall with them) vpon a rash and desperate resolution, and of an inconsiderate desire to defende their prince, do betake themselves to armes : we will then vtterly destroy these wretched soules (who do euen long for their deserued punishment), and with a singular reuenge (which we haue so long desired) we will recompence them for the old wrongs and iniuries which they haue done vs, both in publique and in priuate. It is your duties (valiant and worthie men) to vndertake this warre, not as you were wont to doe against the Hungarians, or other enemies : but with a farre greater wrath and indignation, as against those which are your slaues and fugitives, and who (being most mischieuously affected against you) haue nōw made shewe of their insolent and hatefull mindes, which for a long time lay close concealed and dissembled."

The views of Amurath were approved by those around him ; and it was unanimously agreed that preparation for war should be made without delay, so as not to lose the season of spring ; for the snow on the mountains was beginning to melt, and their summits to appear. Therefore, commissions were immediately issued, and proclamation made throughout the Turkish provinces and dependencies, and to such particular cities and towns by name as the sultan thought proper, that a certain number of thousands of horse and foot should without delay be furnished to him, and assemble at Adrianople ; for Constantinople was still under the dominion of the Greeks. These great preparations of Amurath, as their destination was kept secret, caused great alarm among the neighboring Christians. The Hungarians, distrusting the faith of the Turks, began to assemble their forces, although weakened by their many disasters. The Greeks, notwithstanding the alarm which prevailed among them, re-

solved to exert themselves for the defence and maintenance of their enfeebled and decaying empire.

But Scanderbeg, in consequence of his long acquaintance with the artifices of the Turkish monarchy, was not deceived by the practices of Amurath. It is also supposed that he had secret spies in the Ottoman court, from whom he received intimation of what was intended by his enemies. What chiefly induced him to think that he was the object of these warlike preparations, was the apparent remissness of the Ottoman government with respect to Epire—no new forces having been sent to revenge the disgrace of Mustapha, or even to secure the Turkish frontiers.

Castriot, therefore, laying aside all private and civil affairs, and being not in the least dismayed by the tempest of war which threatened him, with prompt and steady resolution put in execution every measure which could be adopted by a wise and experienced chieftain. He dispatched messengers to his confederates, directing them to be ready in arms, and to dispose sufficient garrisons in the towns and strongholds, together with more than ordinary store of provision and warlike munitions. For Amurath seemed to intend, not only the destruction of Scanderbeg, but the overthrow of the whole country of Epire. Scanderbeg himself, when he had dispatched Moses and other of his nobles to make levies of men and to collect provisions, went from place to place, taking rest neither day nor night, but continually and carefully examining all things with his own eyes. He caused such of the husbandmen and common sort of people as were not fit for military service, to retire, with their families and effects, within the walled towns. All who were able to bear arms he retained, for various services in war. When the garrison of Macedonia, and other troops which daily flocked to Croia, were assembled, they made up a fair and goodly host. His next business was to arrange his forces, and appoint them their several charges. He accordingly

reserved for his own division 10,000 men, who had lately served in the war against Venice, on whom he knew that he could rely in every exigency. To the garrison of Croia, besides townsmen, he added 1300 soldiers, all Epirots, and men of approved valor. The Croians provided themselves with all kinds of munitions of war, for the defence of their walls and the maintenance of their liberty, to the preservation of which they were faithfully devoted.

When the additional garrison was introduced into the city, the women and children were removed to the towns of Epire upon the sea-coast, and to other places that were under the dominion of the Venetians, or their confederates, whither many husbandmen and laborers, with their cattle and effects, had retired. None were suffered to remain within the walls but those who could be of service in the war.\*

The useless mouths being sent away, and the tumult over, Scanderbeg employed himself in dealing with the victuallers, corn-merchants, and those who supplied other munitions; in preparing public garner, and in appointing to each soldier victuals to serve him for a year. He also made presents of great numbers of targets, and other warlike weapons. And thus he set all things in order, and secured the good-will and affection of his people.

He then sent for Uranocontes, an Epirot by birth, whom he had lately appointed to the government of Croia, and whom he loved and favored, both for the sake of his ancestors, and for his own deserts. With him he held a long consultation, respecting the wiles of the Turks and the defence of the city. When the conference was ended he proceeded to the market-place, and there, in the midst of his armed forces, he, with a loud voice, recommended to them the protection of the city; assuring them of reward for their

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\* The account given by Lavardin of the distress of those who were thus separated from their relations and friends, I do not think it necessary to transcribe.

fidelity, and of punishment for want of faith or neglect of duty. He exhorted them resolutely to repel the enemy, and on no account to be induced to listen to any propositions that they might offer. He said that, if they did not look well to themselves, the Turks would be apt to deceive them by false and flattering pretences; and that the town was so strongly situated as to preclude their enemies from any probability of making themselves masters of it. Having addressed these and other exhortations to his forces, Scanderbeg took leave of them, and departed. He was attended by a great concourse of people to the gate of the city, which was closed as soon as he had passed through; and he then joined the rest of his forces, which lay encamped in a plain within sight of the city. After scouring the fields, he sounded to horse, and caused his camp to move. They had not proceeded far before they met Moses, who came to Scanderbeg, accompanied by a well-appointed regiment of his own. He was just returned from Sfetigrade, which, being seated upon the Turkish frontier, was a source of much anxiety to Scanderbeg. The Dibrian, however, had been careful to put its fortifications in good repair, and to furnish it well with men, and with all things requisite for its defence, and had removed from it all those who were incapable of military service. He had committed the government of the place to Peter Parlat, an experienced and judicious officer. The garrison was composed almost wholly of Dibrians, which people Moses had selected out of all the Albanian forces as being the best soldiers among the inhabitants of Epire. Scanderbeg greatly commended what he had done, placed other forces under his command, and sent him to see all other places provided with what was necessary. He himself, with a small troop of horse, galloped to the gates of Sfetigrade; for he felt much anxiety about that place, as though he had a presentiment of the misfortune which was to come upon it. In order to encourage the garrison, and put them on their guard



against the artifices of Amurath, which he feared more than his open attacks, he entered the city, and there, in the midst of many of the principal citizens, addressed the soldiers of the garrison.

Among other things, he declared to them, that if ever they had desired to manifest their faith and loyalty, and to render the memory thereof imperishable, God could not have afforded them a more favorable opportunity for so doing than the present: that the safety of the empire mainly depended upon their bravery; for that the first attempt of Amurath would be against them, to the intent that, the chief bulwark being destroyed, he might with more ease lead his forces into the heart of the country: that a firm resistance on their part would discourage Amurath from further attempts; and that, should he be so obstinate as to persist in his efforts against them, his troops would doubtless grow gray-headed before their departure, since the natural strength of the place was such that it might defy the most furious attacks of any enemy. He ended by saying, that he forbore to address them any longer, lest, by using too many words, he should appear to have conceived some distrust with regard to them.

While Scanderbeg was thus employed, the Turkish army, which was levied in Asia, was transported to Europe, and by long marches arrived at Adrianople. This army did not exceed 40,000 men. For it was usual with the sultan, when he made war in Europe, to raise the greater part of his forces in the countries near to the seat of war, both on account of their being better acquainted than the Asiatics with the Christian mode of warfare, and because the preparations could there be made with greater facility.

When Amurath had raised a mighty host, and had nearly prepared all things necessary, he called a council of his bashaws and other officers, in which the manner of commencing the war was debated. The opinion of some was,

that a flying camp of horsemen (called *Alcanzi* or *Achimzi*), "and whom," says Lavardin, "we may well resemble to our adventurers—(a most cruel and brutish kind of people, and given extremely to robbing and stealing)," should without delay be sent before the main army into Epire: that these troops should rush upon their enemies like a tempest, and suddenly throw every thing into confusion, and by their manner of fighting, draw the Epirots within the reach of the main army, which should regularly advance. Others held an opposite opinion; they thought it best not to provoke the enemy by this kind of warfare, nor to risk the consequences of it: that the whole province of Albania was reported to be in arms, and to be thoroughly prepared: their towns strongly fortified, and their fortresses well garrisoned; and that every thing else had been provided: that all the passes and straits were filled with soldiers; and that Scanderbeg, with the rest of his troops, was continually riding in every direction, examining the thickets and recesses of the woods and forests in order to find places fit for his secret ambushes: that it was most dangerous to attempt such a kind of warfare against an enemy like him: that it was best to march with the whole army, and put an end at once to this troublesome war. Neither of these opinions prevailed; but a middle course was adopted. It was resolved that a third part, or little less, of the whole army should march before the rest, and by their sudden invasion disturb the Albanians, so as to afford an easy entrance for the remainder of the Ottoman forces. Agreeably to this determination, 40,000 light horsemen were immediately sent forward, whose armor consisted of a sword and target, a lance, a plate of mail, and a mace of iron. They were commanded to march by the shortest way to Sfetigrade, and to begin the siege of that place in such manner as should appear to them best. Amurath ordered the remainder of his forces to be mustered and put in order. The description of

these forces, as given by the translator of Lavardin, is as follows, his orthography being modernized:—"Infinite almost was the number of the leaders and commanders, for ordinarily their troops are divided into divers regiments, or charges, which they call Flamburats or Saniacks, and are governments of provinces, under whom do march the Timariots, which properly are those which have a yearly fee or stipend allowed them; and every Flambur hath under him also many Subassides or chiefs of companies, who are of a higher regard and account, and have a larger stipend than the Timariots; and, according to their qualities, are allowed either a greater or lesser number of horsemen under their charge. The foot-bands likewise, both of *Asia* and *Europe*, have their order certain, and are distributed into several companies under their captains. In like manner, the auxiliary forces or extraordinary succors (which in time of war are commonly decreed and sent to the Grand Seignor), were not of any mean or small number. Besides there were a great multitude of voluntary men (as in all expeditions commonly there is no want of such). After all these followed about three thousand men—all of them bankrupt and indebted, or for some misdeed and forfeiture razed and cashiered out of the prince's pay, with a great number also of other youthful and lusty gallants: all which live in hope and expectation, and do seek by some notable and valiant act, either to abolish their former disgrace and ignominy, and to be restored to their former estate and degree; or else, to deserve of their king and emperor some new reward, or some military pay and stipend. The tent or pavilion of the sovereign is continually guarded by more than 7000 armed men, whereof some were on horseback and are named *Spachi*, *Sulastari*, and *Vlufagi*. The others (who are called *Janisseries*, and may be properly accounted of the *Sultan's* family) are all footmen and like to the Macedonian phalanx, or squadron of pikemen amongst the ancient Macedonians.

These were newly instituted, and raised by Amurath, a most warlike and martial kind of men; picked and chosen of purpose; and them he commonly reserved for the last refuge in fight, and for the security and defence of his person; and by the valor of these both he and his successors have obtained so many great and mighty conquests, and subdued all the Levant. Besides all these, for the greater show and ostentation of his forces, there marched with them a most wonderful and marvellous multitude of slaves and base persons unarmed, whom he had brought together and joined to his army, to terrify rather than to employ them against the enemy; and to the intent also that these being offered to the sword and butchered (as a flock of sheep appointed to the slaughter) might so weaken and weary the enemy by overlaboring themselves in killing them, as they might have the better hand and more easily prevail against them, which is one of the greatest and most notable stratagems that the Turks do account of amongst the whole number of their martial policies." The army was commanded by two principal generals, styled *Beillerbiez*, or Lord of Lords, one being the chief commander in Asia, the other in Europe.

The number of this army is not certainly known: it is by some estimated at 150,000 fighting men, 90,000 horsemen, and 60,000 foot-soldiers; by others it is rated at 70,000 horse, and 50,000 foot. The preparations for this expedition were rather with a view to the besieging of towns than to great actions in the field.

When Scanderbeg had done all that he could to encourage and secure the garrison of Sfetigrade, he visited other places of his dominion, and endeavored to excite his subjects—sometimes by commendations, sometimes by gifts, and sometimes by representing to them the greatness of the dangers with which they were threatened. Moses, in the mean time, had fortified all places with strong garrisons and abundant munitions of war. These things having been at-

tended to, Scanderbeg speedily returned to his army in the neighborhood of *Croia*, where he had given orders to wait for his return. The *Dibrian*, with his forces, overtook him on the way, and, joining company, they proceeded cheerfully to the camp. Scarcely had he arrived before messengers from various quarters brought him news that the enemy were within the borders, and the country on all sides in a blaze. Prompted by fear, they reported to him that Amurath was there in person, and had already gotten possession of the mountains and valleys and plains; and besought their prince not to await the Turk in the plain field, but to retire into some stronghold whence he might watch the movements of the enemy.

Scanderbeg was not much moved by these exhortations, nor would he remove from the position which he had chosen for his encampment. But when his scouts from all quarters returned to him in haste, and agreed in their reports, except as to the numbers of the enemy, the Turks not being yet all within view, Castriot chose out of his army 4000 horse and 1000 foot, and, dislodging as secretly as possible, went directly towards Sfetigrade, where he knew that the enemy would encamp. It was at the dawn of day that the signal was given to march. The day following, towards the third hour of the night, he encamped with his men within seven miles of Sfetigrade, which is nearly sixty miles from *Croia*. The place which Scanderbeg chose for his camp he caused to be surrounded by a trench. Having distributed the horse and foot into their several quarters, he commanded the sentinels and the guards to be set, and secret search to be made for places fit for ambuscades. He forbade any fires to be kindled, and ordered all to keep silence. Then, taking with him Moses and Tanusee de Thopy, he went to reconnoitre the enemy. With great secrecy, sometimes through thickets and forests, sometimes through hidden passes in the valleys, he gained the top of a mountain opposite to Sfeti-

grade; from which having accurately observed and noted every thing in open daylight, he speedily returned to his own camp. After consultation held among the officers, the mode of proceeding which appeared safest and most likely to succeed, was, by stratagem to divide the forces of the enemy and draw them into disadvantageous situations. Nothing, however, was done that day, in consequence of its being too far advanced; only scouts were sent out far and near, to discover the approach of Amurath, and to prevent being entrapped by any secret ambush of the enemy. Half the night was allowed the men, to take rest. The other half was employed by Scanderbeg in moving his camp to within five miles of the enemy; for he thought that if they could be enticed forth to fight, the nearer he was to them the more easily they might be overthrown. After every man had sufficiently rested himself, he filled the places fit for ambushes with able-bodied men; among the thickets and bushes he placed a great number of soldiers; the footmen he stationed on the sides of the mountains in situations difficult of approach, or in the woods; he himself took his place among the horsemen at the foot of the mountains, along the plain, and in the crooks and turnings of the valleys.

He then called to him *Moses* and *Musache de Angelina*, a gentleman of special mark, and one of the principal horsemen, whom having exhorted in a friendly manner, he sent them with thirty bold and hardy young men, to endeavor to allure the enemy out of their intrenchments and draw them within reach of the ambushes which he had prepared. These men and their horses were picked from all his forces. They were dressed as common soldiers, that the meanness of their appearance might prevent any suspicion of their purpose. They nearly all drove before them horses laden with corn, that they might be taken for foragers who were returning with what they had gathered. And to render their stratagem more like to reality, they were ordered to direct their

course towards the town through the most unfrequented ways, and on that side of the mountain which was not guarded by the enemy, as though their purpose was to enter Sfetigrade on that quarter. The leaders of this troop, being very quick and intelligent, omitted nothing which was ordered, and the soldiers fearlessly obeyed them with great alacrity. About the dawn of day, and when the stars began to disappear, this troop had approached to within a little more than a mile of the tents of the enemy, when the Turkish sentinels, having perceived them from above, began by signs and then by cries to give notice of them to the army. They, nothing troubled by the noise of the Turks, only quickened their pace a little. At length, one of the Turkish squadrons, being aroused by the sentinels, took their arms and advanced to attack them, supposing them to be shepherds or peasants laden with corn. The Albanians, disdain- ing the small number of those who were about to assault them, prepared with more courage than prudence to meet the onset. Upon the first approach of the Turks, however, turning their backs and retreating a little way, they made a show of fear; to which cause the barbarians imputing their flight, furiously charged them in the rear. But the Albanians suddenly halted and wheeled round, and with drawn swords prepared to meet their pursuers, as though enforced by necessity to resist the manifest danger to which they appeared to be exposed; for the horses of the Turks were breathing close at their backs. This movement of the Albanians did not repress the ardor of the Turks, for covering themselves with their large targets, and misled by the appearance of the troop, they were the first to make the onset. One of them, an Asiatic, of great strength and stature, preceded his fellows with a heavy mace of iron in his right hand, which, after whirling it about several times to give it more momentum, he threw, with great force and a loud shout, at the troop of Albanians, who, being in close array, could not

avoid the blow which fell in the midst of them. But, notwithstanding its violence, they sustained no injury from it, for it was received and sustained by a young Dibrian upon his target. Hereupon the fight began between the two troops, which were nearly equal in number, and their arms not much unlike. The Turks were no better armed than the Christians, because of the haste with which they sallied from their trenches, and the contempt which they felt for their enemy; they carried only a cimeter and shield. In this respect, however, the Christians had greatly the advantage; they were all picked men, the flower of the Albanian youth; whereas the Turks were composed of good and bad troops confusedly mingled as they had been tumultuously roused by the sentinels. For this reason the superiority of the Christians was immediately apparent. The Asiatic, in whom consisted the strength of the troop, being slain by the hand of Moses, the rest were seized with a panic, and at first retiring gradually, they at length turned their backs and fled outright. They were not pursued nor exulted over by the Albanians, who quietly gathered themselves together about their leaders, without regarding the spoils of the slain, and returned to their beasts of burden, and, like men who only wished to save themselves, hastened to drive them the way they had been going. One of the troop, distinguished for his warlike exploits, was grievously wounded by one of the Turks who with his sword had thrust him through the left shoulder, so that he had not strength enough to carry his arms or to manage his horse. His complaints, occasioned by the pain of his wound, greatly troubled his companions and diminished their joy. Moses felt great compassion for him, and dismounting from his horse, he with his own hands took him down and placed him behind one of the soldiers, whom he charged to be careful of him, and not to ride so violently as to risk his falling off; but to make such speed with him as he could to the camp, that he might get among



the tents and his companions before any new attack should be made by the enemy. The rest of the troop were all unhurt. Of the Turks five were slain and eight wounded.

By the time that the wounded man and his companion were out of sight, a great uproar was perceived in the enemy's camp. The complaints of those who returned wounded, and the sight of their large wounds, set the Turks in a tumult and rage, especially those who were related to the slain. Wherefore, without waiting for orders, they were about to rush forth tumultuously; but were restrained by the proclamation of the general, who ordered that no man should stir from the camp; and they arranged themselves in battle array before their tents in expectation of the word of command. The general suspected some stratagem on the part of the Christians, which suspicion was strengthened by the ghastly wounds inflicted upon his men, such as could not have been given by common peasants. He consequently chose from his whole army 4000 of his boldest and most fierce horsemen, and ordered them to scatter and unhorse those foragers; and then to search the mountains, the valleys, the woods and fastnesses, in order to discover the ambuscades of the Albanians.

At about the time when these directions were given, the soldier who had been commissioned by Moses arrived with his wounded companion in the presence of Scanderbeg, and delivering the wounded man to his fellows that they might take care of him, he ran up and down like one distracted, crying out to the soldiers to arm, for that all the camp of the enemy had taken the alarm, and would soon be upon them, and pointed to the dust as an evidence of the truth of what he said. Scanderbeg was, at first, somewhat moved, and feared that his people had been unfortunate, as he saw only two of the troop return, one of them half dead and covered with blood, while the other, by his foolish outcries, appeared to be overcome with dismay. But when he learned

from him the particulars of what had occurred, his depression was succeeded by laughter, and his anxiety by boldness and confidence. He told his men to be of good courage, and ordered every one to have his horse and armor ready. By this time, the sentinels, who were on the heights of the mountains, perceived Moses, pursued by the Turks, who were crossing the plain, and ready to fall into the ambush of the Epirots. The disguised men at first had made no great haste, but rode on, driving their beasts leisurely before them, and bending their course sometimes in one direction and sometimes in another, waiting for their enemies rather than fleeing from them. But when they perceived afar off that the infidels had issued forth from their trenches, quitting their sacks of corn and the beasts which bore them, they began a round and speedy flight. Having in a moment crossed the plain, they got to a hill, on the north side of which was a valley where the troops lay concealed, among whom, before they could be perceived by the enemy, they secretly retired, so out of breath, both they and their horses, that it was evident they had fled in earnest. The enemy finding that they had suddenly disappeared, and thinking that they had concealed themselves in the bottom of the valley, followed directly after them without fear or consideration. They spread themselves abroad, with the view of surrounding them, some preparing to climb the hill, and others to make their way into the valley. But when they got near to the place they heard the neighing of many horses, at which they were surprised and stood still, and the noise of the horses becoming more distinct, they discovered the ambush that was laid for them. Their uncertainty as to the true state of things so worked upon their imagination, that they immediately betook themselves to flight. At this moment Scanderbeg ordered the trumpets to sound, which increased their fear; and, coming out upon them, he himself attacked them on the right and Tanusee on the left, and the foot soldiers at the same

time rushed upon them from the rugged and woody places in the mountains where they had been concealed. The Turks being forced by necessity to offer resistance, set spurs to their horses, and got possession of the mountain, and, throwing their spears as if they had been darts, they for a time kept off the Christians. But Peic Manuel, having mounted the hill from the opposite side with 200 archers and as many crossbow-men, soon drove them down again. On lower ground they were beset on all sides, and were dreadfully galled from above by the bow-men. In this extremity, drawing their cimeters and dividing themselves into two troops, they rushed upon their enemies, but were beaten back by superior numbers, who also were fresh and free from fatigue; especially were they repelled on their right, where Scanderbeg was in person with a large troop both of horse and of foot soldiers armed with pikes. At length, the Turks forming themselves into a compact body cut their way on the left hand through their opponents, not without great loss, being more borne down by each other than by our troops. A general pursuit then began. Of the fugitives near 2000 escaped, for Scanderbeg recalled his men very speedily, not thinking it safe for them to go too far. About eighty prisoners were taken and three ensigns. The booty was enriched by above 1000 horses of the slain. Of the victors only twenty-two were missing and about fifteen wounded.

Thus the Prince of Albania amply repaid himself for the loss of his corn, the capture of which had caused the Turks great joy. And when it was carried into their camp they expected soon to see the supposed victuallers from whom it was taken brought in bound, and condemned to expiate the manes of the five Turks whom they had slain. But when they knew the defeat and slaughter of their companions they were overwhelmed with astonishment, grief, and fear; and, as their danger and the number of their enemies were mag-

nified by their apprehension, they set the army in array to be ready to resist any attack which might be made upon their camp. But such was not the intention of Scanderbeg, neither did he suffer himself to be elated by his victory, but stood as much on his guard against the enemy as they did against him; for he hourly expected that they would make some attempt upon him, to wipe off the disgrace of their overthrow, especially as it was confidently reported that the royal army was at hand. He consequently, for greater security, as soon as it was dark, quietly removed his camp five miles further off from the enemy. The day following, before sunrise, he sent Tanusee to Croia with fifty horsemen, each attended by a servant, both to hasten away the forces which he had left there with George Streese, as well as to conduct the horses and other spoil lately obtained from the enemy into the interior of the province, where they might be in safety. This was done in the space of seven days, and all his troops united and arranged. Two days before the reinforcements arrived in the camp of Scanderbeg, there came in sight 5000 Turks, being the vanguard of the royal army. Three hours before night they pitched their tents before Sfetigrade. The day following, at evening, came also Amurath in person with the rest of his army and all his baggage.

The day on which Amurath arrived before Sfetigrade was the 14th of May, in the year 1449, nine years after Scanderbeg had recovered his dominion. The corn was beginning to ripen, and the meadows were covered with grass, so as to afford abundance of forage. This season is usually chosen by the barbarians for their foreign expeditions. The sultan, in order to secure supplies for his army, gave express orders to his men not to waste or spoil any thing within the territories of their enemy. The Turk, in order to terrify the inhabitants of the town, made a great display of his forces. First in order were the squadrons of foot and the Asappy; after them the cavalry, the Tymariots, the Subassys, the

Saniackes, and other chieftains, each in his place. These marched round the walls in a triumphant manner, with loud clamors and military cries, accompanied by the thundering of the artillery. After this parade, they fixed their ensigns in the ground and pitched their tents. The greatest part of the infantry and common soldiers were encamped at the foot of the mountain, near the walls of the town, and in places most exposed to danger. The quarters of the horse were from three to four thousand paces from the town. The royal pavillion was distant from the walls above eight hundred paces. The first night was occupied in arranging the camp and in setting the guards, with songs and merriment. The mind of Amurath, however, was not free from care, both on account of the disaster lately befallen his troops, and of the difficulty which he foresaw would attend the reduction of the place, as it was situated upon the summit of a craggy mountain, and apparently impregnable; so that his hope of success rested upon corrupting the garrison, and not upon the power of his arms. For this reason nothing was attempted against the walls the following day, but the soldiers remained quiet in the camp, and were not permitted to skirmish with their enemies. But towards evening the sultan sent heralds to summon the town, and to acquaint the inhabitants of the danger that hung over them, unless at the first summons and sound of the trumpet they voluntarily yielded themselves up. The terms which he offered were, that the state and condition of the citizens should remain unchanged; that their liberties and privileges should be the same as those granted to them by Scanderbeg. Great offers of preferment were also made to the governor, and the garrison were promised permission to retire wherever they might see fit. He, besides, made an offer of 300,000 aspers,\* and allowed that night for them to make up their minds;

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\* A coin among the Turks, says Lavardin, worth 12d. sterling.

but threatened that, if his proposals were rejected, they should the next morning see a force brought against them sufficient to demolish their walls, and cause them to repent of their obstinacy. The governor was in the market-place, accompanied by a great number of soldiers, when one from the walls came to him, saying that messengers had arrived from the sultan, and desired to parley with him. He immediately repaired to the quarter where the heralds were waiting for him, and desired them, from the walls, to declare their minds by an interpreter. But they requested him to send away all who accompanied him, as they had a message from the sultan, and matters to treat of which none must hear but himself. Whereunto Perlat jeeringly replied:—"Truly, my friends, you have done well to choose the darkness of the night in which to deliver your secret communications, that they may be concealed, not only from my soldiers, but also from the light of day, which makes me suspect that the message you bring is ashamed to look upon the open face of day. It may, however, be through modesty that you do so, in which case you ought to be commended. But this I have learned from my ancestors: never to consult upon affairs of importance without the privacy and presence of my soldiers, who are my companions in danger—whom I have chosen for their fidelity, for the defence of Scanderbeg, of the liberties of Albania, and for the guard of my own person. Besides which, it is not my custom to call the darkness to witness the conferences which I may have with any out of the walls of the town, especially in such a time as this, of trouble and confusion." He said that they must, for that time, hold him excused; that, if they pleased, he would the next morning hear what they had to say. Having thus spoken, he ordered them to retire from the walls.

The soldiers and common people were much incensed at this behaviour of the heralds; and assembling around the governor, they cried out that they only came as spies, to

reconnoitre the place, and not in reality to treat of any composition. They desired that the gates might be opened, and that those messengers should be brought into the town and forced to confess the truth; that their hands should be cut off (the ordinary punishment of spies), and that they should thus be sent back to their camp. But the wise and prudent governor not only refused to listen to their foolish demand, but severely reprovèd them for their unruly desires. He told them, that men should be more careful about nothing than to avoid the violation of their fidelity and truth: that they took upon them, either to be prophets and diviners, or to place too great confidence in their own suspicions: that it was possible they might, merely upon their own surmises, be guilty of a violation of the usages of nations, and of the law of arms. The heralds, therefore, in as much uncertainty as when they came, were permitted freely to return to their sovereign, without suffering any outrage or offence, either in word or deed.

The old sultan was at first very indignant at the thought of being treated with contempt, and was disposed to assault the town at once, without any further attempt to treat with the garrison. However, he at length concluded that it would be the part of prudence to make another effort to gain his object, without having recourse to arms. He accordingly sent the messengers again the day following, with the same instructions as before; and joined with them one of his bashaws, a grave old man, very subtle, and a native of Albania, who could fluently converse with the Christians in their own language. Perlat had been careful, before entering upon any conference, to have a good lookout kept from the walls towards the mountain and the woods in the vicinity of the town, for fear of some ambush which might there be placed. Afterwards, by a postern gate, called the Dibran, he admitted the ambassadors into the town. Only the bashaw, with three soldiers and two of his servants, were

suffered to enter, and were conducted through the market-place to the Church of the Virgin Mary, where the elder persons and principal men of the town were assembled, the younger sort being excluded, lest some tumult should arise among them. The Turkish ambassador, claiming the right to speak first, as he had proposed the conference, began at once, by plausible and flattering language, to endeavor to gain the good-will of the citizens. He cited the example of many cities and nations, and discoursed so well and so eloquently, that nothing in what he said could be reprehended, except the extravagant account which he gave of the power and might of his master.

Perlat replied to him, that he had treated his subject well and eloquently, but that he addressed himself to men who were devoted to the maintenance of their liberty. That could the threats of the Ottoman damp their courage, or were the dominion of Scanderbeg grievous unto them, they might be tempted to yield; but that they had no charge to bring against Scanderbeg, nor did they know in what way they had been so benefited by Amurath as to be induced to prefer a stranger before their own countryman, an enemy before a friend, or an infidel before a Christian. Let Amurath, he said, first make proof of what he can effect against us by force of arms, and then try whether we shall be ready to submit: that he should deem it infamous to yield up the town before they had seen the ensigns of their enemy in battle array against the walls, before any conflict had taken place, or any injury had been done: that the sultan would do much better to rest from the troubles of war and return to Adrianople, there to pass the remainder of his age quietly at home, and no longer to incense by his arms a people who had been fatal unto him, whose faith in the maintenance of their liberties, and whose singular affection and devotion to their rulers, both public and private, he had so often made proof of with the bloodshed and ruin of his soldiers and sub-



jects : that, for his own part, he should never abandon the duty and fidelity which he owed and had sworn to his prince, nor the defence of the town which had been committed to his care ; and that his ambition was, either to live to see the salvation of his country, or, should she be ruined, to exert all the strength of his right arm in revenging her, until such time as his soul should pass to the liberty of a better country.

This answer of the governor being greatly approved by the magistrates and townsmen who were assembled, the council broke up, and the Turks, without saying any thing more, left the church in company with the governor and his suite, and it being near dinner time, he entertained them sumptuously, and then conducting them to the gate of the town, dismissed them.

The sultan was not a little moved by the resolution and firmness of the garrison and the prudence of the governor, as well as by the report made of the abundance of provisions with which the town appeared to be supplied ; for Perlat had purposely made a show of the plenty which was enjoyed. But Amurath, enraged at the check offered to his arms by so inconsiderable a place, and especially by their boast of being fatal to him, he assembled his bashaws in his tent, to consult upon the measures to be taken, and when the day was nearly spent, he adjourned the council to the following day.

## BOOK V.

THE arrival of the Turkish emperor and the report of his mighty army caused great dread throughout the kingdom of Epire and among the neighboring princes. Embassies were sent from all parts to Scanderbeg, entreating him not to venture single handed to attack the Ottoman power. They also offered him arms, horsemen, munitions, and whatever might be requisite to ward off the imminent danger with which they were threatened. The ambassadors went directly to the mountains of Sfetigrade, where they knew that Scanderbeg was encamped. He was, however, at that time absent from his camp; for, upon the arrival of the Ottoman forces, and when the alarm which it occasioned had spread over the country, he, together with Tanusee, Geo. Streese, and ten chosen men of his guard, and in his usual dress, the simple cassock of a common soldier, secretly left his army in order to visit the towns which were nearest to the danger, and to encourage those who might be dismayed by the exaggerated rumors which reached them. Beginning at Croia, the chief place in his realm, he sent for Uranocontes to come to him at the gate, with a number of soldiers and the principal citizens, for he would suffer no one to enter the town. He addressed them in such a manner as he thought would tend to confirm them in their duty. But the governor, Uranocontes, returned an answer so characteristic of an honest, rough warrior, that it shall be given in the words of Lavardin's translator, the orthography only being modernized.

“It had been much better at this instant, O *Scanderbeg!* if the Croians had seen *Amurath* himself, and the show of

that his glorious and excellent army (which thou tellest us of), than to see thee here as thou art at present; for this is certain that as thy speech is nothing pleasing nor agreeable unto us, neither in general nor in particular: so is thy coming at this time no less grievous and discontenting unto us. For what could the sight or the hearing of the enemy have done, either more to have troubled the minds of men that are courageous, or to have worse offended the hearts of those that are fierce and generous? We are now at that point, and such is our love and devotion towards thee, and to the dignity of the estate of *Albanie*, that as long as these troubles shall continue within this province, and as long as *Amurath* shall prevail or have any authority with his armed forces in *Epire*, it shall be more pleasing, and far more acceptable unto us beyond comparison, to see the face and countenance of the enemy, than to have thy presence and company: because thou bringest us nothing but secret plaints and doubtful fears, as though we were inclining to a revolt, or that we were like to prove disloyal; whereas the presence of our enemy could not but minister unto us good and fit matter to merit praise and commendation, and might yield some notable and worthy experience of our fidelity, and be a perpetual occasion for the purchase of renown and glory."

To this speech of *Uranocotes*, *Castriot* replied, that his motive in visiting the town was not to exhort them to the performance of their duty, but to inform them of the condition of affairs. Whereupon, after embracing the governor, he took leave of him and of those who were with him, and proceeded to visit other places, where finding every thing according to his mind, he returned to his camp somewhat before day, much wearied with the length of his journey. But seeing that ambassadors from his friends were waiting for him, he scarcely took time to refresh himself before he gave them audience in the presence of his chief officers and the principal persons in his camp. When he had heard what

they had to say, he with the assent of all present highly commended the spirit and affection manifested by their rulers. With respect to the succors offered by them, his answer was, that they should be of good courage ; that he did not intend immediately to increase his forces, nor to expose the flanks of his confederates ; but that he desired them to be in a state of readiness, and to keep a careful watch upon the movements of the enemy, who were so crafty as to render it very difficult to discover their intentions ; that whenever any opportunity of gaining an advantage over them should present itself he would attack them with his own forces, and that if he should ever require the aid of his allies he would not fail to have recourse to them. This answer being returned the tables were spread in soldier's fashion, and the messengers having refreshed themselves and received handsome presents, they were, at about the ninth hour of the morning, honorably dismissed.

While Scanderbeg was thus employed the Turk began his operations against Sfetigrade. He placed two very large pieces of artillery, for he had brought no more with him, upon an eminence directly opposite to the town where the walls were most open and unprotected. Three days continually the walls were battered, at the end of which time a large breach was effected ;\* and the sultan felt assured that his men would be able to enter and get possession of the town. Of the progress of the enemy Scanderbeg had notice by means of his espials and those whom he had appointed to keep watch, and conjecturing the purpose of Amurath, and fearing lest the garrison should be overpowered by the multitude of their enemies in the defence of so wide a breach, after mature deliberation he resolved to take a share of the peril, and to make a diversion in favor of the inhabitants of the town. Accordingly, about midnight, taking with him

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\* Knolles says a small breach.

provisions for one day only, and leaving every thing else in his camp, he approached to within five miles of the enemy, and intrenched himself in the same place where he had formed his last ambuscade. He sent before him two of his chief nobles, *Musache* and *Gnirize de Vladrenne*, men of great shrewdness and ability, to reconnoitre the camp of the enemy, and discover what would be their way of attack. He himself remained without stirring and without noise, that he might know, after hearing their report, upon what measures to decide.

These two gentlemen returned to Scanderbeg, at about the seventh hour of the morning. At the same time the *Asappi* and *Janissaries*, fearless men, issued from their intrenchments, and began to ascend the mountain. The ascent was so steep that the horsemen were not able to rise more than a very few steps from the bottom, and were obliged to be content with shooting their arrows at the besieged, by which they caused no great harm; while the inferior sort of soldiers were led on to expose themselves to the first fury of the Christians who defended the walls, in order that they might be exhausted by their efforts against this baser multitude, when more efficient troops should advance to the assault. In this manner the attack was ordered on the side where the breach had been made. But the townspeople had employed the night in repairing and fortifying their defences; and so steep was the approach and the footing so insecure, that the assailants were easily beaten back and overthrown. On other sides of the town, and particularly near the gates, where the ground was more even and open, the *Asappi*, with their targets and pavishes, were ranged in the front. Behind them were placed two large and chosen squadrons of arquebusiers and crossbow-men, to cover the assault of the *Janissaries*, who were appointed to mount the walls by scaling-ladders. To this service they so boldly advanced that some, unhurt, and some, in spite of

being wounded, succeeded in grappling the top of the battlements. Their attempts, however, proved fruitless; for many were overturned by their own weight and exertions, and many had their hands cut off by the defendants. But the greatest execution done upon the assailants was by means of stones, and other missiles, which fell from such a height as to cause great destruction. Yet the Turks continually brought up new troops in the place of those who were slain, and with undiminished fury continued the attack. Many of the Turks might have been taken alive, but the defendants would not remit the fury of their battle in order to make prisoners. At length, the sultan seeing the efforts of his men fruitless, notwithstanding the encouragements and threats of the officers, sent a reinforcement of 3000 men under Feribassa, who was one of his chief captains, and much renowned for great strength and dexterity, of both body and mind. He was supplied with a vast quantity of scaling-ladders, and all other kinds of warlike engines. The approach of these new forces produced a stillness in the town, as though the minds of the inhabitants were impressed with a sense of their new danger. Notwithstanding the missiles with which the besieged endeavored to disorder the approach of the Turks, they marched boldly with their ensigns up to the walls. The defendants then threw down upon them huge pieces of timber, and multitudes of stones of all sizes, together with fireworks, which last so terrified and confused the assailants that they could not place many ladders against the walls, and most of those which they set up were burned. During the heat of this assault, the Turkish commander, with part of his forces, having slain some of the defendants of a part of the wall a little distant, and having placed his scaling-ladders, he encouraged his men there to enter the town where the defence was but feeble. There was no want of readiness on the part of the soldiers, for they were inflamed with great rage and

fury, and each individual was incited by the ambition of being the first to mount the wall, well knowing the crown and the rewards which awaited him who should be so fortunate. But Perlat, with a number of Dibrians, rushing to the scene of action and replacing with fresh men those who were slain, and pouring down a tempest of shot upon the assailants, they were repulsed, and their weapons of attack broken in pieces. Still the attack was obstinately continued by the Turks until such time as they heard the retreat sounded, when the Christians at length had leisure to breathe and to refresh themselves.

But now the approach of Scanderbeg began to be perceived by clouds of dust and the trampling of horses. The assault had continued more than three hours before the arrival of Scanderbeg; for, after much deliberation in council, it was agreed to delay the attack upon the enemy a while, in the expectation that the tents would be left empty, and the force of the whole camp employed against Sfetigrade, when the most effectual onset might be made upon them. But Amurath was too experienced and skilful a commander to employ his forces in such a manner as to leave them open to be attacked in the rear. He had placed a very strong guard at about five hundred paces from the walls, in the midst of which he in person stood, surrounded by his ordinary guard, both to overlook and to encourage his men. He had, moreover, formed a troop of 15,000 chosen horsemen, appointed to course up and down, and to keep a strict lookout everywhere, lest some unforeseen mischief should come from behind. Scanderbeg having arrived within two miles of the enemy, with 7000 horse and 3000 foot, he, as he was wont, divided his forces, directing Moses to lie in ambush with all the foot and 2000 horse, as a corps de reserve in case of need. He himself, with the rest of his cavalry, advanced furiously over the open champaign to attack the enemy, at the same time raising a great

shout, which tended to encourage the besieged and to dishearten the assailants. Thereupon the royal battalion of Turkish horsemen, who stood ready drawn up, made a full career to meet him. But the Albanians, nothing discouraged by the number of their enemies, kept in such close and good order and advanced to the charge with such bravery, that, at the very first onset, they repulsed the Turks and threw them into disorder. But many of the Christians and infidels becoming intermingled, and maintaining a close fight with one another, and the number of the Turks being very great, they did not immediately, in a body, give way. But, after a while, they all began to recoil, and by open flight to confess that the Epirots were not men with whom they were able to deal. Amurath, perceiving that he fought on all sides with such ill success, as if God himself was against him, ordered a retreat; and pointing with his finger to the small number of the Christians, he upbraided his soldiers for suffering themselves to be overcome by a handful of thieves and robbers, whom they might swallow up whole, both horses and arms. The rebukes of their emperor caused them suddenly to turn their faces against the Epirots, and those also who were on the mountain rushed down to join in the charge. But, although the attack was made in a disorderly manner and by men out of breath, Scanderbeg thought it best to retire to the place where Moses was stationed, and not risk the advantage which he had gained, with the loss of only one man killed, and three wounded. Of the Turks, sixty or more were slain, of which number it is said that Scanderbeg slew five with his own hand. The barbarians did not continue the pursuit a great way, as Amurath, fearing some secret stratagem on the part of the Christians, ordered a retreat. When the Turks made this last charge, those who had turned from assaulting the town were charged in the rear by the townsmen. And while the Turks scoffed at the



Epirots for retiring before them, Perlat, with 300 active, well-armed men, pursued those who had quitted the assault, not only with scoffs and reproaches, but with missiles, by which he made slaughter of them until they reached the foot of the mountain.

This was a day of misfortune to the Ottoman. - The assault of the town had been broken off by Scanderbeg's attack, and he and his forces had vanished out of sight without loss. The courage of the defendants was thus raised. A great many of the best Turkish soldiers lay dead before the town. The number of Turks slain during the assault was estimated at full 3000, and the wounded at more than 4000. Great destruction had also been made of the implements of assault. This victory cost the besieged but forty men killed; the number, however, of those who were wounded was very great. An immense quantity of arms and other spoil was found before the walls, and carried into the town, while the enemy were in pursuit of Scanderbeg. The loss of the townspeople was in this manner somewhat compensated. The Turks having retired from before the town, spent the remainder of that day and the following night in brooding over their misfortune.

Scanderbeg, content with having thus afforded some respite to the besieged, remained no longer than was necessary to breathe his soldiers, but returned as speedily as possible to his first camp, where he had left his baggage; and there his troops refreshed themselves with sleep and food. Early the following day he dispatched messengers to *Uranocotes*, and the towns in his dominions, to acquaint them with his success. The day after, he, with only 200 horse, taking his way over the heights of the mountains, went to reconnoitre the enemy. Finding every thing among the Turks quiet, and the town at rest, he returned to his tents; and remaining there two days longer, he, on the third day, trussed up his baggage and removed his camp to

the upper *Dibria*, and there intrenched himself in a strong position, about fifteen miles from *Amurath*. The reason of his so frequently changing his position, is supposed to be, either to prevent his soldiers from contracting idle habits, or to avoid the attempts which might be made by the Turks to surprise and overwhelm him.

Amurath, in the mean while, was greatly troubled by the ill success of his first assault; and, after a while, calling together his officers, he charged them to examine diligently the situation of the town, and to consider on what side it might with most prospect of success be attacked. When it was decided where the attack should be made, he directed ordnance to be planted, and then three whole days were consumed in battering that part of the wall. But all this labor proved to be in vain. For, although the flankers on that quarter were beaten down, and the fortifications which had been erected fell to the ground, yet so great was the natural strength of the place that it resisted all the efforts made against it. Even had no resistance been offered, it would have been difficult for men encumbered with armor to make their way into the town. The mountains were so cragged and covered with wood, and so full of steep gullies and crooked turnings, that they rendered the town, which was seated upon them, nearly inaccessible. On the other side the wall might have been battered, had it not been protected by a projection of the mountain, which rendered it impossible for the enemy to plant their cannon with any effect. The frequent attempts of the Turks were met by sallies of the besieged, who broke in pieces the engines intended to annoy them, and repelled the assailants by shot and other missiles sent from the walls of the place. Although Amurath appeared to have little prospect of success, yet he resolved, by continual skirmishes, to exhaust the defendants and wear out their forces. Thus was the

siege carried on without any vigorous assault, each party annoying the other by distant shot, and each watching the other with the view of seizing any advantage which might occur; no material loss being sustained on either side, nor any exploit performed worthy of being recorded.

No new assault was made against the place, until at length it was perceived by some Janissaries, who had secretly left the camp, that on the opposite side of the town there was one part which the inhabitants did not think required any defence, on account of its height and inaccessible nature, the top of the hill being disjoined from the mountain. This being reported to the sultan he was much rejoiced, and sent a number of men, at different times, who, creeping to the summit, at length amounted to a considerable troop, or squadron. It happened, fortunately, that at that juncture the governor himself went the rounds, to visit and examine the ramparts and fortifications. One of the sentinels gave him notice of what was going on; whereupon he immediately repaired to the spot where the danger was, accompanied by a number of chosen soldiers, and well provided with missiles and defensive weapons. At first he kept himself close, in order to watch the bold attempt of the enemy, at which he much wondered, because of the recklessness of danger which they displayed. In order to meet craft with craft, he kept himself quiet behind the ramparts, and watched their proceedings. They had raised their ladders against the wall; some had already mounted, and some were climbing up towards the top, when the governor, rushing forward singly, so terrified them that they fled in all haste before a shot reached them. Many of them were so bruised and disfigured, that when they returned to their camp they could scarcely be recognized. Of the defendants no one received any injury. During this time all was quiet within the town; for during the day the garrison turned their attention to the quarter against which the battery was

directed, and in the night repaired the damage which had been done in the course of the day.

While the Turks did thus rather inflame the anger of the defendants than affright or discourage them, Scanderbeg, with 2000 horse, scoured the country, in hopes of meeting with parties of the enemy sent out to forage, or to seek for water or plunder. But in this he was disappointed; and finding nothing upon which to vent his anger, he returned to his camp more vexed than when he left it.

It was now the 22d of June, about two hours after noon, when Scanderbeg again mounted on horseback, and taking with him Tanusee and fifty able-bodied soldiers, he betook himself to his wonted task—that is, to endeavor to learn something with respect to the enemy. It happened that as he viewed their camp at a distance, he observed that all was motionless and without noise, as though no enemies were there, but only the ensigns and standards. But upon a more distinct view the men were seen, stretched out under their tents and among their horses, in consequence of the heat of the weather, which was excessive. Castriot, seeing them in this state, turned to his company with a smiling countenance, and with many expressions of contempt for the beastly appearance of the enemy, he and his troop returned to their camp to bring out the forces. He ordered the ensigns to be displayed, and the companies to follow him immediately, with provision for only one day. Besides the servants and camp-followers, he left but forty soldiers to guard the camp. A little before sunset a dark mist was spread abroad, by favor of which Scanderbeg, with a quiet and easy pace, drew near to the Turkish army. But while advancing, he had horsemen continually scouring the country before him, to prevent his falling into any ambush. For this wary commander, who was himself a master of military stratagems, was ever anxious to discover the artifices of his enemies. And it is reported that he was wont to say, that

more good commanders with their armies had been overcome by surprise, than in open battle; and that he would rather fight ten men, when he knew that all was fair and open, than two, about whom he felt any uncertainty; because all things which are doubtful are apt, upon a sudden, to excite apprehension.

When Scanderbeg had approached within a quarter of a league of the enemy he halted and sent forward two soldiers, with the promise of a good reward, to reconnoitre the Turkish camp. *Moses* voluntarily joined himself to these two men, through fear that their skill and ability were not sufficiently to be depended upon. Leaving their horses, they proceeded on foot, *Moses* disguised in a servile habit, with a Sclavonian sword by his side, and followed boldly by the two soldiers. The gallant Dibrian not only compassed the trenches and defences of the infidels, but even penetrated into the midst of their camp. It is by some maintained that this service was performed by Scanderbeg himself; the plurality of voices, however, attribute it unto *Moses*. The reckless boldness with which Scanderbeg is known to have ventured his life in such expeditions is censured as not becoming the caution which a good general should use in the exposure of his person. But it has been observed, that Fortune herself appeared to have exempted Scanderbeg from reproof and blame in this respect, so uniformly did she favor his warts and shield him from harm in his boldest adventures. As soon as *Moses* was perceived by his own people, for the moon was then shining full and bright, they went forward with great joy to meet him, and accompanied him to the general. So great was the eagerness of all to learn what news he brought, that the common soldiers might have been seen mingled promiscuously with the officers and nobles, all crowding anxiously around him. When it was known that every thing appeared to favor the enterprise in hand, Scanderbeg set his troops in order, bestirring himself actively

among them, and encouraging them by his animated exhortations, at the same time warning them not to be tempted by the pillage of the enemy's camp to remit the vigor of their attack upon the enemies themselves.

After prayers offered to God for victory, Scanderbeg about the fourth hour of the night ordered the ensigns to advance. The clattering of the armor and the neighing of the horses discovered their approach to the Turkish scouts, who giving the alarm to their officers, filled the camp of the enemy with tumult and confusion. Although Scanderbeg perceived that the alarm had been given, he did not desist from his enterprise nor abate the fury of his attack. In the quarter first assailed was a body of Asiatic troops, whose tents and lodgings were overthrown in a moment, and they themselves partly slain and partly put to flight, which same fate awaited those who succeeded in their room. The Christians continuing to advance, found some of the tents and pavilions deserted; to these they set fire and cut asunder their cords. Scanderbeg continued thus for a long time to make havoc without any loss on his part, until a strong battalion of Turks advanced in close order from the interior of the camp with the determination to wipe off their disgrace and to retrieve their honor. A doubtful contest was then begun. The place was covered with the bodies of the slain, and deluged with blood. The number of the enemy was so great that the Albanians could not press through them; but closing with them, man to man, they encountered them foot to foot, sword to sword, and target to target; at the same time taking care not to get intermingled with their opponents, and thus be prevented by the darkness from distinguishing friends from foes. The fight was so furious, and maintained with such animosity, that it resembled that of madmen. At length the main army of the Turks, arranged in as orderly a manner as circumstances would permit, advanced upon their enemies; but those who had first opposed the Albanians

having retreated into the most secure places of the camp, the Albanians, being wearied and glutted with slaughter, had retreated in their turn, so that the advance of the Turks was fruitless. Scanderbeg and his men were scarcely a mile distant, but none dared to follow them. The Turkish troops remained stationary until the morning light discovered the horrible slaughter which had been made, the sight of which excited them to bitter lamentations. It is generally agreed that the number of slain amounted to 2000, and the number of the wounded to more than 500. Two and forty of the Christians perished among their enemies, who by tearing in pieces the dead bodies, gave vent to their rage and malice.

When the Albanian prince had gotten out of sight and hearing of the enemy, he made a stand in a valley called by the inhabitants *The Fair Valley*, which was at the distance of about five miles from Amurath. He remained there some time, in order to breathe his troops, and to set them in better order when he should have the benefit of daylight, and also to look to the condition of his wounded men, which he did in person, visiting them one by one, and, like a kind companion in arms, examining and handling their wounds. Having carefully ordered every thing, he dislodged with his ensigns displayed and arrived at his camp a little before noon. He moved with less than his usual speed, being hindered by his wounded men, by the great heat of the weather, and by the booty and prisoners taken from the enemy. Among other things were taken 230 horses and seven ensigns. But the heads of the Turks carried by the soldiers in their hands, as evidences of their individual prowess, did, in the estimation of Lavardin, "singularly grace and beautifie the sight of this triumph." Upon the soldiers who had thus distinguished themselves Scanderbeg bestowed rich rewards and public commendations. The prisoners were distributed among the neighboring towns, there to remain until they should be ransomed. The ensigns, and some of the richer

spoils, were sent to the princes his allies. The remainder of the plunder was divided among his soldiers. After this exploit the Christian camp remained in tranquillity long enough for the losses sustained to be repaired by new supplies. After the third day they removed, with every thing they had, to the plain country of *Emathia*, where they encamped.

The rage of the Turkish emperor is said to have amounted to phrensy. Seeing no other way of revenge, he resolved to vent his fury upon the besieged. For three successive days the Bashaw of Romania with great vigor assaulted the walls of Sfetigrade, but was repulsed and overthrown with great loss; in consequence of which, the courage of the defendants was increased, and the rage and indignation of the sultan boiled more vehemently within his bosom. Notwithstanding the advanced age and wasted frame of Amurath, such was the vigor of his spirit, that he encouraged his men not to despair of success; telling them that nothing was too difficult to be overcome by vigorous perseverance. Having encouraged his troops by his spirited exhortations, and by promises of greater rewards than any he had offered since his coming to the empire, he appointed the day following for a new assault.

Nothing of all this was concealed from Scanderbeg; for as soon as any thing was resolved upon he had notice thereof from his spies, and from the Turks themselves, of whom numbers daily deserted to him, either through inconstancy or weariness of the tyranny of their rulers, or desire to follow the good fortune with which Scanderbeg appeared to be blessed by God himself, or by the frank and liberal nature of the Albanian prince, by which he won the hearts of all who attached themselves to him, so much so, that even those who repaired to him with fraudulent and evil designs were vanquished by his bounty, clemency, and benignity. Upon notice of the design of Amurath, Scanderbeg, while waiting the return of Moses whom he had sent to levy some new



supplies, kept the troops whom he had with him in battle array, to be ready for any emergency.

On the day appointed by Amurath for the assault, the ensigns were brought early in the morning close under the walls of the town, and upon the signal given, at break of day, the assault began. Every part of the town which could be approached was invested by armed forces, for the sultan having declared that this should be the last assault, he was resolved to spare no effort to render it successful. In order to prevent any diversion on the part of Scanderbeg, he placed under command of the brave warrior *Feribassa*, at his earnest request, 12,000 troops, horse and foot, wherewith to watch the motions of the Albanian prince, and repel any sudden attack, such as he was wont to make. The military reputation of *Feribassa* stood very high from his long experience in arms, and he had long desired to try his fortune in single combat with Scanderbeg whenever an opportunity should present itself. Having received the charge committed to him, he ceased not to course in every direction, in hopes of meeting his enemy.

At length much of the town was destroyed and part of the fortifications overthrown. The walls were filled with ladders, and the assault made with various weapons, but especially with long hooks directed against the defendants; while, at the same time, others in vain attempted to make their way into the town through mines and caves. Balls of wild-fire were also thrown into the city, for mortars and shells were not yet in use. But the fire was speedily quenched by the inhabitants, who freely exposed their lives in defence of their town, and carefully guarded and defended the walls on all sides. But the chief violence of the assault was near the great gate, where, by means of planks and boards heaped together, and many ladders, a sort of tower or platform was raised on which numbers could ascend at a time, and with their missiles endeavor to dislodge the defend-

ants from their stations. At this point of attack the number of assailants continually increased. Some brought large and long beams to strengthen and enlarge the platform, some made secret lodgments close to the wall and endeavored to undermine it with pickaxes and bars of iron. To this spot the fury of the fight was at length directed, and, little by little, abated in other quarters. The hearts of the Christians began to fail when they found that however many of their enemies were beaten down and repulsed, their numbers still appeared to increase, fresh men continually succeeding in crowds to those who had fallen, so as to afford the defendants no time to breathe and recover their strength, which, as well as their weapons, began to be exhausted. In this extremity they dispatched messengers to the governor to acquaint him with their situation. But the rumor of what was doing had already reached Perlat, and those who were sent to him met him near at hand with a troop of citizens making all speed to bring relief to those who were oppressed. The presence of this bold and hardy chieftain at the first onset beat the enemy off the wall, and some Turkish standards which had been raised upon it were torn down and sent to the market-place as trophies which might serve to raise the spirits of the citizens. It still remained to break and destroy the mass of wood and beams of timber which, as has been said, afforded shelter to the men who were endeavoring to undermine the wall, and who supplied their companions with weapons, and upon which the assailants still maintained a furious fight. By rolling down heaps of large stones, accompanied, as Lavardin says, by great quantities of oil, vinegar, and water, all boiling hot, the defendants at length succeeded in breaking down the work; and under its ruins were destroyed the offensive engines of the enemy. More than 100 common soldiers also, together with two officers of high rank, were crushed to death. The town being delivered from this danger, the ramparts repaired, and the

walls furnished with new troops, the governor and his train betook themselves to other places where their presence was required; for so fiercely were the walls beset by the Turks that the town was far from being out of danger. When the enemy perceived that the governor had retired from the quarter where they had made the desperate attack just described, they again advanced with the intention of renewing their efforts against the same point. They were beginning again to raise beams and timber against the walls which were fuming with the blood of their companions. But the sudden return of Perlat rendered their present efforts as fruitless as those which they had before made; for, the work being only just begun, he easily disjoined the materials and threw them to the ground.

While the fight was thus raging about the walls of the city, Scanderbeg approached with his army, and when nearly at the distance of 600 paces from the enemy, he resolved suddenly to break in upon their camp. But Feribassa, with the forces committed to him by the sultan, was prepared to receive him. The bashaw supposed that the intention of Scanderbeg was only to make a feint in order to draw off the men who were engaged in the assault upon the town. To frustrate this stratagem, he marched against the Christians, determined that they should not advance without contesting the matter with him. Scanderbeg, as though intimidated, retreated slowly with the Turks at his heels, about 140 paces, when suddenly facing about, with his forces all well ordered, he made upon them a most furious charge. The Turkish commander, who was desirous of coming to battle, willingly received the attack. The Christians were little more than 9000 men in number, Scanderbeg having left the residue, which at most did not exceed 1500, with *Musache*, about a mile and a quarter distant, as a reserve. The Turk, seeing the small number of his enemies, opposed to them all his foot soldiers and 4000 horse, whom he placed

in front. The rest of his cavalry he ordered to withdraw secretly from the main body, and to make a compass, that they might come upon the rear of the Albanians, so as to inclose them, and perhaps take Scanderbeg alive. But that veteran and expert soldier presently discovered the stratagem. Whereupon, leaving *Moses* to command the main battle, he himself, with a chosen troop, setting spurs to his horse, and turning to the right, rushed upon the forces which were ordered to surround him and instantly stopped their progress; then, coming to blows with them, he forced them to give ground, and at length to think only of providing for their own safety. Against the 4000 Turkish horse were opposed not quite 2000 Albanian cavalry. Yet the victory for some time continued doubtful, although the number of Turks who fell exceeded that of their enemies. *Musache*, who stood aloof with the reserve, being called up, charged the enemy on the left. Thus was the fight divided into three separate battles. *Moses*, in the centre, exhibited excellent conduct. He restrained the ardor of his soldiers, and kept them in firm and close array while the contest on the wings remained doubtful, in order to have his forces fresh and vigorous when the time for them to act should arrive. This conduct of the Albanian general rendered *Feribassa* more furious and eager to press on; and it is reported that he addressed his men in a speech which ended in this manner:

“But what do I blame these,” (the Albanian soldiers,) “or why doe I presse upon them, whose obstinacie will soon cease, and vanish as the surges of the sea, when the tempest is gone and past? We must cut off their head, and then the bloud of the other (as it is but vile and base), so is it of no force nor resistance. Where is this wicked fugitive, the author of so manie mischiefes? I my selfe alone will dispatch him of his life, without the hazarde of any of you, if it be my good happe to encounter him in the battell. And I will sacrifice the blood of this savage and wilde beast

(whom so many theftes and robberies have made insolent), to the soules of our slain brethren, friendes, and kinsfolkes. I have (my friendes) of a long time bene of this minde, and this my desire is not of any sudden or new affection. It is long since that my thoughts did ayme at this combat; and my spirit hath beene ever enflamed to seeke the punishment of this wretched, unhappie runnagate. I will once make prooffe whether this my sword can cut well or not; whether that bodie of his be penetrable, or that it be fatall to those that encounter him. And I will see from whence he hath that corporall strength and vigour, and in what this happie warrior (whose fortune hath been of such long continuance) doth excell and surpasse all others."\*

After thus addressing his men, he rode to and fro in a furious manner, not becoming a general officer, seeking for Scanderbeg, and expressing by his voice and gestures the greatest eagerness to meet him. The common soldiers are said to have been pleased with the expectation of witnessing a single combat, although aware of the extraordinary prowess of Scanderbeg; and to be in hope that the conflict between the generals would decide the engagement, and relieve the men from exposing themselves to the danger of battle. However, many of those under the command of *Feribassa* whose minds were of a loftier cast, endeavored to dissuade him from this combat, as being both dangerous, and unusual for generals of armies, who ought not to expose their own persons more than was necessary, or to make themselves the actors in a scene of which they should rather be the spectators and judges: that such combats were suited to private men; but that it was the duty of general officers to give counsel and to command, rather than to act as swordsmen: that enough might be found to undertake this enter-

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\* The whole speech, as reported by the translator of Lavardin, is not repeated, because the above specimen is believed to be sufficient. The orthography is not altered.

prise, without his exposing himself to the danger of losing the victory, of which they felt assured.

*Feribassa*, deaf to this wholesome advice, set spurs to his horse, and being followed by a strong squadron of cavalry, called aloud upon Scanderbeg to prepare to defend himself. The Prince of Epiro had heard the vaunting of his adversary; but, while the issue of the battle remained doubtful, he would not take notice of him, and continued to urge the Turks with unremitting fury. When, at length, the victory was evidently inclining to his side, and the barbarian still continued to challenge and importune him, his anger was roused, and he no longer refused the challenge; but, all besprinkled with the blood of his enemies, he went, well accompanied, to meet *Feribassa*. The two armies at once suspended the fight, by the command of their generals. All was quiet, except that some of the Albanian officers of highest rank surrounded their prince, and earnestly dissuaded him from his intended combat; entreating him not to meddle with the clamorous, railing beast, whose destruction was their business and duty: that it would redound more to his honor and to the advantage of the state of Albania, that the *Ottoman* sovereign should see that the soldiers of the Epirots were equal in prowess with the leaders of the Turks, and that there could, in that respect, be no comparison between their generals: that it was not beseeming that so great a prince should peril the glory and renown of so many exploits performed by him in the course of so many years, by combatting with a slave and bondman to Amurath: that it could be no augmentation of the fame of Scanderbeg to overcome this barbarian, but that *Feribassa* might possibly obtain more honor and glory than by all the deeds of his past life. Notwithstanding these remonstrances, Scanderbeg prepared himself for the combat, and having thanked his friends for their affection and care for his safety, addressed them to this effect:—

“God defend (my friends), that as long as this hand of mine can handle the sword, and as long as this body of mine retaineth his wonted strength and vigor, that any of you should carry away from me the success of this adventure; the which (whatsoever it be) I refer to Him that is the giver of all victory. Reserve, therefore, these your offices of goodwill to some other season when you shall see me aged and stricken in years, when my limbs begin to fail, and when I shall assure myself that my strength doth decay. At this time you ought to have a care, lest whilst you show yourselves too careful of my life, you do envy my honor and reputation. And what would the enemy say if (according to your request) I should yield you the hazard of this combat; but that my holding back and refusing of the fight were but a mere dissimulation of my cowardice, and a true confession of a fearful and faint heart, and that I durst not encounter him, nor were comparable unto him. For (to answer your objections) it is not amiss sometimes for a general of an army to undertake a combat as well as a private soldier. That glorious combat of *Alexander* the Great with *Porus*, king of the Indians, was it any diminishing to his honor and reputation? Did our ancestors ever discommend the fight that was between *Pyrrhus* and *Pantachus*? I will not here speak of the *Marcelli* and *Torquati*, and the *Cornini*, who with the singular glory both of themselves and their citizens, have overcome their enemies that challenged them to the combat. These are the hands that must undertake this hazard: for me it is that the enemy calleth with so many menaces and bravadoes: to me it is that this cruel beast speaketh. I could do little if I should refuse him in such a matter, and he might think me very unkind if I should not satisfy his desire in so honest and reasonable a request. He is a man of sufficient worth to feel the weight of this my sword, whom *Amurath* thought so worthy to have the charge and command of so great an army.”

After this address to his men, he sent one of his guard to tell the barbarian to make ready to receive him. And he immediately presented himself upon the place assigned for the conflict, accompanied by the shouts and acclamations of his soldiers. The inferiority of the Turk to his opponent, and his speedy defeat, in the estimation of Lavardin, "did make the sight and spectacle lesse delightfull, and made the combat lesse notable then otherwise it might have been." For at the first encounter *Feribassa* was pierced through the face and head by the lance of Scanderbeg, and fell to the ground, leaving at the same time both his steed and his life. Scanderbeg, without regarding the dead body or the spoils of his foe, returned immediately to his troops, and urged them to renew the fight and again attack the enemy. But when the Turks saw their general slain, they at first rushed towards his body, with the view of rescuing it from the Christians. In this attempt, however, they failed. Whereupon they turned their backs and fled with all their speed, pursued by the Albanians who were advancing to charge them, until the retreat being sounded they were obliged to desist from the pursuit. Scanderbeg, full of joy for this victory, when all was quiet, and nothing was to be seen but the traces and dead bodies of the enemy and the ground stained with their blood, sent the common soldiers to gather the spoil, while he himself with his best and bravest troops stood on his guard arranged in order of battle, lest any force should be sent against him from the camp of the enemy.

This discomfiture and slaughter of his troops overwhelmed Amurath with distress and apprehension. But when he became more calm he displayed the part of a wise and skilful general in the measures which he adopted. He stationed soldiers on all sides, with orders to watch carefully the motions of the enemy. He removed to his camp some light pieces of artillery from before the town, and planted them on that side where the townsmen most usually sallied out



upon him. He added to the troops which had been under the command of *Feribassa* a supply of 4000 men, for so many had fallen in the conflict with Scanderbeg. To this body he particularly gave in charge the defence of the trenches and fortifications of the camp, with strict orders that no one should go beyond the trenches to meet the Albanians, but await their attack, and, if they entered the camp, to throw up barricades and play upon them with the artillery provided for that purpose. He thus made such arrangements for his security as should not interrupt the siege of the town. Nevertheless, the courage of the Mahomedans was greatly abated by this triumph of their enemies; and it seemed as if the extraordinary good fortune of Scanderbeg had turned the minds of even some of his enemies in his favor; for it is recorded that on the day of the defeat of *Feribassa* more than fifty Turks deserted to the Christian chief. The inhabitants of Sfetigrade were greatly encouraged by this victory of their prince, and they soon afforded to their assailants a bloody testimony of the spirit with which they were actuated; for Amurath having made another assault, which lasted until night separated the combatants, he therein lost 7000 soldiers, at the least, killed, and the greater part of those who returned from the assault were wounded. Of the defendants seventy were slain and ninety-two dangerously wounded: by which diminution of their numbers, the defendants began to be much troubled lest they should not be able to hold out against the numbers brought against them. They, however, applied themselves with all diligence to the repairing of their walls and other defences, so as to afford as much protection as possible to their persons against the efforts of the enemy. Still, the good fortune of their prince sustained their spirits, as well as the diminution and impairing of the Turkish forces in consequence of the defeats which they had sustained.

The Albanians, having gathered the spoils of their ene-

mies, returned exulting to their camp, and passed the night in singing and making merry. The booty obtained was so abundant that the soldiers scarcely appeared to care for it. The number of horses, especially, which they took was such that almost all the soldiers had some allotted to them; many were also presented to the neighboring princes, together with rich spoils taken from the enemy. Much of what was thus obtained was purchased by merchants from Italy and other places, who gave in exchange ready money or merchandise.

The whole province of Epire now began to lose all fear of the Turks; and Scanderbeg himself thought it probable that Amurath, after so many reverses, would raise the siege of Sfetigrade and retire from the country. He daily sent out spies to discover, if possible, the intentions of Amurath; but he could obtain no information from the camp of the enemy. Wherefore, as he could not endure to remain idle, he selected 2000 horse, and directing his course towards the mountains, he went forth to ascertain what might be the general state of affairs. But he continued in great perplexity with respect to the counsels which the Ottoman intended to pursue. The only way in which he hoped to gain the desired information was by intercepting some of the foragers or servants of the Turk; for he considered it mere folly openly to engage all the Ottoman forces or to attempt their camp, which he knew from the deserters was provided with artillery for its defence. Scanderbeg, however, continued to course about in all directions, and to show himself to his enemies, sometimes on one part and sometimes on another, in hopes that if the smallness of his force should tempt them to sally out upon him, he might be enabled to perform some notable exploit. But all his efforts proved fruitless; for the Turks were strictly forbidden by Amurath, on pain of death, to issue without leave from the camp, or even to make mention of fighting with the Albanian prince. Scanderbeg being disappointed in his hopes, returned to his camp with a troubled mind, in order

to consult upon the course to be pursued. To attempt to meet Amurath with open force, he was aware, would be rash and unadvised; to solicit his confederates of Epire to take arms and adventure the fortune of the whole state upon the chance of battle, appeared to be incurring too great a risk, for, even were he assured of victory, it could not be obtained without much bloodshed and the sacrifice of the lives of vast numbers of his people. Among many opinions expressed in council, the most judicious appeared to be that which advised to continue the war in the manner in which it had hitherto been carried on, that the strength of the enemies might be wasted and wearied out by the force of their own exertions. Scanderbeg, it was observed, had no reason to complain of his own fortune, nor of want of faith or loyalty in any of his followers; and it was thought that the defences of Sfetigrade were so strong, the provisions so abundant, and the countenance shown by the defendants so resolute, that no apprehensions need be entertained for its safety.

The language of Scanderbeg, which he openly held, was to the above effect, accompanied with a great appearance of cheerfulness and confidence; but inwardly he was much troubled and perplexed with doubts and fears as to the plans of Amurath, nor did the event prove his suspicions to be groundless. He was so well acquainted with the usual policy of the sultan that he dreaded his inactivity and appearance of sloth more than his open assaults. He considered that bribes and rewards might prevail against the strongest fortress. He knew that if once the love of gold took hold upon the hearts of men, they would thereby be rendered unfaithful and sacrilegious, and hurried away, like brute beasts, by the violence of appetite. These considerations filled him with apprehension; for he was aware "that the walls of many towns, and the bodies of many men who had contemned all danger of sword and armor, who were unconquerable by

force, and against whom iron could not prevail, yet had been tempted and overcome by gold and silver.”\* He thought it not improbable that among the multitude of his people some traitor might be found upon whom the Turk would successfully employ his means of corruption. Nor did he fear for Sfetigrade alone, but for the other towns of his dominion, and especially for Croia, lest some of its inhabitants should have a secret understanding with the Ottoman. In order, if possible, to ascertain whether there existed any ground for this last mentioned apprehension, he disguised himself as a private soldier, and taking with him only *Tanusee* and *Musache*, and about thirty more, he used all diligence to search out and inquire whether any thing that justified his fears could be discovered.

Thus Scanderbeg and Amurath were both in a state of much perplexity. The Turk began to despair of taking Sfetigrade by force, and, keeping within his trenches, occupied himself with consulting upon some other means by which to effect his purpose. Although he was advised by a part of his council to continue his open assaults, he felt convinced that in this way he should never subdue the spirit of the defendants, and determined to assail them in some other manner. Many advised him to raise the siege and to lead his forces through the country and lay all waste with fire and sword; and to pursue the enemy, who had grown so fearless and insolent that they coursed in every direction with (comparatively) a handful of vagabonds as though they were free from all danger. The opinion of others was, that he should leave Sfetigrade and direct all his efforts against the capital, *Croia*, which being a place of so much importance, it was probable that Scanderbeg would not intrust the defence of it to any commander but himself; by which means their efforts would not be interrupted by any incursions from an enemy

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\* Translator of Lavardin.

without the town. None of these counsels were approved of by the sultan. As to laying waste the country, he observed, that every thing had been so carefully gathered in by Scanderbeg before their coming that it would be folly to think of obtaining any thing worth having in that manner. He ridiculed the idea of pursuing the Epirot, as nothing, he observed, was more silly than to entangle themselves in the extensive forests and thick woods of Epire, which were covers for wild and savage beasts, but not for men endued with reason and discretion; and that the enemy would desire to have them place themselves at no greater disadvantage. As to attacking Croia, he thought the hazard and difficulty would be greater than those which they encountered before Sfetigrade, because the place being so important, it was to be presumed that the Croians would make a more stout defence than even the inhabitants of Sfetigrade had done; that Croia had its Gods as well as Sfetigrade; and he demanded of his council if they thought it reasonable to abandon their first attempt, and leave behind them on the enemy's borders a town before which they had been disappointed, and rush into the heart of Albania to attack the capital and strongest city.

Amurath was thus in a state of suspense, doubtful and irresolute, yet striving to conceal his vexation and disappointment. Finding open force unavailing to conquer the town, he directed his efforts towards corrupting the fidelity of the inhabitants. He after a time succeeded in opening a communication with them, so as to make them alluring offers and rich rewards if they would consent to admit a Turkish garrison into the town. The answers given by different citizens all concurred in rejecting the proffers of the Turk, and in declaring their resolution not to violate the allegiance due to their own prince. The sultan, however, did not despair of succeeding, as the bribes offered by him were so enormous as seemed to him too great to be resisted. At length one man was in-

duced to become a traitor, and to hold conferences with the spies of the enemy ; but so great was the danger and difficulty of carrying into effect his treasonable purpose, that he did not dare to attempt it.

As the town was placed upon the summit of a high rock, it was watered neither by springs nor by the river which ran near it. There was but one well in the place, which had been digged in former times for the common use of the inhabitants, and especially as a resource in time of war. The whole garrison consisted of Dibrians, who, though subject to Scanderbeg, were not properly Albanians either in name or language. The country of Dibria is divided into upper and lower Dibria. The latter is a champaign territory, rich and fertile, and abounding with productions of every kind. It is inhabited by a hardy and warlike people upon whom Scanderbeg principally depended in his most arduous warlike enterprises, and considered them as his principal defence against the Ottoman power. He thence drew, as often as he had need, the most valiant and excellent supplies of both officers and soldiers. The upper Dibria is mountainous and abounding with wood, although fertile. It is near to Macedonia, which it resembles in the manners of its inhabitants. It is peopled by Bulgarians or Tribullians, a fierce and warlike race, who were as much esteemed by Scanderbeg as the people of the lower country, both for their prowess and their fidelity and devotedness. Still, their habits are rather those of foreigners than of the Epirots, and some of their customs are abhorrent to those of the Albanians, as they retain the ceremonies and superstitions of the Greeks.

Of this peculiarity in the character of the upper Dibrians did the traitor whom we have mentioned take advantage to succeed at length in his traitorous designs. He knew that if the Dibrians should once see the carcass of any beast that was drowned in the city well, they would submit to ruin or desolation, or to any conditions whatever of peace, rather

than drink of its water. And the event proved the justness of his opinion, for during the night he threw into the well a dead dog, which being perceived in the morning, the rumor of it was immediately spread through the whole town, and eager inquiries were made as to who could be the perpetrator of so detestable an action, and as the author of it could not be discovered the tumult increased almost to a sedition. The Dibrians declared that they were betrayed, and that they should soon die of thirst, for there was not one of them who would not rather be made slave to the infidels than drink of the water of that well. Some of them cried out that it would be best to set fire to the town and sally forth, and either cut their way through the enemy or meet an honorable death. But of all the evils to which they were exposed, they deemed a coming to terms with their assailants the least. And thus by a groundless superstition was the fidelity of the Dibrians shaken. They became willing to listen to Amurath; and the soldiers of their own accord were ready to ask of him the conditions which they had not long before magnanimously rejected. The Dibrians were much superior to the citizens in number and strength, so that they were not in danger of being quelled or driven out by them. And if the citizens had been able to rid themselves of these soldiers, their own numbers would not have been sufficient for the defence of the town. All they could do was to give vent to their feelings in loud complaints against the infidelity and superstitious folly of these Dibrians. They did not even spare Scanderbeg, but blamed him for having committed the care of their city and of their lives to such unfaithful guardians. *Perlat*, the governor, was greatly astonished, and could not help suspecting that the polluting of the water was a mere fiction of some who held traitorous correspondence with the enemy: he therefore prohibited all parley or intercourse with the assailants without his permission and presence; and forthwith assembling the multitude in the market-

place, addressed to them such arguments and exhortations as he hoped would dissuade the Dibrians from their mischievous intention; and, when he had finished his speech, in order to ascertain whether what he said had produced any effect, he and most of the commonalty went to the well, and in the presence of them all he took a large draught of the water, which example was followed by most of the inhabitants. But when presented to some of the officers and chief persons of the garrison, nothing could prevail on them to taste it.

The governor, finding his entreaties and promises of no avail, was obliged to frame his conduct by the exigency of his situation. He assembled some of the Dibrians and of the principal citizens to deliberate upon the course to be pursued. The terms on which they would consent to surrender were soon decided upon among themselves. They required that the garrison should be suffered to depart in safety, with all their baggage, and that the citizens should have the choice either to remain unmolested in the town or to depart when they pleased. The Grand Seignior consented to the article touching the garrison, but he would in no wise consent that the citizens should remain within the town. The keys were thereupon delivered to Amurath, and the place surrendered empty of inhabitants. Some of the inhabitants lingered without the walls; but those who could not endure the idea of living under the dominion of the Turk, abandoned every thing, and went in search of Scanderbeg. The traitor who had polluted the water remained within the town, and being known by those who had practised with him, was by them conducted with great exultation to the Turkish tents. He was graciously received by the sultan, and honored both by words and valuable presents. He received 50,000 aspers and three rich suits of apparel. He also had bestowed upon him demesnes of which the yearly revenue amounted to 2000 crowns. But he derived little benefit from all these



favors openly bestowed upon him, for although much caressed by the infidels, he in a short time suddenly disappeared and was never more heard of. It was supposed that he was secretly put to death by Amurath, who could repose no confidence in so vile a traitor.

The garrison of Sfetigrade was permitted to pass without molestation through the Turkish squadrons, which stood ranged in order on each side of them, although the prince Mahomet, a fierce and cruel youth, urged his father with great earnestness either to put them all to the sword or to retain them in strict bondage until such time as they should be ransomed; offering as one reason among others, that no injunction of their law and of the religion of Mahomet was more imperative, than the duty of showing themselves in every possible manner mortal enemies to the Christians. Thus did this arrogant youth betray in his early years the temper of mind which he was afterwards to exhibit when seated on the Ottoman throne. This cruel advice of the son, however, had no influence upon his father, who sharply reprimanded him, and reminded him that nothing among men was more necessary than the strict observance of their faith, without which neither kingdoms nor empires, nor society itself, could remain firm and in security. Other words to the same effect he addressed to him, and demanded of him wherein the inhabitants of Sfetigrade had offended, or what fault they had committed against the majesty of the Turkish empire. They had defended their country, their wives, and their children; and if, he asked, they have faithfully observed the conditions agreed upon, what more have we a right to require of them?

The Dibrians and other Christians having evacuated Sfetigrade, and a garrison of 12,000 Janissaries having been there established, Amurath directed all his efforts towards repairing the injury which the walls had sustained from the battering of the cannon.

Scanderbeg, in the mean time, when he returned from his progress through the country, learned the misfortune of Sfetigrade and the infidelity of the Dibrians; whereupon, being moved with great vexation and wrath, he remained close within his tent. At length Perlat came with his dishonored forces. He himself was sad and downcast; but much more so were the citizens, down whose cheeks the tears trickled abundantly for the loss and desolation of their country. The Dibrians also appeared with their eyes cast to the ground, and overwhelmed with shame and remorse. But when they came in presence of their prince, and perceived the fierce displeasure of his countenance and the deep indignation with which he was possessed, they, every one of them, cast their armor to the ground, and taking the girdles from their waists and putting them about their necks, fell prostrate at his feet, and with bitter tears besought him to pardon their grievous and disgraceful fault. Scanderbeg was naturally kind and merciful. It was no easy matter to punish so many men; and he was aware that their ill conduct was occasioned solely by a blind superstition, and they openly confessed their guilt with wonderful humility and contrition. These considerations mitigated his anger, and turning towards them, he said that he granted them their lives in consideration of the good service which they had before performed in defence of the town. To the citizens he gave lands and possessions according to the former estate of each one, and he appointed many to honorable offices in the wars. Nor did he absolutely deny any request of the Dibrians; but the shame of their late disgrace caused them to shun the presence of their fellow-soldiers, and prevented them from remaining long in the camp.

Perlat received great commendation from Scanderbeg for the bravery with which he defended Sfetigrade, and the testimony of those who served under him was in his favor. Yet it has been doubted whether he did not deserve more censure

than praise on account of the laxity of discipline maintained by him in permitting his men to hold intercourse with the enemy. Scanderbeg, however, rewarded him not only with words but with a large sum of money, with fine horses and other presents, which Perlat accepted with great reluctance. He retired to his own dwelling with high honor and reputation. He was a native of *Emathia*, and was preferred to the spiritual dignity of abbot by his countrymen, called that of *Proto-sengeli*. He led a very austere and strict life, of great virtue and integrity; and to his other accomplishments he added great learning and eloquence.

When Scanderbeg perceived that the sultan was wholly intent upon fortifying Sfetigrade, he went with all speed in that direction, taking with him 5000 horse, in hopes of interrupting the progress of the work. But, after ranging through the woods and over the mountains without finding an opportunity to perform any notable exploit, he still continued to watch the enemy, in hopes of surprising their foragers or scouts, or of annoying them in some other manner. Nor did his soldiers return without booty, for they took many men and horses, who, as is usual in a great army, ranged carelessly about the country.

After Amurath had repaired the walls of Sfetigrade as well as his haste would permit, and had stored the place with provisions for a year, he resolved to withdraw his forces from Epire and to return to his own country. Various are the conjectures offered to explain the cause of this sudden determination of the Ottoman monarch. Some impute it to the disturbances in Hungary, some to the troubled state of Greece, and some to that of Persia. Many suppose that the losses he had sustained were the cause of his evacuating Epire, with the intention, however, after his forces were repaired, of returning to undertake the siege of Croia. Subsequent events appear to indicate that this last is the most probable reason of the departure of Amurath. Whatever

may have been the cause, on the last of July, 1449, he ordered the baggage with the carriages and part of the horsemen to precede him. The following day, at sunrise, he himself began his march with the remainder of the forces. As was his usual custom, he placed himself in the midst of his battalions, mounted upon a white horse and surrounded by his Janissaries, the centre being protected in front by the Beglerbey of Asia, and in the rear by the Bashaw of Romania, with their troops ranged in order of battle. All who have given an account of this expedition agree that the loss of Amurath amounted to 30,000 men, besides a great part of what he had provided for the assault, and many of his ensigns which were destroyed or taken. To all these misfortunes was added another which was inflicted by Scanderbeg. For upon the retreat of the sultan he pursued him with 8000 horse and 3000 foot, harassing him and picking up all the stragglers, sometimes appearing in front, sometimes in the rear, sometimes on one flank and sometimes on the other. The Turks frequently made head against him with their whole army, when he would retire among the neighboring valleys and hills, and then again suddenly appear in sight. He thus, for several miles, pressed close upon the Turks, causing much annoyance and mischief.

The sultan, being greatly vexed and shamed by the insults thus offered to his power, and by the slaughter of his troops, ordered the Bashaw of Romania to stay behind with 30,000 horse to cover the retreat of the army; commanding him, if Scanderbeg should continue his attacks, either to force him to fight, or oblige him to retreat. Scanderbeg, perceiving that the manœuvring of the enemy was changed, and fearing to be inclosed between two armies, quietly withdrew his forces from the multitude to which he was opposed, and took possession of passes in the mountains, where he knew that he should be able to defend himself. There, for a while, he kept his army arranged as though he intended to

attack the enemy ; and so, probably, he would have done, had not his men been exhausted by fatigue, and the Turkish power so greatly superior to him as to render such a movement altogether rash and hopeless. As he retired he said to his soldiers—"I would rather that this place should be noted for the flight of Scanderbeg, than for his cross." For it was the custom of the country to erect a cross in the place where any Christian, especially if a man of note, had been slain, or met with adverse fortune.

When the Bashaw of Romania perceived that Scanderbeg kept within his lines, he gradually drew off his forces and joined the main army. Scanderbeg also retired, being earnestly entreated by his men not to continue the pursuit of the enemy, but to let them go their way out of the country. Thus Scanderbeg returned to Croia ; and Amurath, proceeding through Macedonia and over the mountains of the Tribullians, arrived at the city of Adrianople. Both Scanderbeg and Amurath were much downcast by the events which had taken place. But the vexation of Amurath was much greater than that of his adversary ; for that he had failed to subdue an enemy whose destruction had been the chief aim of the expedition which he had undertaken, and because he did not esteem the capture of Sfetigrade a sufficient recompense for the losses and humiliations which he had sustained.

## BOOK VI.

TRANQUILITY being restored to the kingdom of Epire by the retreat of the Turks; the trade of the country having returned to its wonted channels; the garrisons being dismissed; and the people having resumed their several trades and occupations, the Prince of Albania also gave leave to his troops to rest a while from their military labors. He, however, gave orders that at the end of two months they should again repair to him, that he might lead them to Sfetigrade, with the purpose of recovering that town from their enemies. In the mean time he retained in arms but 2000 horse and 1000 foot; which force he sent to the frontiers of Macedon, to protect the inhabitants of that part of the country from the inroads of the Turks.

While Scanderbeg was thus at rest from war, and engaged within Croia in a kind of exercise entirely new to him—that is to say, the administration of justice, and the affairs of state—the nobles of Epire, and the princes his allies and neighbors, regretting that one of such rare excellence should pass the prime of his life (for he was then forty years of age or more) without any lawful issue to inherit his estate and kingdom, assembled with one accord, and approaching him as they had often before done, endeavored to persuade him to marry, and have children, by whom he might continue his name and memory; alleging, among other things, that good fortune and the favor of God would accompany his subjects only while the sceptre of Albania remained in the hands of his posterity.

The mind of Scanderbeg was far from any inclination to follow this counsel, for his thoughts were set upon much

loftier purposes—as one who appeared to aim at things beyond the ordinary reach of human capacity. And it is reported that he at first opposed this advice of his friends by many specious reasons, telling them that nothing was so oppressive to a free mind as the dominion of a wife; that when the troubles of matrimony once entered into a man's house, his body and spirit became enslaved; that fortune herself (as though by marriage she were lamed) would, in such a state, diminish the greatness of a man, and deprive him of the means of rising to the height of prosperity. At length, however, he so far yielded to the importunity of his advisers as to consent to take the yoke which they wished to impose upon him, provided he might have a respite until Sfetigrade should be recovered; for he maintained that it would be a reproach to him, if he should engage in marriage festivities while his friends and allies remained under the tyranny of the enemies to Christianity. The princes and nobles of Albania were pleased with having prevailed so far over him, and would not importune him any more; but, rendering him many thanks, they quickly proclaimed the news throughout the country, to the great joy of all the people.

During these consultations, tidings were daily brought from the frontiers of depredations committed within the territories of the Turks, and of their scouts being defeated and put to flight. The garrison of Sfetigrade was also constrained to keep close within the walls of the town, in consequence of the continual and watchful onsets of the Christian horsemen, who concealed themselves in the woods near the town, and suffered none to escape who incautiously wandered in the open country. Those who attempted to sally forth were generally driven back more speedily than they came out. The Christians, apprehensive of the disadvantage of the ground, did not venture very near to the walls; but, by pretended flight, endeavored to allure the Turks into the

open fields. On one occasion, 300 of the garrison issued out, and advanced about a bow-shot beyond the foot of the mountain, being desirous to take vengeance of the Christians, with whom encountering with more fury than prudence, forty-three lost their lives and fourteen were made prisoners; nor would any of them have escaped, had not their hasty retreat been covered by their companions of the garrison. The troops of Scanderbeg might, in the confusion, have gotten possession of the place, if their pursuit had been hotter, or their numbers greater. After this the Turks dared no more to show themselves without the walls; but remained shut up, and in a manner besieged by a handful of Christians.

In this rencontre were engaged but a part of the Christians left by Scanderbeg upon the frontier. Although his troops had acted without his orders, still this sage and prudent prince was so well pleased with their conduct, that he determined to take advantage of the panic which had seized the Turks, and hasten as speedily as he could to the assault of the place. Accordingly, he at once dispatched to Sfetigrade 300 horse and 500 foot, of the troops which he had with him, to the aid of their companions; to whom he also sent many presents, in token that he approved the exploits which they had already performed, and as an encouragement for them to act in the same manner until he should himself arrive with more forces, and with all things necessary for carrying on a siege. He then set about gathering new forces; and within a few days he assembled an army of 18,000 men, of whom 8000 were horsemen, the residue foot soldiers.

All his preparations being completed, and the carriages sent on ahead, he himself followed with all his army; and, on the 20th day of September, he planted his ensigns before the walls of Sfetigrade. His own person and his horsemen were lodged just beyond the distance of an arquebuse-shot;



for the Turkish garrison was almost entirely composed of arquebusiers, the best which Amurath could procure. The footmen were quartered somewhat nearer; and to prevent the enemy from annoying them with their shot, they erected, in the manner of a palisado, a large number of rafters and planks, whereof a great store had been provided, behind which they were securely sheltered. The Albanians were almost all of them archers; the rest, being Italians and Germans (Almaines), served with arquebuses and cross-bows. There were also some Slavonians, more skilled in the use of the sword than of the bow; who, upon news of the levy of soldiers, being allured by the hope of plunder, came to serve with the Albanians as volunteers, and without any pay. In those days, people came constantly into Epire from the nations around, to serve under Scanderbeg, who was the only captain perpetually under arms and engaged in war with the Turks.\* There were also among the forces of Scanderbeg fifty Frenchmen or more, who had charge, as cannoniers, of some small field-pieces, intended rather to annoy the defendants than to batter the walls of the town. There do not appear to have been any great pieces of artillery brought against the town, as the intention was to take it by escalade. In order to secure his army from being attacked by the Turks in the rear, he sent out, in different directions, two bodies of troops, the one under the command of *Streese*, the other under that of *Tanusee*, to protect those who were engaged in the siege, and to prevent succors from being sent in to the besieged. During the first seven days after the Christians had presented themselves before Sfetigrade, they were incessantly occupied in fortifying their camp and in preparing their lodgings, as they expected to winter before the town. And in all this time they had not molested the besieged by word or act. But the soldiers at

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\* Lavardin's translator says, "Turkes and Miscreants."

length began to assemble around their prince, and urgently request him to suffer them to assault the enemy. But *Castriot*, not willing to employ force until he had first essayed all other means, restrained the impetuosity of his men, until he could sound the minds of the defendants. He accordingly sent to them two soldiers, with the offer of terms of capitulation similar to those which the citizens of Sfetigrade had accepted from the sultan. But the Turks haughtily rejected his proposals, and answered, that the place which had cost them so much blood was not to be sold for words; that he should boldly offer the bodies of his men, and even his own head, for the redemption of the town; and that he would then learn whether their faith, like that of the Dibrians, depended upon the water of a well.

This answer did not surprise Scanderbeg; and he determined to permit his men to act as they desired, and, instead of giving words to his enemies, to let them feel the weight of his blows. At daybreak, therefore, the next morning, an assault was made upon the suburbs lately assigned by the Turks to the poorer citizens, which Scanderbeg caused to be overthrown and burnt. Many of those who inhabited these suburbs, at sight of the Christian ensigns, joined their ancient friends and allies. The rest took refuge under the walls of the town. The buildings nearest the town were not much injured by the assailants, as they were chiefly occupied by Sfetigradians and Epirots.

Moses, in the mean time, was not idle; for while the garrison were engaged in the defence of the suburbs, he made an attack upon the great gate with 3000 able-bodied and brave men. But the Turks, whose numbers were very great in proportion to the size of the place, ran from all quarters to repel the assault; some of them annoying the Christians with shot from above, and some placing beams and large stones against the inside of the gate, so as to baffle the attempts of the assailants. This affair was not attended

with any great loss; for, no scaling-ladders having been brought up to the walls, the fight was maintained on both sides with only bows and arquebuses. While Moses was calling to his men to bring up their ladders and other engines, Scanderbeg caused a retreat to be sounded, and the troops retired unwillingly to their quarters. This unimportant conflict served but to sharpen the minds of the two parties against each other.

The remainder of that day was employed by Scanderbeg in consulting about the method which should be employed in order to reduce the town. It was finally thought most advisable not to risk an open assault; but by stratagem to induce the garrison to make sallies, in some one of which the Christians might be enabled to enter the place together with the Turks upon their retreat.

The execution of this plan of operations was attempted the following night. *Moses*, at the head of 300 chosen horse, was appointed to provoke the enemy to come forth. *Zacharie Groppe*, with 500 horse, and Scanderbeg with the like number, placed themselves in very close and secret ambush: for having put out and covered their fires, they issued as silently as possible from the rear of their camp, and, taking advantage of a dark and stormy night, they got into the hollows and windings of the valleys, among woods full of bushes and briars, where the scouts of the enemy could not discover them. The *Dibrian*, in the mean time, with his men, watched and pried about in the manner of a freebooter; and gradually approaching near and nearer to the walls, he coursed up and down in sight of the townsmen, and within reach of their weapons. The garrison were divided in opinion. Some were for sallying forth, exclaiming that it was shameful to suffer so fair an occasion to be lost: others thought it best not to stir without mature advice and deliberation. The latter opinion, in the end, prevailed. The gates were kept closed, and none suffered

to go out. The *Albanians*, sometimes in troops, sometimes in a scattered manner, with their bows bent against the defendants upon the walls, galloped backwards and forwards in hopes of enticing the garrison to sally forth. At length *Moses*, finding that he gained nothing but blows, and that there was more prospect of increasing danger than of a successful event—for two of his men were slain, and six or seven of them so badly hurt that he could hardly carry them off, gradually withdrew from the walls and the sight of the enemy, full of shame and indignation. Scanderbeg also, and his men, dripping-wet with rain, soon followed, in great vexation and disappointment. This failure and ill plight of their enemies, afforded the Turks great merriment.

Scanderbeg did not patiently endure this mockery, but determined to requite it by open force and a general assault. The day following, having arranged his companies in order of battle, and assigned to every man his duty, he at about two hours before noon led 10,000 men up to the walls of the town. The remainder of his forces were partly assigned to the protection of the trenches, and part were retained as a corps de reserve, that the assault might not be interrupted. *Moses* first, with a squadron of stout and brave youths, advanced in hope of carrying the town by escalade; for Scanderbeg from beneath, with a great band of Italian archers and crossbow-men, drove the defendants from their stations, so that many of the assailants mounted their ladders and got footing on the walls, and there valiantly engaged the Turks. The artillery which was planted on the other side of the town did not suffer that part of the garrison to remain quiet; for although they made no great breach, yet they caused injury to the walls, and swept away many of the defendants. But the most violent and furious assault was made by *Zacharie Groppe* with the chief strength of the army, and especially with the Germans (*Almaines*), who preferred to die rather than to retreat. These being protected by the

targets of their companions and by baskets close joined together, endeavored with pickaxes and crowbars to undermine the walls. The garrison could not, from above, prevent this work; for although many of the assailants fell, others succeeded them without respect of danger or apprehension of death. But, notwithstanding the annoyance suffered by the besieged, they purposely protracted the fight, because they knew that the sultan had caused the foundation of the wall to be made so secure that it required no defence. *Zacharie* persevered for a while in his attempt, but at length finding all his efforts likely to be fruitless, he changed his mode of attack, and determined to scale the walls, crying out to his soldiers, "To the scalado! to the scalado!" When the Turks perceived the mode of attack changed by the Christians, they suffered some of them to mount even to the top of their ladders, and then discharging a volley of arquebuse shot and rolling upon them a multitude of great stones, they easily drove down both them and their ladders to the bottom of the valley; for the foothold between the ramparts and a steep precipice was very narrow. Little better success attended the assailants under *Moses* on the opposite side; for having several times succeeded in planting the Albanian colors upon the ramparts, the defendants, in great wrath, collected and kept up such a force as finally succeeded in throwing the assailants with their ladders in confusion to the ground. *Castriot* was excessively grieved to see his troops thus handled, and especially on account of *Moses*, who was wounded, and whom he had with much difficulty withdrawn from the range of the enemy's shot, and sent to his quarters that he might have his wounds dressed. *Scanderbeg*, a little retired from the wall, caused himself to be covered by the targets of two of his soldiers, and had some of his men to stand by him and with their shot to play upon the enemy; others, who were fresh and sound, he commanded and encouraged to bring up their ladders, and fiercely to renew the

assault. Scanderbeg himself that day fought with bow and arrows, and it is said that the number of Turks which he slew was wonderful, for that he drew not one shaft in vain. It was not difficult to have the ladders brought up and set against the walls, but the soldiers advanced in small troops, and dreaded to mount; so that, notwithstanding the great promises of their chief, they at length ceased to fight, and the darkness of the night put an end to that day's service. The Albanians remained very quiet in their camp during the night, as having no reason to exult; for 200 of their best soldiers were slain and 600 wounded, more than thirty of whom afterwards died of their wounds. Although the loss of the defendants was greater, and the cries of their wounded were heard in all quarters, yet their success in the repulse of their enemy, and the preservation of the place, caused them to pass the night in great mirth. They kindled large fires, and incessantly ran up and down upon the walls and ramparts, singing songs and exhibiting great triumph and joy.

The news of the siege of Sfetigrade caused Amurath much disturbance of mind, especially as winter had begun, and induced him to make immediate preparations for the relief of the place. He caused proclamation to be made of his intended return into Epire, partly, it is probable, with the view of discouraging the Christians from prosecuting the siege.

Scanderbeg did not abate his activity and diligence in consequence of his repulse and his loss of men, but exerted himself to the utmost to annoy the garrison. Sometimes in the day, and at other times in the night, he would lead his troops close under the walls and throw balls and pots of wild-fire among the enemy. He would also dispatch small bands of soldiers to draw away the dead bodies, thinking to entice forth the enemy. But all his efforts and devices proving ineffectual, he determined to make another assault,

and if that failed to raise the siege. Accordingly, after sunrise the next day, he caused proclamation to be made with sound of trumpet throughout the camp, that, besides the great rewards offered to those who should first enter the town, he gave his men permission to plunder it. He also urged them by other motives to make another vigorous effort to get possession of the place. Having thus stirred up the courage of his troops, he divided them into companies, and leaving about 600 for the custody of the camp, he with the others pressed the town on all sides where it was approachable. The attack was begun with shot alone, and answered with the same by the defendants. After skirmishing some time in this manner, the boldest of the assailants took to their ladders, in order to get nearer to their enemies. Once or twice they were repulsed by the defendants. But at length, such was the courage and violence of the Albanians, who rushed on like lions without fear of danger, that the garrison were so far driven in, that the Christians might have established themselves upon the walls had they not, when they saw the enemy relaxing their defence and retiring from the fight, been seized with a panic lest the movements of the enemy were intended to cover an ambuscade, by the dread of which their efforts were so much relaxed as to give the enemy time to recover from the disorder into which they were thrown and to bring on fresh troops to the defence. In this part of the attack many were slain on both sides, but many more on the part of the assailants than of the defendants. The slaughter would have been greater if it had not been prevented by the good conduct of *Zacharie*; for he, against another part of the wall, having raised many ladders, made a new onset, by which a diversion was effected and the garrison obliged to divide their forces. All this while, Castriot was to be seen with his squadrons, sometimes leading them up to the walls that he might strike terror into his enemies, sometimes doing the duty of a common soldier; and

urging on his troops, at one time by entreaties, at another by reproaches. Those who were armed with missile weapons kept their stations around the walls, and played incessantly upon the Turks as they passed along upon the curtains. The defendants perceiving their own numbers to decrease, and the courage and obstinacy of the Christians to increase beyond all reasonable expectation, they began to dread what might be the issue of that day's conflict. In order to gain time and stop the fury of the assault, they had recourse to stratagem. They caught up the Turkish ensigns from the ramparts, and calling out aloud to the Christians, they desired a short suspension of arms in order to hold a parley with Scanderbeg. This request was granted by the Albanians, with the consent of their general. Both sides ceased hostilities, and the defendants were permitted to declare what they had to say. Whereupon, a grave old man, after thanking the commander and his forces for their courtesy, proposed, on behalf of the defendants, that a truce should be made for one day, during which the garrison might consult together upon terms of capitulation, which should be submitted to him the following day. Scanderbeg, suspecting this to be but a device of the Turks to gain time, at first was altogether averse to granting the truce, and required them to declare immediately what terms they had to offer; nevertheless, at length wearied by their importunity and fair speeches and by the entreaties of his own soldiers, he retired from the assault, and the remainder of that day and the following night were passed in tranquillity.

The next morning four Turks, men of great craft and subtlety, came to consult with the Prince of Albania, and presented to him valuable gifts. The conditions offered were such as those who proposed them knew would not be accepted; for it was intended, upon the rejection of the first offers, to come forward with others, so as to prolong the time of negotiating. The conditions offered were, in sub-



stance, the following : That the ancient citizens being readmitted to the town with their former privileges and immunities, the houses and fields should be equally divided among them, and that they should thereupon renounce the Ottoman dominion and yield faithful obedience to the Prince of Epire. They also required that 10,000 aspers should be paid down to their governor. The Christians returned no answer to these propositions except the cry of *To arms! to arms!* The Turks, however, did not desist from their manœuvres, but sent again the same men, to know what terms Scanderbeg would accept, and, if nothing else could be done, to submit all to his discretion. This sudden alteration in the minds of the defendants excited in the Christian general a suspicion of insincerity on their part; yet he deemed it not well entirely to reject their overtures: he therefore told them distinctly, that he would not depart in any respect from the offers which he had first made to them; that if they would be content with them he would take the town into his possession, but that if their intention was only to deceive him in order to gain time, they must expect to be treated with the utmost rigor of war.

Three whole days being spent in these pretended negotiations, the purpose of the garrison became manifest. News also arrived of the preparations and speedy coming of the Turks, by which the mind of Scanderbeg was greatly disturbed and perplexed. His indignation at the conduct of the garrison prevented him from raising the siege; and, on the other hand, he was prompted thereto by the expected approach of Amurath and the importance of attending to his affairs elsewhere. He resolved, however, to remain a while longer, until he should receive more certain accounts of the movements of the sultan. But the elements seemed to conspire against him, for such torrents of rain continued for some time to fall that the soldiers could not leave their trenches. When, at length, the rain ceased, Scanderbeg proclaimed one assault more

against the town for the following day. He passed the whole night without sleeping, being occupied in getting all things necessary in readiness and in encouraging his men.

Before day, Scanderbeg, drawing forth his troops, marched them towards the walls. The late rains had rendered the ground so slippery that their advance was toilsome, and they with difficulty dragged up their ladders and other warlike implements. But anger and resentment lent them strength and courage to forget and overcome their difficulties. The defendants, to whom this attack was unexpected, were at first remiss in their efforts, but soon collecting their forces, they were able to repulse the assailants. The assault of the Epirots was less ardent than the former one; for they were impressed with the idea that Amurath would soon be upon them. At length Scanderbeg, finding that his men were discouraged and in confusion, was constrained to raise the siege.

At the ninth hour of the day, when the troops had dined, Scanderbeg commanded them to truss up their baggage, after throwing down and setting fire to the defences of the camp. Had Scanderbeg given loose to the fury of his soldiers, the country would have been laid waste; but he restrained their violence, and told them that he hoped some day, when it should please God to be more favorable to them, to recover the town and re-establish it in its former state. He therefore dislodged as secretly as he could, without leaving any marks of hostility in his course, and proceeded directly towards *Croia*. It is reported that Scanderbeg lost at this siege more than 500 men, which seems much more probable than the account given by those who say that when he raised the siege, his loss did not amount to more than sixty.

On the three and twentieth day of October, Scanderbeg with his army returned to *Croia*, where he gave immediate orders for enrolling troops. He appointed officers, and gave

to them their several charges, in anticipation of the expected invasion by Amurath. All persons unfit to bear arms were sent out of the town, in which was placed a garrison of 2000 men, composed of Albanians, Italians, Germans,\* Slavonians, and Frenchmen. These different nations kept peace and harmony among themselves, of which their worthy defence of the town against Amurath was a convincing evidence. *Uranocotes* was continued in the government of the place, with full powers and authority, and with the warmest approbation of all men. It would have been difficult to find any person in the whole army more fit for the station, or more worthy of it, or who was more acceptable to the soldiers. He was a man of singular resolution and self-possession in the midst of all dangers. He was ever prompt in the discharge of his duty, whether to command or to obey. He always, with the best imaginable grace, attributed the merit of any service to those whose due it was, and never sought to diminish the credit of his soldiers that he might exalt his own reputation. He had through life conducted himself well and valiantly, and by his character, as well as by the goodness and gravity of his person, he commanded the respect of all men; and to all these qualities was added lustre by the noble blood which ran in his veins. He promised to spare no efforts, nor to shun any danger, in order to maintain the general good opinion which he had obtained. Garrisons were also placed in *Stellusa*, *Petra-Alba*, and other places of strength, and governors set over them. And in all the towns many persons were appointed to provide from all quarters store of victual and munitions. But, notwithstanding all their efforts, three months elapsed before they could obtain the requisite supplies, in consequence of the waste which the country had suffered from the wars, and the neglect of tillage the preceding year, caused by the military du-

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\* Almains.

ties which the inhabitants had been obliged to perform. It is reported that, although the Venetians were at peace with the Turks, the merchants of Venice secretly supplied the Epirots with provisions. Certain it is that Scanderbeg never failed of obtaining large supplies of money from that state; and during his whole life his wars were carried on with the assistance and under the favor of the Venetians, and to them he attributed the glory of his most memorable exploits and triumphs.

Croia was stored with grain and other provisions sufficient to last for a year. All kinds of missile weapons were also provided. The artillery was continued in charge of the French, who received each man five crowns per month pay, both in peace and war. Most part of the garrison were armed with arquebuses and crossbows. When the preparations in *Croia* were completed, whatever provisions were not there wanted were sent to other parts of the province. Before raising any new forces to be under his immediate command, Scanderbeg thought it advisable to visit the troops which had lately been appointed to defend the frontiers. He took with him *Moses* and a few other horsemen, with whom he went to give the necessary orders and directions, and to send out spies to obtain information respecting the movements of the Turks. Neither cold nor frost nor snow impeded the active motions of this vigilant chieftain. He was not discouraged by the greatness of his labors nor by the difficulties with which he had to contend; but visiting and revisiting, now one place and now another, he with increasing spirit discharged the various duties of his station. Sometimes he disguised himself as a shepherd, and would get under the walls of Sfetigrade in hopes of discovering some way to rescue the place out of the hands of Amurath. The garrison within were kept on the alert, not stirring out of the gates, but keeping continual watch and ward as though they were actually besieged.

While Scanderbeg was thus busily engaged in preparing for the expected invasion of the Turks, information was brought to him by his emissaries, that Amurath had resolved to delay his march until the following spring. He was induced to do this by hearing that Scanderbeg had raised the siege of *Sfetigrade*, so that there was no need of his pressing forward during the approach of winter. He consequently issued a new edict, that the forces which had been levied for the expedition against Epire, should rendezvous at Adrianople the following spring, on the 15th of March. He was very desirous that his intention to attack *Croia* should be kept secret. But it was evident to every one that his preparations were directed against Scanderbeg. This delay of the Turkish monarch gave the Christians time to breathe. The garrison upon the frontier was diminished one-half; so that not more than 2000 men at most remained there, who built huts, and prepared winter-quarters for themselves. The rest were dismissed, and permitted to return to their homes.

The Prince of Epire, with *Moses* and others, being returned to *Croia*, occupied himself some time in causing the fortifications to be repaired and increased. After this he was in continual motion, hastening from place to place. And being meanly dressed, in company with only ten men, he visited the neighboring princes, his allies, and the governors of the Venetian towns, warning them of the danger which threatened them, and endeavoring to rouse them to a vigorous participation in the war. The greater part of the winter he passed secretly in the confines of Macedonia, among the troops there stationed, in a camp not more than fifteen miles distant from *Sfetigrade*, the nearness of which prevented those within the town from venturing much abroad, and kept them in continual apprehension.

After the winter had passed, the spring of 1450 brought to Scanderbeg frequent intelligence of the Turkish move-

ments : for, at one time, some of the infidels would come to him and offer to enter his service ; at another, some, who remembered their former friendship, would send him an account of Amurath's designs. Having provided for the safety of his towns, he now turned his attention to the raising of forces wherewith to annoy the army of the sultan when it should invade his territory. He sent Tanusee, Streese, and the Dibrian, the only chief officers who were at leisure, to levy men throughout the province. But the flower of the population being already employed, it is said that he took into pay many of the subjects of the Venetian government, and some also of the inhabitants of Dalmatia.

Amurath also was not remiss in his preparations. Orders were given that each soldier should furnish himself with provisions for many days, as it was expected that the province of Epire would be found waste and barren. His store of warlike implements was immense ; among the rest were tools for mining and breaking through walls, and small pieces of artillery, which could be carried upon camels. Great quantities of brass and other metal were collected, to be carried with the army, and to be cast into battering ordnance upon the territory of the enemy. When all things were in readiness, it is generally agreed that the invading army amounted to 160,000 fighting men, besides carpenters, masons, and all sorts of handicrafts-men, and laborers, some of whom were paid by the sultan, and others went without pay, being allured by the hope of plunder.

About the 5th of April, 1450, the van of the Turkish army\* was sent into Macedonia, under the conduct of *Sebalias Zeurenesse*, an officer of experience and judgment. The Prince of Epire, at the same time having disposed his scouts and guards throughout the mountains and woods, and having withdrawn the garrison from the frontiers, and collected

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\* The *Albaneses*.

his troops together, rode through his dominions, examining the condition of all things. It is by all admitted, that, during the siege of Croia, this army of observation, if it may be so called, did not exceed 8000 fighting men, of whom 2000 were foot, the others cavalry.

A few days before the arrival of the Turks, Scanderbeg, with his troops, had laid waste and burned the corn, and whatever within his territory could afford the enemy nourishment. And when, at length, he received frequent advice of their approach, he retired to a mountain called *Tumenista*, distant about four miles from Croia, there to wait and observe what course it would be advisable for him to pursue.

The Turkish cavalry held on their march towards Epire without meeting with any opposition, and passing quietly into that province, they entered upon the territory of *Croia*. After reconnoitering the environs of the city to ascertain where their camp might be most advantageously pitched, and on what quarter it would be best to assault the town, they chose a fair and fertile plain, extending from *Croia* to the town of *Parthinois*.

*Sebalias*, having encamped his troops so as to be secure against any force which the Christians were able to bring against him, turned his attention entirely to watching the people within the town. He stopped all access to it, that they might be debarred from any succors. These troops composing the vanguard, had brought with them no arms but lances and cimeters; and *Sebalias*, warned by the misfortunes of others, determined to make no predatory incursions into the country. He had, moreover, been expressly commanded by the sultan, to make no attempt upon the enemy except in case of necessity. Scanderbeg, with a part of his men, took a view of the Turkish camp; and finding the force very great, amounting to 40,000 men, and the conduct of the commander extremely prudent and skilful, he retired into his fortress without making any attempt upon

the invaders, resolved there to await the coming of Amurath, in the expectation of being able to act more efficiently when the hostile army should be spread abroad and engaged in attacking the town.

While Scanderbeg was wisely ordering his affairs, the Ottoman ensigns continued daily to arrive, and the country appeared full of armed men. At the end of April, Amurath, accompanied by his son Mahomet, with his chief nobility, and the main body of his army, joined the forces already encamped before Croia, in the place which was destined to be his grave. Nearly twenty days intervened between the arrival of the vanguard and the main body of the army. The tardy advance of the troops was caused by the weight and quantity of the baggage, and the advanced age of the sultan, which rendered him indisposed to proceed with rapidity. So great was the space occupied by the Turkish multitude, that the quarters of the troops extended six miles from the town. The courage of the besieged was not abated by the dangers with which they were surrounded, but rather heightened by the hope of the glory which they should acquire by triumphing over such a mighty host. The soldiers on the walls presented a most resolute countenance, and gave every token of confidence in their own strength. The other fortified places of Epire also continued undaunted; for their former experience, and the habit of exposure to perils, had blunted in them the apprehension which was wont to be caused by the Ottoman power.

Four days were spent by the Turks in arranging their camp. And when that was done, they flocked around the sultan, demanding and entreating to be employed. That day, however, Amurath would not hearken to them, but strictly commanded them to remain quiet within the camp. The reason of which order was the strange apparent inactivity of Scanderbeg, which made the Turk suspect some plot laid by that master of warlike stratagems. The follow-



ing day Amurath sent two heralds to *Uranocotes*, to summon the town, and to offer the following terms, namely: That if the place were delivered up, the governor and his garrison should be suffered to depart, bag and baggage; that the governor himself should receive 200,000 aspers, and be honorably entertained, if he would, among his greatest friends and favorers. As to the citizens of *Croia*, if they disliked the religion of the Turks, the sultan offered to grant them the free exercise of their own faith, together with the enjoyment of their ancient rights and immunities, and any other favor with which he could gratify them. The heralds, bearing these conditions, approached the gate—there being but this one entrance, as the mountain prevented access to the city in every other part. The governor being apprised by the guard of their coming, went, well accompanied, to that part of the fortress. The heralds requested to be admitted to speak with him. He would not permit them to enter the town; but when they were near enough to be distinctly heard, he made a sign for them to deliver what they had to say. They had scarcely finished their message, when the soldiers, not waiting for the governor to make answer, cried out that the enemy should be answered with arquebuse-shot, and not with words; uttering, after the manner of soldiers, many scoffs and abusive terms against the messengers.

The sultan was exceedingly indignant at the reception given to his heralds, and, in great wrath, commenced his preparations for the assault of the town. He first caused the rude masses of metal, which he had brought with him, to be founded. This work occupied about fifteen days. Ten pieces of battering ordnance were cast; four of which are said to have been large enough to throw a shot of 600 pounds, and the other six would throw shots of 200 pounds weight. Four of the lesser pieces and two of the larger

were planted against the walls, on the east side of the town; the others were pointed directly at the gate. Those were the only parts of the fortifications upon which they expected to make impression, because they were constructed by the hand of man. In other parts the natural strength of the place was so great as to be considered impregnable.

The ordnance being mounted upon carriages and ready for service, four days were spent in battering the walls. The injury sustained by the defences was very great, so that the Turks were much encouraged in their hopes of carrying the town. The men, with great alacrity and emulation, got ready their scaling-ladders and other implements for the attack. The bashaws themselves, and other principal officers, used every exertion in their power to win the favor of Amurath. Mahomet particularly distinguished himself by his zeal and activity, being constantly about his father, and exerting himself with as much diligence as a common soldier. It is also said that, besides the reward publicly offered by the sultan, he promised 100,000 aspers to the man who should first enter the town and plant the Turkish colors upon the walls.

The courage of the *Croians* was not broken by the breach made in their fortifications. The encouraging speeches of their governor, *Uranocontes*, had great effect in keeping up their spirit. He sometimes addressed them in the Albanian, sometimes in the Italian language, and sometimes by interpreters, preparing them for the expected assault, and urging every man to the performance of his duty. The governor and his garrison continued actively employed until two hours of the night were spent. The remainder of the night was given to repose.

The infidels also passed that night quietly, for it had been resolved that the assault should be made the following day; and proclamation was made in the evening for the troops to

assemble, armed, before seven o'clock in the morning, at the head-quarters of the sultan. These orders were punctually obeyed; when, the chief officers of the army being called together, the old sultan addressed them more vehemently than comported with his age and debility. Young Mahomet, also, scarcely waited for his father to finish speaking, before he broke out in so furious a manner, that, like another Hannibal towards the Romans, he betrayed his deep-rooted animosity against the Christians in general, and the Epirots in particular. After him, the other chiefs and officers encouraged each his own men. When they had dined, and all things had been well ordered, it was near noon, at which time the squadrons were marched out of the trenches and displayed upon the plain. They advanced with a great noise of trumpets and drums, and shouts of the soldiers. They had reached the walls, and the foremost of them had begun the attack, when the Turkish camp was suddenly alarmed and thrown into an uproar. This was caused by Scanderbeg, who, a long time, had watched the motions of the enemy; and now, with a strong troop of horsemen, the ablest and best-mounted of his army, rushed in upon their tents. The Turks, in the quarter where the onset was made, at first opposed him very vigorously; but were beginning, at length, to give way, when they were sustained by their fellows, who came to their aid from other quarters. The Albanians, however, keeping their ranks close, made such a charge upon their opponents as laid 600 of them dead, and put the others to flight. They succeeded in destroying two tents, and carrying off the ensigns and whatever else was found within them. The news of this onset was brought to the ears of Amurath, while busied in ordering the assault of the town. He supposed that abundant provision had been made to resist any attack upon the camp; but as he was wont to say "that nothing was sufficient to make resistance against the fierceness and fury of this beast," he thought it

best to send *Seremet*, one of his captains, with 4000 horse, to repel the Christians. *Mahomet* also, against the wish of his father, was induced, by his hatred of Scanderbeg, to accompany this troop, with his ordinary body-guard. But Scanderbeg, before these forces could act, perceiving that he should not be able to resist the numbers that were coming upon him, turned bridle and retreated; not, however, without the imminent peril of his life; for it is said that the heat of the fight had so excited him, that he broke in among the thickest of the enemies, and was nearly overpowered by them. His own strength, as well as that of his horse, was so exhausted that it was with the utmost difficulty he could extricate himself. At length both he and his troops got out of sight of the Mahommedans. This tumult ended, the Turkish soldiers returned to their camp; and the sultan's son rejoined his father, much grieved that his enemies, after such a bravado, and the loss of so many of his men, should have escaped from him. And he publicly took oath that he would never cease to watch an opportunity to get that savage wild beast into his snares.

The Prince of Epire, having freed himself from his enemies, rejoined his own troops, who were greatly alarmed at his danger, and had sent soldiers on all sides in quest of him. Many, who feared he had fallen, could not refrain from lamenting the fate which awaited their country, in consequence of the loss of such a leader. But his safe return converted their heaviness into exultation and songs of joy; and vows which had been made for his safe return were performed, in the full belief that through them he had been preserved from his enemies. His shield was so battered and hewn that its original shape could scarcely be discerned, yet he was himself without wound or hurt.

The loss of the Christians in this affair did not amount to more than about ten slain and as many wounded; for Scanderbeg, leaving his infantry behind and the men who

were worst mounted, made this attack with 5000 horsemen, all stout and valiant, and prompt either to fly or to fight. The Christian forces having recovered their general returned joyfully to their camp. But this success could not make glad the heart of Scanderbeg, when he contemplated the danger to which Croia was exposed, the great importance of the place, and the incalculable loss to his country which would be caused by its capture. Nor could the bravery of the governor and garrison, and the almost impregnable situation of the town, relieve his mind from these apprehensions.

Although this exploit of Scanderbeg did not entirely interrupt the assault upon the town, yet it somewhat retarded the efforts of the assailants, until Amurath had ascertained the truth of what had taken place. He then renewed the attack with greater violence than before. He ordered those who were armed with missile weapons to be placed so as to annoy those who defended the walls. The smaller pieces of artillery were brought nearer to the ramparts that they might play upon the defendants, while the meaner of his soldiery brought the scaling-ladders and other engines up to the walls. Some brave troops of the Janissaries and Asappes were appointed to follow, and to mount the ladders as soon as they were raised. The principal effort was directed against that part of the town where the defences were weakest, for some parts were naturally such as to be almost inaccessible. Whilst the enemy were making their approaches, the defendants were not idle, for they discharged such volleys of shot as slew many of the assailants and greatly disturbed their ranks. But they were urged on by the exhortations, the menaces, and the blows of their officers; and the ladders were at length placed against the walls; not, however, without great loss to the Turks. Although the assault was made with great spirit, and the ladders when thrown down were often set up again, yet they were con-

tinually overthrown and broken in pieces, and the men mounted upon them cast headlong to the ground. The baser sort, who brought up the scaling-ladders, were so severely handled that they could not be induced to stand their ground; but it availed them little to retreat, so roughly were they handled by the sultan, who watched them from behind.

The greater part of those who were in this low estate were Christians under the dominion of the Turk, great numbers of whom he was wont to take with him unarmed in his expeditions, to perform the menial and laborious services of the camp; and, in an assault or in battle, to be exposed to the first efforts of the enemy.

The boldest of the Mahommedans being either slain or repulsed, the townspeople caused sixty chosen men of the garrison to sally forth from a small postern on the other side of the town, and fall unexpectedly upon the enemy, who were greatly alarmed by this sudden attack. This small body was composed of lance-knights and Epirots armed with arquebuses, who had, with great difficulty, obtained leave of the governor to leave the town. They did not advance far from the walls, and having made considerable slaughter of the Turks, they retired, with the wish to renew their attack; but Uranocontes would hearken to no entreaties, nor suffer them again to quit the place. But he bestowed great commendations upon their conduct and large rewards for their bravery. The assault was continued, with great loss to the Turks, until about two hours after noon; when the sultan, seeing how many of his troops were lying dead, and how much the others were exhausted with fatigue and heat, while the courage of the Croians appeared to increase, he hesitated whether to renew the assault with fresh forces, or to defer it until another day. But he was at length persuaded by his officers to continue the attack, and not to suffer the disgrace of being repulsed by the Christians, with so little

loss on their part. Other motives were urged by them which induced Amurath to follow their advice. Whereupon, he ordered up fresh troops to the assault, in the hope of overcoming their enemies who had stood the brunt of the day. But the Croians had providently prepared for such a contingency; and, bringing on new men to oppose those who were new, they still repelled the efforts of the enemy. The Turkish horsemen pushed on to the walls, and with their lances couched endeavored vainly to break through the gate. So great was the slaughter among his men, that the sultan could not endure the hideous spectacle, and at length caused a retreat to be sounded. This respite was most welcome to the defendants, and they passed the remainder of the day and the night following in refreshing themselves with rest and food.

The same night Scanderbeg had tidings of this success of the Croians, which caused him great joy, and he immediately spread the good news among the neighboring princes and people. The enemy, on the contrary, were much depressed by their ill success and by the loss they had sustained, which amounted to more than 8000 good soldiers; while the loss of the Croians was comparatively trifling. It is reported that Amurath remained two days within his tent in close consultation with his viziers and captains. But young Mahomet, above all others, was chagrined and enraged. He became more attentive to the business of the camp, and watched particularly that quarter of it which had been invaded by the Albanians; and he there stationed a strong guard, and placed troops in ambush, and watched whole nights in person, hoping that Scanderbeg might fall into his hands; but all his schemes were rendered vain by the skill and prudence of that wise chieftain, who, by his spies or by those who came to surrender themselves to him, was daily informed of all that was done by his enemies. He continued within his camp, ordering his affairs and providing for their

safety, and by delays drawing on his enemies. He could not, however, endure to remain long inactive, and bethought him of a stratagem by which to entrap those who were intent upon getting him into their snares. In pursuance of his design, he one night trussed up his baggage very secretly, and removed his forces to a place called *Monticlea*, whence he could commodiously annoy the enemy. He left *Moses* and *Tanusee* at *Tumenista* with 500 horse. Having communicated his intentions to them, he directed them to attack the trenches of the enemy the following night a little after midnight, on the same side where the former attack had been made, and when they had given a false alarm by the show of forcing the barriers of the camp, to retreat suddenly, without giving the enemy time to come to blows with them. He, in the mean time, was to break in upon the tents of the enemy on the opposite side. According to this arrangement, the alarm given by Moses and the real attack of Scanderbeg were nearly simultaneous; for as soon as Scanderbeg perceived the agitation caused by the Dibriani, he charged the opposite side with full career where there was no suspicion of an attack. The camp was thus filled with fear and confusion; some running to one side and some to the other, in order to oppose themselves to the Christians. So great was the number opposed to Moses that he did no more than cause an alarm. He was not pursued, however, because of the night and the fear of ambuscades.

Scanderbeg, on his part, caused the enemy great mischief. Their camp was beaten down and laid waste by fire and sword; although this destruction did not continue long, as the Turks hastened in such numbers to oppose the invaders that the conflict was soon ended. The Christians were not able to stand against the multitude which opposed them, especially in a plain and even place; for it was in *Tyranna* that Scanderbeg made his onset. Yet, when the Christians retreated, the infidels showed no disposition to follow after—



in which they probably acted with prudence; for the wise and wary prince had stationed all his infantry and 8000 horse near at hand, so as to be a guard in his rear, and ready for any casualty which might occur. By these troops he was received with great joy and loud acclamations; and they set forward with their leader towards their camp, in marching to which they passed the remainder of the night. It is said that Scanderbeg never performed any exploit upon his enemies with less injury on his part; for he brought back all his troops without the loss of a single man, and left to the Turks no token of his having been among them, save the destruction which he had caused. It is said that no one, after this, dared offer any advice to Amurath, for this so notable disaster seemed to cast a reproach upon all their former counsels and deliberations.

In this their dilemma, they had recourse to the measure which had proved serviceable to them the year before, at the siege of Sfetigrade; that was, to fortify their camp on all sides with artillery. They, therefore, in pursuance of this plan, drew down many small pieces which they had planted against the walls of the town, and disposed them in such places as were judged most advantageous; especially in that quarter where the late assault had been made. Their baggage was so cumbrous, and the heat of the weather so oppressive, that their different lodgments were too extended and too far apart from each other, to admit of being all equally well guarded. All these circumstances were soon made known to the Christians, both by fugitives from the enemy, and by their own spies. Scanderbeg resolved to remain quiet until an opportunity should offer of obtaining some further advantage. It also became necessary for him to turn his thoughts towards the procuring of supplies for his army, since a dearth of provisions began to prevail, and nothing could be obtained from his own country. He, therefore, resolved to remove his camp to the river *Isme*, near

upon the sea, where he might be furnished with every thing necessary. The inhabitants also of *Duraz*, a town not far distant, agreed to supply him with as much corn as he required. The governors and magistrates of the Venetian territories likewise secretly yielded him assistance.

The Turks, in the mean time, continued to batter the walls of Croia, in hopes of reducing them to such a condition as to render another assault likely to be successful. Amurath thought that to undermine the walls would require too long a time, and be attended with too much difficulty, on account of the height and steepness of the rocks upon which they were built. As soon as a breach was made that appeared to be practicable, the sultan ordered every man to be ready for another assault on the following morning. This order was received with so little alacrity, that he assembled the chief men of his army, and addressed them in a harangue which, if truly reported, was made up of reproach and encouragement. The spirits of the army were revived by the words of their commander. Another circumstance also tended to embolden them to the intended assault, which was, that measures were taken to prevent Scanderbeg from attacking them, during their attempt upon the town. For, besides other precautions, the following device was adopted, in order to lure away Scanderbeg from the place during the assault: Sebalias, who has been before mentioned, was ordered to march with some of the troops to another part of the province, as if to lay waste the country. Accordingly, that Turkish officer, having strict orders from Amurath not to give the enemy an opportunity to engage him, quietly proceeded on his way at evening, with 16,000 horse. When he had marched about twenty miles the news of his expedition reached the Christians, and caused much commotion among them. The general opinion was that they ought to mount their horses, and, as silently and secretly as possible, get possession of the passes in the mountains and forests

through which the enemy would probably attempt to go. But the Christian prince would not risk the danger of travelling in the dark, and deferred his departure until the next morning; when, at dawn of day, he set out, with ensigns displayed, towards the mountains and the covert and secret places, preceded by his scouts, who beat the country before him as he advanced, to secure him against falling into any snares of the enemy.

The assault against Croia was begun nearly at the same time that Scanderbeg began his march; as it was thought best to commence as early as possible, in order to avoid the heat of the day. The absence of Scanderbeg afforded to the Turkish host great encouragement. They brought up their scaling-ladders, and other implements, in great numbers to the walls; and some, with mattocks and bars of iron, endeavored to break down the gate, and in that way gain entrance into the town. On the side towards Tyranna a great quantity of wild-fire was thrown within the walls; and the artillery continued to play during all the time of the assault, although it caused great loss to the assailants. But it is said that the sultan did not think the head of a Christian dearly paid for, if it cost him twenty heads of his own men. The defendants did not escape without loss; but their valor, added to the natural strength of the place, rendered them secure from the danger of being finally overcome. Of the Turks who ventured to attack the gate, scarce any returned; great slaughter was also made among them in the other quarters, and very few, if any, of the ladders were placed against the walls. Still Amurath continued, with great fury, to urge on his people, and with fresh troops to fill up the places of those who fell. At length the slaughter became so great that he consented to order a retreat, being urgently persuaded so to do by his bashaws, who besought him not to destroy and waste his army to no purpose, as there was no probability of getting into the town by the

means which were then employed ; and that he would be most likely to succeed by reserving his men for the purpose of working mines under the city walls.

This new mode of attack proceeded slowly, in consequence of the great dearth of victuals suffered by the Turkish army. Commissaries were therefore sent to Lyssa, and other places in the Venetian territory, whence the sultan supposed he might derive supplies, in consequence of the peace sworn between him and the Venetians.

In the mean time Scanderbeg had intelligence, by his scouts, of the course which Sebalias had taken ; who, having spread some of his troops about the country, destroyed the vines and fruit-trees. Wherefore Scanderbeg followed, as secretly as possible ; and when he had arrived within three miles of the enemy, he selected 4000 able horse to make a charge upon them in the open fields. The remainder of his forces, both horse and foot, he left with Moses, and stationed them on a high hill, near to the road through which it was hoped that the Turks would pass, with orders, if they fled in confusion, to attack them fiercely ; but, if they stood their ground gallantly, immediately to join his forces with those of his chieftain, that the barbarians might have to encounter the whole Christian army. As to the flight of the enemy, Scanderbeg was not deceived, but the event proved different from what he hoped ; for Sebalias, being advertised by his sentinels of the approach of the Christians, drew all his troops together, except a few who were scattered afar off, and who fell an easy prey to the Albanians, and, before his enemies were in sight, he hastened away by a different road from that by which Scanderbeg was approaching. Nothing of any consequence resulted from this expedition. Castriot would not suffer his men to pursue the enemy, as the toil would be too great for his foot soldiers, and as he thought it best to take back his army in good condition to watch the progress of the siege. The Turkish

general returned to the sultan, with great joy at having so deluded Scanderbeg, and at having kept him, the whole of the day, from troubling their trenches. Scanderbeg, on the other hand, returned to his camp much disappointed at not having met the enemy, and very anxious concerning Croia, from which he was not wont to be so long absent.

It is related that he met many persons by the way who told him of the Turkish commissioners being abroad in search of provisions, and gave him information of the strength of the convoy which was appointed for their protection. Upon this information he disguised himself in ordinary attire, as he frequently did during his wars, and taking with him a hundred soldiers similarly habited, he followed those victuallers the way they had gone, and having ascertained by what road they were to return, he and his men placed themselves in ambuscade. He then sent two of his soldiers, men upon whom he could depend, to *Lyssa*, to observe carefully the troops of the enemy, to mark whether they returned by the same way they went, or whether they took a different course ; and, in the latter case, to come with all speed and give him notice of it. The victuallers, however, did not change their first route, and upon their return fell into the hands of Scanderbeg, some of whom he slew and took the remainder prisoners. The corn, the cattle, and horses he conveyed to his camp, and distributed the booty among his soldiers. After this Moses returned with the infantry under his command to the camp near *Ismé*.

The news brought to Amurath of the capture of his provisions caused him vexation, but he was relieved by a message from *Alchia*, which informed him of supplies that were coming from Macedonia. In order to secure the safety of these supplies, a large escort of 20,000 able men was detached from the Turkish army, who conducted all in safety to the camp.

The undermining of the walls of Croia was continued with-

out intermission, and the labor systematically apportioned among the troops. At the same time the assailants did not cease to annoy the garrison on the walls, with the view of drawing off their attention from the work which was going on under ground. Although some of the Turks perished daily during these efforts which they were making, still their numbers were so great that these losses were not accounted of any moment.

In addition to the provisions brought from Macedonia, the Turkish camp was daily supplied with corn, wine, oil, and all sorts of victuals by merchants from the neighboring towns under the Venetian government: nor was there any want of mercery, being abundantly afforded by the traders who flocked to the camp. All this was very well known to Scanderbeg, but he would not offend the Venetians, nor prevent the gain of individuals, by taking any notice of it. He busied himself with matters of greater importance, and studied how he might by force of arms, and not by famine, drive this outrageous enemy out of *Epire*. In pursuance of this purpose, he turned his attention to the augmenting of his forces; for, of the 8000 men whom he had levied at the beginning of the war, near 1000 had either perished or were suffered to return to their homes, these latter being such as he thought deserving of some refreshment after their toils. *Tanusee* and *Moses* were charged with the duty of raising new troops. They were not able to levy, throughout the province, more than 2000 men, of whom 500 were cavalry and the residue infantry; for Scanderbeg had so vigilantly ordered his affairs that it was difficult to find an able-bodied man in *Epire* who was not already appointed to some service.

While this levy of forces was going on, the Croians were so provoked by the daily alarms caused by the assailants, that they could not contain themselves within the walls of the town, but, making frequent sallies, encountered their enemies with good success. One day in particular, 500 men

issued forth, and having slain and put to flight those who opposed them, advanced even to the trenches of the enemy. The Mahomedans perceiving the rashness of the Christians, did not regret the loss which they had sustained, because they hoped that this temper of the defendants would afford an opportunity of revenge. In this, however, they were mistaken, for Uranocontes, dreading the consequence of such hardihood, would not thereafter suffer his men to set foot beyond the gates.

The new bands levied by Scanderbeg being incorporated into the old forces, he divided the whole army into three parts. One was placed under the command of Moses, another under that of Tanusee, and the third was reserved by himself. About the close of the evening,\* he ordered his ensigns to advance very secretly towards the camp of the enemy; but before he had proceeded as far as within two miles of their trenches he was discovered by the Turkish sentinels. His approach caused a great tumult among his enemies. They hastily assembled about 8000 men to oppose him, which made him pause a little and proceed with more caution. The Mahomedans with loud cries advanced to meet him, but he gradually retired, in order to draw them away from their trenches; and now Moses and Tanusee suddenly breaking into the ramparts and barriers on the quarter which was assigned to them, filled the camp with alarm and confusion. While the attention of the Turks was principally directed to the quarter attacked by Scanderbeg, Moses and Tanusee had leisure to do great execution within the camp. This attack did not continue long, for the Turks mustered in such force that the Christians thought it prudent to retire. Fortunately the camp artillery remained silent, either because the enemy did not know how to make use of it in the dark, or because, in their terror and confusion, they forgot to em-

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\* I do not find the date of the day mentioned.

ploy it. The day was beginning to appear, and Scanderbeg retired in the hottest of the fight to a hill about two miles off, where it was easy to see him, and waited for Moses and his squadrons, that having been appointed the place of rendezvous. When the Turks perceived Scanderbeg to make a stand, they hastened to the tent of Amurath, and entreated him to permit them to issue forth and attack the Albanians, at the same time pointing out to him the smallness of their numbers. The old man was prevailed upon by their importunity and yielded to their request: whereupon a detachment was immediately made of 12,000 powerful troops,—7000 horse and 5000 foot. Scanderbeg, seeing the large body which was advancing towards him, and considering the nearness of the whole Ottoman army, was in doubt whether to stand their attack or to retreat. The course which he adopted was, neither to await the enemy nor to flee precipitately before them. He retired gradually towards the highest and roughest parts of the mountains, trusting to the advantage of the ground and the assistance of his other troops, whose approach he perceived by the clouds of dust which rose in the air. The enemy advanced with great fury to the hill, but perceiving the difficulties of the ground they slackened their pace. Scanderbeg would not quit his position until he should be sure of the approach of his troops. This, however, could not be concealed from the enemy, who, when they perceived that more forces were advancing, turned bridle and fled with all speed, in their flight casting many of their ensigns to the ground. Their great haste did not preserve them entirely from harm, for Scanderbeg and his men had begun to engage them, and with their shot from aloft had laid many dead. The Dibrian, on his part, coming on with all diligence, made many prisoners of those who were not able to keep up with their fellows. When Amurath saw and heard all that had taken place, especially the waste and slaughter that had been made in the camp, he



was so overcome as to remain speechless ; and that day nothing was attempted against the Christians. It is reported, that the day following Scanderbeg was seen with a small train, as usual, walking on the top of the mountain which overhangs Croia, and holding conference with Uranocontes, and that being pointed out to Amurath, he, with a sardonic laugh, said " that the best way was to let alone that furious and untamed lion : and not from thenceforth to feede that unhappy beast with the bloud of his men," &c.

The army of the Turks was greatly dispirited by these occurrences. And to these was added an event of no less importance : the working of the mine had been discovered by the inhabitants ; and whether, as some relate, they issued in the night and destroyed the works of the enemy ; or whether, as is maintained by others, Amurath of his own accord abandoned the attempt, when he found that the garrison knew what he was about and prepared to counteract his efforts ; or whether he found the difficulty of the work so great that he gave it up in despair ;—whatever be the reason, he determined to change his mode of attack, and instead of violence and menaces, to employ bribery and corruption. In pursuance of this design he sent to the governor, Uranocontes, one of his bashaws, a man of high degree and great authority, and noted for intelligence and judgment. This officer took with him two servants, charged with rich and valuable gifts, which Amurath directed his messenger to present to Uranocontes, before entering upon the business for which he was sent. The bashaw, when he had received his instructions, proceeded directly to the town, and was stayed by the guards as he approached the gate, and obliged to wait until the governor should be apprised of his coming. Uranocontes soon appeared, and the Turk began to present his gifts, accompanying them with insinuating and high-wrought speeches. But the governor cut him short, telling him that he had adorned his gifts with enough of goodly

and elegant phrases, and desired him to deliver his master's message, that they might better know whether to accept or reject his presents.

In answer to this, the messenger made a harangue composed of threats, and promises, and exhortations, tending to show how much better it would be for Uranocontes to enter into the service of Amurath, and for the Croians to yield themselves to him, than to remain under Scanderbeg; and to persuade the garrison that their efforts to defend themselves must, in the end, prove unavailing.

The address of the Turk was delivered in a graceful and agreeable manner; and when he had ended, he watched the effect of what he had said upon those who heard him. But perceiving that the soldiers were not pleased with his discourse, and were beginning to murmur, he requested the governor to permit him to speak a few words with him in private. This was granted; for the garrison felt such confidence in Uranocontes that they made no opposition to it. The opportunity being thus afforded him, the Turkish messenger opened his proposals to the governor, in a most plausible and insinuating manner. But Uranocontes again interrupted him, and ordered him to get out of his sight. Thus was the messenger dismissed with disgrace, and without having delivered any of his bribes. And, as he departed, the governor gave him warning that if he, or any other persons, again dared to approach the town and demand a parley, they should lose their hands, their noses, and their ears, and be otherwise ill treated.

When the bashaw returned to the camp and made known the failure of his mission, and the resolute words and countenance of the besieged, the effects upon the multitude were sorrow, and fear, and fury, according to the natural tempers of the different individuals. The aged sultan, more excited than the rest, had recourse again to arms, and resolved upon another assault. Orders were accordingly issued to have

the scaling-ladders and other engines ready for the following morning. He passed the greater part of the night in making preparation for the intended attack; placing the artillery, and providing for the safety of the camp, as he knew that Scanderbeg was ever on the watch to do him some mischief. To this service he destined 30,000 men, well appointed, whose horses were kept in readiness for action. The next morning, at about daybreak, the cannon of the assailants and of the town both opened; but the shot of the garrison did much more execution upon their enemies than was suffered by themselves, and the Turks were so careless of the lives of their own people, that, while bombarding the town, they drove from the field many of their men by the deadly wounds which their shot inflicted, and by the danger to which they exposed them. When the cannon ceased to roar, an attempt was made to scale the walls. But such was the slaughter among the assailants, that Amurath at length put an end to the assault, and retired to his pavilion, overcome with grief and rage. He passed the remainder of the day tearing his hair and his beard, and pouring out blasphemous speeches against the majesty of heaven, seeming to call the Almighty in question for suffering his gray hairs and his former glory, and the Ottoman name, to be disgraced and humbled for the sake of a paltry castle in Epire. His bashaws and friends endeavored in vain to console him. The next day, notwithstanding his feebleness of body and distress of mind, he held a council of certain of his chief officers, who were said to be two bashaws, one of Romania, and the other of Asia, and two viziers, or counsellors. After long deliberation they were divided into three different opinions. One was, to continue the siege until the besieged should be reduced by famine. Another was, to raise the siege of Croia, and with all their forces to pursue and straiten Scanderbeg, so as to oblige him to surrender. The third opinion was, that it would be best to send ambassadors to

Scanderbeg, and endeavor to persuade him to become tributary to the Ottoman power; and that, in case the Albanian listened to the proposals made to him, a yearly tribute should be demanded from him of 10,000 crowns. The first course that was proposed did not please Amurath, because the winter was approaching, and the providing for the multitude of his forces would be very difficult; in addition to which, the incursions of Scanderbeg were not a little to be feared. Neither did the sultan like the idea of coursing up and down the mountains of Albania in pursuit of the Prince of Epire, as he foresaw that such a proceeding would be attended with many and great dangers. The third opinion, therefore, appeared to him preferable to the others.

It being determined to send an ambassador to Scanderbeg, the person chosen for that office was a Turk named Isup, a man of great credit and authority with Amurath. He was directed by the sultan, in case Scanderbeg should think the tribute demanded of him too great, to remit one-half of it. A difficulty still presented itself, and that was, how to meet with Scanderbeg; for, as the country was all in arms, it would be most dangerous to wander about, even in the character of an ambassador, not knowing where with certainty to find him. But this dilemma was removed by some Dibrians, prisoners in the Turkish camp, who, upon condition of regaining their liberty, engaged to conduct the messenger safe to the presence of Scanderbeg. These terms being agreed upon, they led the way to the Christian camp. When they arrived at the river Isme, they found that the prince had removed to a place in the open country, called the Red Plain, not far from the river Isme. The Dibrians, having obtained information from the inhabitants, followed him, and in less than an hour arrived at his encampment. The whole company did not enter together into the camp; but one of the Dibrians, leaving the others without, went alone to pay his respects to Scanderbeg, and to ask him

what was his pleasure with regard to the Turkish ambassador. The Dibriani was joyfully welcomed by the men of his own squadron, and immediately conducted to Scanderbeg. He welcomed the soldier; and when he learned his business, forthwith sent Tanusee, with a train of horse and foot, to accompany the ambassador to his presence. The Turk did not enter upon his business that day, as it was far spent; but passed the night among the tents of the Christians, being courteously received and sumptuously entertained. But, while this was doing, Moses was commanded by Scanderbeg to scour the country round with a large troop of horse, and the guards were doubled; lest, under this fair show, some treachery should lie concealed. Early the next day, the principal officers of the army being assembled, Scanderbeg gave audience to the Turkish messenger. Isup delivered his message, in a speech which, as reported, is too long to be here inserted. The terms offered so roused the indignation of the hearers, that the Turk could not proceed with his harangue. The answer of Scanderbeg is reported to have ended thus: "God forbid, that any age or time should see, or that any man living should ever hear, that this province was become tributary, as long as Scanderbeg is alive. Assure yourselves, if the Ottoman would restore unto me the whole and entire possession of Macedonia, and all the patrimony of my ancestors; nay, if Amurath would divide with me and make me copartner with him of all his empire, I would never suffer the name of Albanie to be stained and blemished with this blot of disgrace and infamy. In vain, therefore, dost thou heap up these examples of strangers and foreign states; in vain dost thou represent before our eyes the subjection of the Peloponnesians, and servitude of them of Asia; for there is no example nor precedent whatsoever of so great weight and efficacy, which may move a free and liberal heart to subject and submit itself to so base, villainous, and foul an indignity!"

From the temper with which his proposals were received, the Turk saw that to make an offer of receiving less tribute, or to urge the negotiation any longer, would be of no avail. When the council broke up, the ambassador and his train were conducted to the quarters of Scanderbeg where they dined and were treated with distinction; after which, Tanusee and a troop of horsemen escorted him the distance of a mile from the camp, to prevent any violence which might be offered by the soldiery. The Turk was scarcely out of sight before Scanderbeg with all his army, for fear of some stratagem of the enemy, marched to the mountain Tume-nista, where he placed guards and scouts on all sides with more care than he had ever been wont to do.

The return of Isup without having effected his purpose, much troubled Amurath, who lay at the lesser Tyranna, and it also aggravated the violence of the illness with which he was afflicted. His disorder continuing daily to increase, the attention of the bashaws was almost entirely diverted from military affairs to the care of the sultan. But the nature of his malady being unknown to them, they could bethink themselves of nothing better than to amuse him with agreeable conversation and entertaining discourse. Affairs continued in this state for some time. Yet, notwithstanding his indisposition and uneasiness, the sultan was able to give audience to his people and direct what was to be done in matters of importance, until Scanderbeg, by two or three attacks upon his camp, broke down his remaining strength. The first and second inroad of Scanderbeg were of no great consequence, as the Turks were on their guard, and promptly repulsed the Epirots; but these disappointments only served to chafe the hardy spirit of Scanderbeg, who, choosing the night season for his third attack, marched with all his horsemen towards Tyranna, which being more plain than the rest of the country, was better adapted to the movements of cavalry. It was past

midnight when the approach of the Christians was discovered by the tramp and the neighing of their horses. The darkness was greater than usual, which obliged the Turks to order their defence by hearing and not by sight. The Albanians also were somewhat daunted by the obscurity, so that no one appeared willing to advance before the rest. But in this uncertainty Scanderbeg, taking about 100 of his vanguard, rushed forward with great fury to the trenches of the enemy in the hope of provoking them to issue forth. Having incensed them by taunts, and by throwing darts among them, some were drawn forth from their stations with the intention of setting upon him; but, part of them being overthrown, the rest were glad to return within their camp. Scanderbeg continued for a while to attempt to decoy the enemy to attack him; but at length finding his efforts fruitless, he returned to the main body; and, dividing his troops between Streese and Tanusee, for Moses was left with the infantry at Tumenista, he led them on against the enemy. The first onset was with shot on both sides, for Scanderbeg feared to let his ranks be intermingled with those of the Turks during the darkness, lest his men should mistake one another for the enemy; and it is probable that they would not have come to close quarters had it not been for the Turks, who, trusting to their great numbers, detached a large battalion of horse towards the left with the view of inclosing the Christians; but Scanderbeg withdrew from the trenches into the open field, and charged the enemy with great fury in front and rear. The Turks at first resisted bravely; but at length, not finding themselves supported by any fresh succors, and their spirit flagging as that of the Albanians rose, they gave way and fled with all speed back to their trenches. A great number of Turks and some Christians were slain in this conflict. When daylight came, the multitude of Turks which showed themselves was so great that Scanderbeg's forces were obliged

to retire. The Turkish troops would gladly have pursued them, but for fear of displeasing the sultan, they desisted. This fight being without the trenches, caused no disorder within the camp; neither was any spoil obtained by the victors except what was found upon the bodies of the slain. The principal officers of the Turks endeavored to conceal this misfortune from the sultan, lest it should increase his malady. But the whisperings and murmurs of the common soldiers did not fail to betray to him what had happened.

Greatly was Amurath perplexed to decide upon what course to pursue. Shame would not permit him, after the great armament which he had brought into the field, to raise the siege and evacuate the kingdom. Some advised him to leave the greater part of his army to continue the siege, and himself to retire to Adrianople and recruit his health by rest from the fatigues and miseries of war. But his health continuing to decline, and a difficulty of breathing coming upon him, his attendants perceived that his days were numbered, and that no change of place could restore him: therefore, although they ceased not to apply such remedies as they still hoped might be of use, yet the chief care of every one, like mariners without a pilot, was, how to provide for the safety of the army. The tents, which lay scattered at a distance from each other, were placed nearer together; the intrenchments were contracted to a less circuit; and strong guards were carefully placed around. Having thus provided for their safety, the army remained in expectation either of the death of the sultan, which would put an end to the war, or of his recovery, when some new plan of operations might be devised. Scanderbeg was daily informed of all these things; and many of the Turks surrendered themselves to him, from whom he learned the proceedings and councils of the enemy; and especially did they resort to him after it was rumored abroad that the sultan was



drawing near his end. Scanderbeg thought it best not to continue his attacks upon the enemy, but to reserve his most vigorous effort until after the death of Amurath : but he often, by day and by night, ascended to the top of the mountain called Crayna, and consulted with Uranocontes ; or coursed with troops of soldiers over the neighboring hills, in hopes of surprising some of the Turks employed in the service of the camp, and with the intention of keeping them in continual alarm.

This state of suspense did not continue long ; for, within a few days, Amurath breathed his last. It is reported that, when he found his end approaching, he caused himself to be raised up on his low bed, and uttered long complaints against the destinies for having decreed that the former glories of his reign should be tarnished by such a disgraceful termination of his career. He admonished his son Mahomet to take warning from the example before him never to despise an enemy, however contemptible he might appear ; and ended his address in words to this effect : " Thou therefore, my son, shalt receive both the sceptre, and the other marks of our empire : but principally and above all, I leave unto thee this enemy, charging thee that thou do not leave our death unrevenged ; but that thou have this thing only and continually before thy eyes, and in thy mind, in acknowledgment of so large and honorable a patrimony from me as thou art to receive and enjoy. Other sacrifice than this neither my aged trembling hands, nor my grieved departing spirit require of thee."

His power of speech now began to fail him ; and, after continuing about half a day in a dying condition, he breathed his last. His body was embalmed, and kept in state, to be taken to Bursa, formerly named Prusa, in Bithynia, there to be deposited in the sepulchre of his ancestors. Mahomet was immediately saluted as sovereign lord. He was advised by his chief officers to keep the death of his father carefully

concealed, that the report thereof might not reach the enemy. Late at night, the baggage was made ready, and, before the dawn of day, they began their march. It is said that Amurath died about the middle of August, 1450, five months after the siege of Croia was begun. His age is variously stated; but all agree that he had attained to eighty-five years. Mahomet was very unwilling to raise the siege, and to abandon a war which had brought such dishonor upon the Turkish arms. But he was under the necessity of hastening to Adrianople, to take the investiture of his crown and empire, according to ancient custom; and to be ready to quell any tumults which might arise upon the accession of a new sovereign. Scanderbeg did not fail to follow him in his retreat, and hang upon his army, picking up the stragglers, and sometimes pressing on his main body. And he thus continued to harass his enemies until they were beyond the bounds of his country. He then returned in triumph towards Croia. He was received by a concourse of people, and welcomed with every demonstration of joy and affection by Uranocontes. The common people expressed their delight and reverence by prostrating themselves, according to their manner, at the feet of their prince, and by kissing the skirts of his garments; and by songs, acclamations, music of instruments, ringing of bells, bonfires, banqueting, and whatever else could give vent to the joy of their hearts. The conduct of the Croians during the siege was highly commended by Scanderbeg; and the garrison, over and above their stipulated pay, were rewarded with large sums of money, and good and rich clothing. The governor, besides a large sum of money, received from Scanderbeg two purple coats of armor, and one richly wrought with gold, and four valuable manors; and, unexpectedly to him, he was created Duke of Emathia, and received the immediate investiture and possession of that dignity.

Scanderbeg sent messengers to the neighboring princes

and people to announce the events that had occurred. Which news, when spread abroad, brought multitudes of people to visit Croia, and congratulations to Scanderbeg even from distant countries ; and his name became renowned above that of all other men. The princes of Christendom to these congratulations added substantial tokens of their gratitude and esteem. *Nicholas*, bishop of Rome, *Ladislaus*, king of Hungary, and *Philip*, duke of Burgundy, seeming emulous of one another, sent their ambassadors into Epire with succors of large sums of money. *Alphonsus*, king of Aragon, a faithful friend of Scanderbeg, not only sent him liberal supplies of treasure, but furnished him with 300,000 measures of wheat and 100,000 measures of barley, when he had learned the wants of the country occasioned by the interrupted cultivation of the land, and the devastation caused by the Turks. He also sent many workmen, at his own charge, to assist in repairing the walls of Croia, which he knew had been sorely battered by the enemy.

In honor of the success of his arms Scanderbeg proclaimed a tournament under the walls of Croia, which attracted many gallant youths, who came to contend for the prizes, and was attended by multitudes who assembled as spectators of the games ; and afforded, it is said, a brave and noble spectacle.

## BOOK VII.

WHILE Mahomet was establishing himself in the throne of his ancestors, the Prince of Epire was engaged in repairing the ruins of Croia. He entirely renewed the old fortifications, which were in a dilapidated condition, partly from the effects of time, and partly from the cannon of the enemy. He added other defences of a more modern description, and not like to those which were constructed before the use of ordnance, and when the chief security of cities consisted in the valor of those who defended them. Among the new fortifications of Croia, Scanderbeg caused a large and strong tower to be built at the city gate, decreasing gradually in circumference as it rose. The other parts of the town were strengthened by works constructed under the direction of able engineers.

While Scanderbeg was thus occupied, his nearest relations among the princes and nobles incessantly urged him, now that there was a cessation from the troubles of war, to marry, and have children. Although the Albanian prince was disinclined to follow this advice, yet he deemed it most expedient, all things considered, to yield to the wishes of his friends and subjects. Accordingly a marriage was concluded upon between him and Doniqua, the daughter of Ariamnites Comminat, chief for power and wealth among the lords of Epire. She was of remarkable beauty, and brought him a dower worthy both of him who bestowed, and of him who received it. The nuptials were celebrated without delay, and the bride was attended by the neighboring princes and nearly all the nobility of the country; and such as could not be present in person sent ambassadors,

together with costly presents. The alliance thus formed with so powerful a prince, raised the hopes of the people that their liberty might be permanently established. The government of Venice expressed its approbation of the marriage by sending an embassy and rich presents. The same tokens of satisfaction were exhibited by other princes and potentates. The presents from the King of Aragon were so magnificent, that Scanderbeg would not have received them but for the importunity of his friends and the Spanish ambassadors; but, in return, he sent very valuable spoils which he had taken from his enemies. Thus was this marriage celebrated with universal approbation and joy, and not without jousts and tournaments, and other spectacles.

Mahomet was not ignorant of these transactions, nor of the fortifications of Croia. It is thought that he would willingly have interrupted the proceedings of Scanderbeg, but that he was too busily engaged in establishing himself upon his newly-inherited throne, and in providing treasure for his intended warlike enterprises. But he spoke openly of his purpose, ere long, to convert the happiness and joy of Scanderbeg's marriage into tears and lamentations.

Scanderbeg now effected what he long contemplated, but from which he had been hindered by the continual occupation given him by his wars. This was, to visit the frontiers and other parts of his dominions. He made this tour, which lasted many days, accompanied by his bride and by a good troop of horsemen. Wherever he went he was received with every mark of joy and liberality; and to all, from the highest to the lowest, he showed kindness and condescension. His course extended to the furthest limits of his kingdom. In Lower Dabria he observed a pass through which, as being the most convenient, the Turks had ever been accustomed to invade his territories, and make sudden inroads for the purpose of foraging or of laying waste the country. Through the same the Christians had been wont to enter

the lands of their enemies. He determined to deprive the Turks of this facility to annoy his subjects. Near this pass was a rugged mountain called Modrissa, of great height, from the top of which the frontiers of the enemy might be seen to a great distance. On the summit of this mountain he resolved to build a fort, whose cannon might give notice to the neighboring country of the approach of the Turks, and which might also, in case of need, afford a place of refuge to the inhabitants in its vicinity. He had long purposed to do this, but had not been able to effect it on account of his continual wars. In pursuance of this design he speedily returned to Croia, whose fortifications were now complete, and took thence a number of masons, carpenters, and other workmen belonging to the town, and about four thousand soldiers as guards to the workmen against any interruption that might be caused by the enemy. With this band he proceeded to Modrissa, and engaged in the work with so much diligence that it was finished without any annoyance from the Turks. For although Mahomet was burning for revenge, and was assembling a powerful army against Scanderbeg, he was alarmed by the rumor of war intended against him by the Persians, and by this for a time diverted from his intended operations against the kingdom of Epire.

Mahomet, as may be supposed, was not a little annoyed by seeing the good fortune of Scanderbeg, and by hearing the complaints of his own subjects that they were perpetually harassed by the inroads of the Christians. He at first vented his wrath in violent menaces against Scanderbeg, but finally determined to make an effort to obtain peace. For this purpose he sent an embassy offering terms of pacification similar to those formerly proposed by Amurath. Scanderbeg was made acquainted with all the proceedings of the Ottoman court by friends high in rank whom he had about Mahomet, so that when the ambassadors arrived they were

not long detained for an answer. The reply of Scanderbeg was a decided rejection of the terms proposed to him; and with this the ambassadors were dismissed. Scanderbeg continued diligently to get ready the defences of his country. The fortress of Modrissa in less than six months was inclosed and encompassed with walls, and provided with accommodations for the soldiers. Whatever else was wanted was added from time to time. The place was so strong by nature that it required no ditches nor ramparts. Pieces of ordnance were taken there from Croia, and the men instructed how and for what to use them.

When all this was done, Scanderbeg, with his troops, made an incursion into the territories of the Turks, and finding the places defenceless, he laid waste all that came under his hand. After which some of the men returned with their chieftain to Croia laden with spoil; but the greater part were left in garrison, as had been customary, upon the frontiers. For although the fortress of Modrissa was a great security to the country near it, it was not sufficient for the whole frontier, the forces in garrison being also specially designed to repulse the incursions of the barbarians. And in case an attack should be made upon them by a power too great for them to resist, they were to retire to the tops and fastnesses of the mountains, or into the interior of the country.

When Scanderbeg returned to Croia, being desirous to take advantage of the time during which the sultan could not move against him, and to perform some action for the benefit of his country, he assembled his nobles, the principal citizens, and the greater part of his troops, and having a long time considered the state of affairs, in order to try how their minds were affected, he made an address, in which the following thoughts were embodied. They had long enough been engaged in feasting and amusement, and ought not any longer to neglect their arms, and let their

courage sleep ; they had spent a whole year in recreation, in repairing their towns, and in erecting new works, and had not once met their enemies. While Mahomet was engaged in attending to the Persians, weakened in power, and perplexed with various concerns, was the time to arouse, and not wait for the assaults of the enemy. Sfetigrade, with all the difficulties which might attend their efforts, called upon them to attempt its recovery. Or if they felt averse to attack that city, other places might be found whose capture would be some compensation for the loss of Sfetigrade. He mentioned the city of Belgrade as worthy of all their efforts, and added many motives to induce them to immediate action. But his speech did not meet with that hearty response with which what he addressed to his troops was wont to be received. At length Uranocontes, in the name of the rest, represented to him that the unwillingness of his troops arose from the lateness of the season, and apprehension of being overtaken by winter. And he is reported to have thus concluded what he said to Scanderbeg. " All this notwithstanding (most valiant prince, the mirror of magnanimity), we will not hinder thy determinations ; but if thou dost think that thine own opinion and conceit in this point be more for the benefit and advantage of the estate, and for the public and common reputation, we will march on with a good will, and will cheerfully follow thy ensigns wheresoever it shall please thee to lead us ; will frame and fit our tongues and our speeches, our hands and our actions, yea, the very times and seasons, to serve only at thy good will and pleasure, and as it shall seem good unto thee. In thy company the snow shall be pleasant, the showers shall seem sweet, the winter shall be thought mild, and all things shall be gracious, acceptable, and pleasing unto us ; no troubles, no difficulties, no hazards, nor any kind of dangers shall grieve or discontent us, so long as thou art our leader and commander ; so long as we may enjoy the happy pres-



ence of thy virtues, and may follow the greatness of thy fortunes."

Scanderbeg, perceiving the temper of mind of his subjects, and being conscious that they had reason on their side, with his usual candor and good nature, by which he won the hearts of all who were connected with him, yielded his own desire to the inclination of others; and, when the assembly broke up, licensed every one to depart to his own home. In the beginning of summer he had left his queen at Petra-Alba, which, as long as he lived, was his practice ever after at that season of the year, as being an agreeable retreat during the summer heats. The rest of the year she generally passed at Croia, except when the Turks were in the country, or extraordinary dangers were imminent; at which times the king took her, with all her household and most valuable property, to Colchina, a maritime town of the Venetians, or to some other place far removed from danger. Now that his army was dismissed, he, with Amese, and a very small train, joined the queen in Petra-Alba. Beneath this castle extended a plain of great natural beauty, which was cultivated with great care, and enriched with all manner of shrubs, vines, and trees. In this retreat, as has been said, the queen passed a part of the year, with the ladies of her court, her maids of honor, and her officers. This plain was encompassed on all sides by woods and thickets, valleys and narrow passes, which made it difficult of access. In these Scanderbeg always kept a large force to watch and guard the place, which was also well provided with men and with munitions of war. After a short stay at Petra-Alba, he returned with his queen to Croia. Here he was not permitted to remain long in tranquillity; for, as Uranocontes had wisely predicted, news arrived, which was daily confirmed, that the probability of war between the Persians and Turks no longer existed, and that Mahomet was bending all his thoughts against the Albanians.

These tidings gave Scanderbeg great uneasiness, but he told his subjects that recourse must be had to arms and good counsel, and not to anger and indignation. Though he was in hope that the enemy would not march when the season was so far advanced, he immediately mounted his horse, and taking with him not more than fifty horsemen, he quitted Croia and went towards the frontiers, where Moses was stationed, in order to consult upon the course which it would be proper for him to pursue. Upon his arrival at the frontiers, he found that the reports which he had heard at Croia were true. Thereupon he in great haste levied about 5000 men, and retired with them into the lower Dibria, where he usually encamped his army during the winter season. He gave charge to Moses and others not to move or attempt any thing before they saw him approach with his forces. Ten days scarcely elapsed between these preparations and the coming of the Turks. Their advance was first discovered by the garrison in the new fort of Modrissa, who, according to their instructions, gave notice by firing the cannon. This signal being communicated to Scanderbeg by the inhabitants of the country, he trussed up his baggage in the night, and, as silently as possible, made towards the enemy. Moses was not present with Scanderbeg in this service, for the Turks directed their course far off from the place where he was stationed, and he would not leave unguarded the passes which had been committed to his charge. The Turkish force advanced the same night with great celerity. It consisted of about 12,000 chosen troops, all horsemen and well appointed. The Christian army was composed of horse and foot nearly equal to each other in number. Near break of day, notice being given by the Christian scouts of the road taken by Amese,\* the general of the Turks, Scanderbeg stationed himself upon the mountain Modrissa, with the intent

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\* Or Amesa.

to surprise the enemy, who had now advanced beyond the mountain Mocrea, and had entered the valley which lay between that and Modrissa. When the foremost Turks had ascended the mountain, and had become entangled among the rocks and declivities, their horses being out of breath with the exertions they had made, the Christian general gave the signal of attack, and, with loud cries, his troops rushed like a torrent upon the Turks, and overthrew and beat them down, being, both men and horses, already breathless and wearied. The attack was led by the infantry, because the nature of the ground was ill adapted to the movements of cavalry, and the chief credit of this victory is due to the foot soldiers. The Turks who had reached the top of the hill threw away their lances and defended themselves with their cimeters; but, as their horses had no sure footing, their efforts were unavailing, and the Christians, covering themselves with their targets, first slew the horses and then their riders. Many of the Turks dismounted, and either fought on foot or endeavored to save themselves by retiring into the valley towards their companions. Scanderbeg sent his nephew Amese with a strong troop of horse down the other side of the mountain, where the descent was more gradual, and a new engagement began in the passes of the valley. When it was broad daylight, Scanderbeg's battalion of horse having repulsed the enemy, descended into the plain. Of the infantry, some pursued the enemy, and others from the foot of the mountain showered their arrows upon them while broken and disordered. Scanderbeg pressing them hard on one side and Amese on the other, they inclosed the Turkish general, who, being often summoned to surrender, at length most unwillingly yielded himself prisoner. He was granted, by the law of arms, to Amese, the nephew of Scanderbeg, by whose desire he took his prisoner to Croia with some part of the spoils, especially the standards. The rest of the booty was given up to the soldiers. In this encounter all the

Turkish standards were taken, seven thousand men were left dead upon the place, and most of the horses were killed or wounded. The loss of the Christians was trifling; for, at the utmost, it amounted to not above thirty men.

Scanderbeg remained some days in the parts where the battle was fought, that he might overrun the frontier of the enemy, dismiss his soldiers, and order the rest of his affairs. After this he returned to Croia in time for the festival of Christmas. As he approached the city, the inhabitants of all ages rushed out in troops to meet him with loud and joyful acclamations, such as were never heard on the like occasions; for they looked upon the late victory as an omen that they should be as fortunate against the young sultan as they had been against his father. During the Christmas festivities Scanderbeg directed that the prisoners should not be kept in confinement, and that Amese, the Turkish general, should be brought to him. He received him very kindly and entertained him sumptuously; making him, as much as was in his power, partaker of the pleasures of the season. The Turk requested Scanderbeg to permit one of the captives to go to Adrianople, in order to treat of the ransom of the prisoners; to this Scanderbeg acceded, and their ransom being agreed upon for 13,000 crowns, two of the prisoners were immediately dispatched in company with a Christian, who was to see them safe beyond the borders. Such were the events with which the year 1451 was signalized.

When Mahomet heard the news of his misfortune, and saw the remnant of his army return without a general, without standards, and without arms, the grief and indignation felt by him as well as by the public at large may be more easily imagined than described. The sultan was very minute in his inquiries concerning all the particulars of the battle with Scanderbeg. But, when he had obtained the information which he sought, he endeavored to conceal the mortification which he felt by plunging into revelry and banqueting.

His covetous disposition was much troubled by the message sent from his general Amese respecting the ransom of the prisoners. He was much inclined to refuse to listen to any treaty on the subject, under pretence that the whole misfortune was attributable to the folly or the cowardice of his general. But the principal persons of his court, and the friends and relations of the prisoners, dissuaded him from acting in such a manner. They represented to him that the whole course of Amese's life proved him to be incapable of any want of fidelity, and that supposing him to be in fault, the rest of the army ought not to be neglected on that account. The reasons offered were so cogent that the money was soon procured and delivered to the messengers, besides many valuable presents which were sent privately to Scanderbeg, and the ransom was quickly brought to Epire and paid. The greater portion of the sum was by Scanderbeg delivered to his nephew, the remainder was partly divided among the soldiers, and partly sent to Moses to be distributed among his garrison. Scanderbeg's nephew showed himself to be as liberal as his uncle ; for, keeping very little for himself, he divided what was received by him among his friends and those who had shared in his perils. When the ransom was paid, the prisoners were suffered to depart. It is said that Amese, the Turkish general, left Scanderbeg with great regret, and that before his departure he conversed much with the prince upon the nature and disposition of Mahomet, and of the manner in which the war should be carried on against him. The prisoners received many gifts when they departed. Many days' provision was likewise afforded them, and a good convoy which took them safe to their own borders.

Before the arrival of Amese at Adrianople a new levy of troops had begun, and the old companies were filled up with new men in place of those who were wanting. The command of these forces was given to an experienced and brave officer named Debreas, who had attained to the rank of Sa-

niacke (Sanziak). This commander, relying upon his own talents, and allowing nothing to fortune, promised the sultan a certain victory; at the same time assuring him that he would not risk all his forces in one engagement, but that he would proceed carefully and by degrees. He did not require a larger force than had been sent with his predecessor Amese; prompted, in all likelihood, by ambition to restore the fortune of the Turkish arms by a power not exceeding that which had suffered defeat.

Debreas was not the only one who desired this command, for many others were anxious to be intrusted with this difficult and dangerous service. And by how much the fame of Scanderbeg increased, by so much did the desire of those who had a high opinion of themselves become more vehement to have the honor of serving against him. The great rewards offered by Mahomet to the one who should vanquish the Albanian, also contributed not a little to render men anxious to engage in this service. But when Amese returned, such was the account which he gave of Scanderbeg and of his fortune, and so liberal was he in his commendations of him and his troops, that the courage of those who were before so eager was much abated; and the opinion of Debreas was so much changed that the sultan nearly resolved to put a stop to the expedition. But, for the honor of the empire, he thought it better to increase the number of his forces than to show a distrust of his Sanziak before he had been put to the proof, or to leave the discomfiture of Amese and the disgrace of his arms unrevenged. He therefore added to the troops already levied 3000 horse.

When every thing was prepared, and the troops ready to march, a storm of rain came on, and continued so long as to delay for some time the advance of the expedition. The foul weather at length ceased; and the season, in consequence of the approach of spring, became more mild. Whereupon, the Turkish forces, with all speed, began their march.

Scanderbeg also drew into his camp to consult with his chiefs about the ordering of his affairs ; and, in a short time, he assembled a force of 7000 men, or somewhat more.

The speed with which the armies of Epire were assembled and equipped was owing to the provident care of Scanderbeg ; for he had distributed the greater part of his revenues and domains among the chief men of his country, upon condition of their being always ready to bring into the field, in time of war, a certain number of troops well provided and equipped, to be employed under their command, in such service as he should direct. This body of forces was, consequently, always prepared for action. The custom of the country also required a certain number of the husbandmen to accompany their chiefs in military service, without receiving any pay. And the hope of prey and plunder induced more to offer themselves as soldiers than the prince required. From this it appears how Scanderbeg, without great revenues, was able so constantly to recruit his armies. His fame also, and the confidence which men felt in his talents and good fortune, were alone sufficient to allure numbers to his standards. His mercenary troops were chiefly paid by the sums which he received from the Bishops of Rome, the King of Naples, and other Catholic Christian princes.

When the Turkish general Debreas had arrived near to the confines of Epire, Castriot, who was well advised of his movements, ordered his men to mount without delay. He selected 6000 horsemen from his whole army. As the service required great expedition, he could not conveniently employ his infantry. Before he began his march, he sent Moses with ten horsemen to reconnoitre the enemy ; and then followed leisurely with the rest of the squadrons. The moon shone so bright that the Dibriani was enabled to obtain a full view of the enemy. The Turkish general, waiting for the break of day, was encamped in a plain, bounded

on one side by the mountain Mocreá, on the other by the town of Scopia, belonging to the Turks, and was also inclosed by two mountains of considerable height, called by the general name of the mountains of Pologue. Moses brought back a distinct account of every thing which he had observed to his chief, who immediately ordered his troops to hasten their pace. They had just left Mocreá, and entered upon the plain, when the heavens were suddenly overcast, and a gentle rain at first fell, which was succeeded by a violent tempest of wind and storm, and thunder and lightning. Hereupon the ensigns halted, and the troops were seized with a panic as though they were met by an omen of ill fortune. Scanderbeg treated the apprehensions of his men with derision, and ordered the standard-bearer in front to push on, and his men to take advantage of the weather to charge the enemy, telling them that the sudden storm was but a usual occurrence at that season of the year, being the month of March, and that they would soon see the sky as serene as ever. He in this manner allayed the superstitious fears of his men; and, as he had predicted, the moon again shone out. When the approach of the Albanians was perceived by the Turks, their astonishment at the boldness of the Christians was very great; and they at first appeared irresolute how to act; but Debreas, confiding in the superiority of his numbers, gave the signal to charge, and passing up and down through his troops, encouraged and animated them by his speeches.

He then sent forward a detachment to skirmish with the Christians and repress the fury of their attack, that he might have leisure to arrange his battle to the best advantage.

Scanderbeg also addressed his men; and was particularly careful to keep them in firm array and order of battle, with the view of preventing their ranks from becoming intermingled and confounded with those of the enemy, especially as his forces were inferior in number. As he did not



trust to the strength of the light troops who had begun to skirmish with the enemy, he directed Moses and Amese, with a strong squadron of chosen men, to encounter the Turks who were coming on. He kept the rest of his squadrons in close and regular order, and in great silence. The Turkish general also kept his troops quiet, and the engagement was carried on between the avant-couriers of the two armies. But the Dibrian\* soon put an end to this kind of combat, for, rushing into the midst of the enemy, he slew a great many and put the remainder to flight; and in the heat of his fury forgetting himself, he would have rushed into the main battle of the Turks, had he not been restrained and the men called back by Amese. Moses was doubtless a brave and able commander, but, when his blood was heated, he was apt to be led away by his eagerness. It is said that Scanderbeg sharply reprehended him for his imprudence, telling him that a private soldier might be excused for such hardihood, but that it became a leader to have more command of himself.

The main body of the Turks remained quiet, and Scanderbeg was, at first, uncertain how to act; but at length, he sounded a charge and made a furious onset upon them, at the same time animating his men with encouraging words. The Turks received the attack very coolly, and Debreas advanced to the front to inspire his men with courage; so that the ardor of the Albanians was somewhat repressed. Whilst the two armies were thus face to face, and the battle not completely joined, one of the Musaches was sent with a detachment of horse from the left wing to charge the enemy on that side, and there their ranks first began to be disordered. Scanderbeg continued pressing on the front, and eagerly watching for the general of the Turks. It is reported that, in all his battles, he was desirous of attacking the

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\* Moses.

commander; and was wont to say, that he knew of no creature in the world that could live after its head was taken off.

But the brave charge made by Musache thwarted the purpose of Scanderbeg, for Debreas, leaving the front of the battle, hastened to prevent his troops from getting into confusion. The soldiers in the van, perceiving that the general had left them, became discouraged, and suffered themselves to be easily driven in among the other battalions. Moses broke furiously among them, and snatching an ensign out of the hands of one of the Turks, threw it to his companions who followed him. The Christians were so much excited by this act, that they pressed upon the enemy with a fury which could not be withstood, and which completely routed them. While Debreas was in vain exerting himself to rally his men, Scanderbeg, who had all along been on the watch for him, charged him with his lance, and ran it through him a little above the breast. When he fell from his horse, his people covered him with their bodies, in hopes that he was not killed and would be able to mount again. But when they found that he was dead, they turned bridle immediately, and abandoning their standards and carriages, fled with the utmost precipitation. Musache on one side, and Moses on the other, pursued them so vigorously, that more were slain in the chase than on the field of battle, and some were taken prisoners. Those who had served under the Turk Amese, in the former expedition, having that adventure in their minds, fought more warily than the others, and were the foremost and most fortunate in their flight. More execution would doubtless have been done upon the Turks, had the Christians been provided with archers and arquebusiers; but their only offensive weapons were lances and cutlasses.\* When the chase had continued a considerable distance within the Turkish frontier, Scanderbeg ordered the pursuit

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\* Courtlasses.

to be stayed, and collecting his troops together, returned with his prisoners, and without the loss or hurt of a single man. The Turks lost 4120 men ; so that it has been remarked, this victory might be said not to be *bought*, but to be *given*.

The booty being displayed in sight of all, was equally divided among the soldiers, to the intent that they who had continued the pursuit, without staying to pillage the camp or spoil the dead, might not be rewarded less than their fellows. Scanderbeg presented with his own hand to Moses, the horse and armor of Debreas, with an honorable testimony of his great deserts. A young Turkish prisoner fell to the share of Musache : his physiognomy and appearance indicated that he possessed rank and courage. A controversy arose between Musache and his prisoner which afforded some amusement to the bystanders. The young man demanded how much would be required for his ransom ; and at length it was agreed that he should pay 200 crowns. These he immediately took out of a small bag, and counting them to his owner, asked leave to depart. Hereupon the Epirot began to smile, telling him that his ransom must be found somewhere else ; that all he had, by the rules of war, belonged to the one whose prisoner he was. The Turk debated the matter, until the question was brought before Scanderbeg, who desired both parties to state the arguments which they had to urge ; after which, turning to his people, he spoke to this effect :—" Truly, here is a pretty controversy. Both of these contend for that which is mine. The money, Musache, I did not bestow upon you, for I knew not of it. Nor should you, young man, attempt to deal in so crafty a manner ; for you know very well that even your life is not your own, but depends upon our clemency—so far are you from having a right reserved to yourself over any thing. But not to insist upon the rigorous laws of war in the case of a captive, I freely give to

you, Musache, all that this prisoner has about him, and do you as frankly give him his liberty, upon condition that if ever he fall again into your hand, you will dispose of him as you may think fit." The young Turk was greatly rejoiced thus to obtain his liberty. His horse and arms were also generously given to him by Scanderbeg; and he departed highly commending this his liberality, and praying God to prosper both the king and the state of Albania. The Christians, gathering up their baggage, retired towards evening into Dibris; during their abode in which place, the prince, in general council, set on foot a deliberation concerning the prosecution of the war, and the assaulting some of the towns of the enemy. But it was at length concluded that the most prudent course would be to wait for some time, and see what steps would be taken by Mahomet after the defeat of his forces. With this view, it was resolved that no enterprise should be commenced before the end of two months; but spies were sent out in all directions, although deserters from the enemy came in daily from Adrianople and other places. In the mean time, Moses retired to his garrison upon the frontiers; and Scanderbeg, with Amese and his other princes and nobles, went to Croia.

When the Turkish army returned to Mahomet, broken and discomfited, although they were in miserable plight and greatly distressed, he showed no pity towards them; for both he and the great men of his court openly declared that so many able men as had returned were sufficient to have decided the fortune of any battle. But when the sultan inquired into the particulars of the engagement, his anger was inflamed still more, and he ordered them out of his sight, casting blame and reproach upon them, and accusing them of sloth and cowardice. The fate of Debreas was a cause rather of gladness than of grief among those of his own condition, whether prompted by envy of his former reputation, or by indignation at his audacity and presump-

tion. Mahomet himself was much mortified, and not without a touch of fear, at the result of this expedition. He at first could not be persuaded that Scanderbeg with so small an army had dared to enter so far within his frontiers, and encounter Debreas even upon the open plains of Polonia;\* but, finding that the different accounts which he received all agreed together, he was obliged to give credit to what was told him. He wanted not abundance of flatterers to gloss over the real importance of the defeat which his arms had sustained, and to persuade him that enough talent and strength would be found to get the better of Scanderbeg.

Mahomet listened with satisfaction to the expressions of good-will and fidelity uttered by his subjects; but he had in his mind a different method of dealing with his enemy from that intended by his courtiers. His purpose was to excite against the Prince of Epire some of his own friends; and in this he was not altogether disappointed.

Scanderbeg had about him many in whom he reposed great confidence in regard both to civil and military affairs, and Moses was the one whom he loved and esteemed above all others. Against this person Mahomet determined to direct his efforts, and to endeavor by the greatness of his offers to overcome his faith and loyalty. One circumstance in particular gave him hope of success; which was, that the estates of Moses, especially in the neighborhood of Sfetigrade, bordered upon the Turkish dominions, so that he might conveniently and secretly treat with him of this matter. He therefore, for the present, resolved to intermit his warlike preparations, feigning to his courtiers that for good reasons, he had deferred to execute the vengeance which he meditated against the kingdom of Epire. Having then communicated his secret to one or two of his most faithful counsellors, he wrote a letter to the governor of Sfetigrade to

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\* Pologne.

this effect:—That he should enter into a negotiation with Moses, in the name of Mahomet, and make him the offer either of money or of estates and preferments, upon condition that he should cause Scanderbeg to be made away with, or at least, that he should quit his service and follow the arms and fortunes of the emperor. Other motives were proposed for the governor to urge, although throughout the letter the name of Moses was not mentioned. The time and manner of conducting this business was left to the discretion of the governor. He neglected nothing that was enjoined upon him; but with singular dexterity and address proceeded in his scheme for bringing Moses to a conference. For this purpose he imparted his design to a Christian, one of his own household servants, and an Albanian by birth, promising that he and his house should forever be enriched if he could manage to bring him and the Dibrian to converse together. This fellow was dispatched by the governor to Moses. He departed in the night, and knowing the country perfectly, never missed his way, but arrived without delay on the frontiers where Moses was stationed with his garrison. The Dibrian, upon the arrival of this messenger from the enemy, took him apart and gave him an opportunity of speaking. Before broaching the business upon which he was sent, he prayed Moses to take the trouble of going to Sfetigrade; but perceiving that he not only refused so to do, but was ready to laugh at the impudence of the request, he changed his tone, and drew the general's attention by flattering and fair speeches; after which, entering upon his business, he gave a hint of the purpose of the sultan. Moses was attracted by what the messenger said to him, especially when told that the sultan considered him as the only one in Epire who was worthy of being solicited. But he so demeaned himself, both by his words and his countenance, that the messenger did not know how to understand him—whether he approved or disapproved of what had

been proposed to him : wherefore, not urging the matter any further, but saying that he would return again shortly, he took his leave and departed. It is generally reported, that when Moses was asked by some of his soldiers what had passed between him and his visitor, he replied that the man was a spy from the neighborhood of Sfetigrade, who came to give him information by means of which he hoped to be able to render good service to the king. The soldiers readily believed what was told them, especially as the appearance of the man, and his being a Christian, seemed to confirm what was said. Nor had they any reason to doubt the truth and fidelity of their general, which had so often been tried, and into whose hands the safety of the whole state had been so often committed. But ever after this conference the Dibrian was thoughtful and downcast, and appeared to be touched with the thought of how much he owed to his generous and kind master, and at the same time to be allured by the greatness of the offers made to him by Mahomet. While the Dibrian was thus agitated by opposite thoughts and affections, the messenger again arrived with an ample provision, not only of fair and plausible speeches, but also of valuable and sumptuous gifts. It does not appear that Moses accepted any of these gifts ; but the answer which he returned sufficiently showed that his mind was corrupted. He desired the messenger not to meet him again, but to tell the sultan that he most humbly thanked him for his favor and good-will, and promised so to conduct himself that he should not thereafter find him to be his enemy.

It has been stated that the entering upon any enterprise had been deferred by Scanderbeg and his people to a certain period. This period being now arrived, and all appearing to be tranquil on the part of the Turks, Scanderbeg set himself to consider in what direction he should turn his arms, and what preparations were requisite to be made. Although his

troops were excellent in plain combat, he was aware that they were deficient in the skill requisite to conduct sieges, and operations of that nature; he therefore resolved to supply this defect, if possible, by the aid of the Italians. In prosecution of this design, he deferred the levy of troops, and caused two vessels to be well equipped, and laden with presents. These he sent, with two of the principal and noblest persons of his kingdom, to Alphonsus, king of Sicily and Naples, together with a letter to the following effect:

“To the most noble and victorious Prince Alphonsus, king of Aragon, Naples, and Sicily, Scanderbeg, king of the Epirots, sendeth health and prosperity:

“Our soldiers, most Catholic king, know how to fight with men only in the field; but for the assaulting of walls and holds, they are utterly ignorant. You *Italians*, as I hear, are very skilful in that kind of service, and you love it well: this is the cause that we at this time have need of your good aid, which we desire you to impart unto us. The infidels are possessed of certain of our towns in *Epire*: and I have for a long time had a singular desire to pluck this thorn, if God be so pleased, out of my foot; but the continual impediments and hindrances of the wars having ever withheld me, I have not been able to this day to bring it to any good pass. Wherefore, to the intent I might accomplish my desire, I have made choice of this opportunity; being most fit, both in regard of the season now present, as also of the leisure and rest which Mahomet hath permitted us, whose fury we have now repressed in two several combats and battles. You may guess, by few words, what it is that we have need of: all other things are in readiness, only we stay for succors and aid from you, which, if it shall please your majesty, you may send unto us; namely, arquebusiers and crossbows, such as are skilful to fight aloof, and to trouble the enemy afar off—for of other soldiers our dominions are sufficiently well furnished. But, oh! how happy



may I account *Naples* and *Sicily*, which are governed by such a king as my *Alphonsus*, from whence, as out of a treasury, a man may have choice of all precedents and examples of virtue! If we have need of your people, either in peace or in war, both our estate hath been furthered by your laws, and our wars have been maintained by your arms. For my part, I do so highly esteem of your love and goodwill; and the memory of your exceeding great benefits doth remain so sacred and inviolable in my mind, that many time I wish—though perhaps therein I overshoot myself—that your fortune and estate were such as you might have occasion to try and prove, rather than to purchase and tie your friends unto you. For so should I be able, by some certain and evident proof, to testify my devotion and ready service, and the entire affections of my unfeigned love towards you.”\*

When the ambassadors were departed, Scanderbeg made a journey into Dabria, where the garrison then was, accompanied by Amese his nephew, Musache' his brother-in-law, and some other of his nobles, in order to consult together with them and with Moses, upon the state of his affairs. When arrived at the garrison, he asked Moses whether he had learned any news from the Turks—near whose borders he was stationed—that affected the state of Epire. He answered that he knew of none; but he said that he had had a conference with a man of Sfetigrade, to endeavor to ascertain whether any way could be found to recover that place; but from what he was told of the care with which it was guarded, and the abundance of munitions with which it was provided, he concluded there was no hope of success. This representation was made by him in order to turn the thoughts of Scanderbeg from attacking Sfetigrade, which movement would prevent him from fulfilling his engagement

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\* This is copied verbatim from the translation of Lavardin, the orthography being modernized.

with the sultan, and in the hope of inducing the prince to direct his efforts against Belgrade.

Mahomet was not pleased at having no pledge by which to bind Moses to his engagement. Yet, being hindered by other concerns from turning his whole attention towards Epire, and not having it in his power at that time to send thither an overwhelming force, nor to go there in person, and thinking that it did not comport with his dignity to carry on a petty warfare, he sent other letters to the governor of Sfetigrade, commending his diligence, and directing him to continue his negotiations with Moses, and, for the present, to take no measures with regard to the Albanian war.

While the affairs of Scanderbeg were in this quiet state, Alphonsus received his ambassadors and his letters with great distinction. He immediately caused a hasty muster of troops, amounting to 1000, of whom 500 were arquebusiers, and the remainder crossbow-men. The king would have increased the number, had not the ambassadors informed him that they were sufficient, as the places to be attacked were of small circuit, and that the Prince of Epire had abundance of good and expert archers. But instead of more troops, they requested that they might be furnished with engines of assault, such as artillery and bars of iron; all which was granted, and cannoneers were also appointed to serve the ordnance. Alphonsus also sent a supply of corn, and a large sum of money. He had two vessels of his own equipped, in which the soldiers being embarked upon the Adriatic sea, where the passage was not more than sixty miles over, he recommended them to God and the winds. Some time after he sent a new supply by Gilbert Ortafan, a knight of great valor and experience, by whom he also sent most friendly letters to Scanderbeg, proffering all the aid which it was in his power to afford him. Of his soldiers, he jestingly remarked that the Albanians should keep a sharp

eye upon them ; for that the gallantry of the Italians was not wont to be confined merely to the enemies with whom they had to contend in the field.

The Italian soldiers were wafted by a prosperous wind to Epire, where they were landed with their baggage, and immediately conveyed to Croia, while the Prince of Epire was busily engaged in Dibria mustering his forces, and carefully watching whatever might be stirring among the Turks. When he had every thing in readiness, he returned with his army towards Croia to join the Italian forces, of whose arrival he had received intelligence. Moses was left in garrison with 1000 horse and the same number of foot. He was very desirous that Moses should be with him in this expedition. But he artfully excused himself, alleging that it would not be safe to leave that part of the country unprotected ; and that his estates being situated in that quarter, he was the most likely to defend them with care : that if Sfetigrade were the object of attack, or if Belgrade were not so distant, being more than one hundred and forty miles from Dibria, he would gladly accompany the rest of the army, and was earnestly desirous so to do, as he thought he might thereby gain honor to himself and profit to his soldiers ; but that he was persuaded there would be enough else for him to do, as Mahomet, he was confident, would not remain quiet when he heard of the movements of Scanderbeg ; and that to draw him off from Belgrade, he would invade Albania. These reasons appeared so plausible, that he was not only permitted to remain where he was, but authorized to increase the garrison as circumstances might require.

When Scanderbeg approached Croia, the Italian bands came out to meet him, and accompanied him into the city, the rest of the troops pitching their camp without the walls. The ambassadors declared to Scanderbeg the purpose of their coming, and delivered to him the money and the letters sent by Alphonsus. The letters were publicly read in

the assembly of the people, and excited much merriment. Castriot, in a speech of considerable length, applauded the liberality of the King of Naples, and his singular friendship towards the people of Albania. After which, he directed that the foreign troops should be suitably entertained and provided with accommodations. The chief officers of the army turned their attention to having the artillery mounted and properly ordered. When all things were in readiness, Scanderbeg, accompanied by the whole multitude, proceeded to his camp. He there mustered and received his troops, and after public processions and prayers for victory and a happy return, while the soldiers were only waiting for the stroke of the drum and the sound of the trumpet, their prince addressed them (as reported by Lavardin) to the following effect :

“ This is now the eleventh year of our continual travails (my good soldiers) which we have sustained for the recovery and possession of our country of *Epire*, and for the seat and dwellings of our ancestors which were lost unto the *barbarians*, rather by a certain kind of fatal necessity, than by any default or want of courage either in them or us. The time is now come that we must employ our whole power and endeavors to disnest these infidels, and to expel them wholly out of our country, and with no less glory to impose the yoke upon the necks of our enemies, than we have already by the divine clemency and your unspeakable prowess, shaken it off from our own shoulders. If the life and the death of *Amurath* have heretofore given you a large and ample subject of glory, you have now a fitter occasion and a more noble matter to purchase honor: and it may be that his son is reserved for your geater glory. You have had even of late some pledge and experience of your good fortune, and the tyrant gave you some proof and trial thereof, whilst that with the one hand (as it were) holding the funerals of his father, with the other he demanded

peace of you, yet under a certain color and honest show of tribute. The which we having denied him, he would with a strong hand have enforced and exacted of us, sending hither certain of his captains and soldiers as collectors of that his tribute, throughout all this province. But the valleys of *Mocrea*, and the fields of *Pologne*, can testify that they had but ill payment, and that they made but a bad audit. The consideration hereof ought to spur us on to follow and pursue that which remaineth yet undone. Amongst the rest the town of *Belgrade* doth seem to promise us no less good success: in the siege whereof, we will continue as long as yourselves shall think convenient: in such sort that if either the fortune of war, or the obstinacy of the defendants, do protract and draw it out at length, we are not determined to continue there longer than till the end of autumn. Howbeit I am in good hope, that we shall not be enforced to stay there to the end of that season, considering both your accustomed valor, the flower of so many goodly troops, such great store of engines, and pieces for battery, wherewith the King of *Sicily* hath most bountifully furnished us. Besides, you know that *Belgrade* is a town of Christians, peopled with our own kinsmen and friends, and that *Amurath*, after the death of Theodore Corona the last lord of that city, did traitorously seize and possess himself of the same. This place is yet full of her ancient citizens, who do only attend to be freed and delivered out of the servitude of those infidels. I am much deceived if they do not greatly further and favor our attempts, whereby the enemy shall be assailed both within and without. Go to, therefore (my good friends and companions in arms); march on a God's name resolutely and courageously, succor them that attend in expectation of your virtue: at leastwise spare not to enforce both them and the residue, if you find them perverse and obstinate."

This speech excited great applause among the soldiery ;

and they were about to set forward without delay. But Scanderbeg commanded them to remain stationary until he should send forth scouts to explore the country and marshals to select a place in which to encamp. Tanusee, with 3000 good horse, immediately led the way. The carriages and baggage proceeded next, and after them followed Scanderbeg with the main army. The fame of this expedition reached the city of Belgrade sooner than the army of the Christians ; so that when Tanusee arrived there, he found that he could take nothing by surprise. The peasants had retired with their crops into the strongholds, and had left no forage for their enemies. Tanusee's men would have overrun and laid waste the country, but he restrained them, saying that he had no order to that effect from the commander-in-chief. Wherefore, keeping strict watch, he quietly lodged his men under the walls, without offering any violence by word or deed. Nor did the townspeople make any effort to prevent their approach ; but carefully ordered every thing within the town, setting their guards and appointing to every man his station.

The Turkish garrison was very strong, consisting of at least a 1000 men. The inhabitants were Christians, but not accustomed to bear arms. There was a diversity of opinion among the soldiers of the garrison whether or no the citizens, as they were Christians, might be trusted and suffered to remain in the town. Their long and quiet residence there, the good treatment they had received at the hands of the Turks, and the pledge afforded for their good behavior by their wives, their children, and their property, all which were as hostages in the power of their rulers, these considerations tended to allay the suspicions of the garrison ; but the governor thought proper to have some further assurance that no disturbance should be raised by them while the Turks were engaged in defending the walls. He accordingly called together some of the oldest inhabitants,

and, after conferring with them, it was finally agreed that a number of the Christians should be delivered as hostages. As the governor could not send them to Adrianople on account of the troops who were besieging the town, they were confined in the castle or fortress, which was occupied solely by Turks. In the conference held with the governor the Christians declared that, as they had never been under the dominion of Castriot, they had no desire to be so now, and were well satisfied with the treatment they had received from Mahomet. The confidence of the garrison being established by this measure, all things within the town were ordered and made ready for the expected attack. The governor is reported to have then addressed the soldiers and citizens in a short speech, which so inflamed the courage of the soldiers that, besides exciting boasts and bravadoes, some of them flocked around the governor and besought him to give them leave to sally out and attack the enemy. But to this he would not consent, as he was informed of the approach of Scanderbeg, who, in fact, soon arrived. The Albanian troops reached Belgrade at about 10 o'clock in the forenoon, and encamped close together in an extensive plain under the walls. They quietly took their repast, and then retired by companies into the quarters assigned to them. The army of Scanderbeg amounted to 15,000 men—8000 cavalry and 7000 foot. They were distributed about on the plain and on the mountain, which, not being very lofty, served for the horse to encamp in as well as for the foot. By the time that the artillery was planted, and all things in readiness for the siege, night came on. The bold appearance of the Christians and threatening array of the artillery tended much to abate the courage of the besieged.

At break of day the ordnance opened furiously upon the town, and the curtain in several places began to be dismantled, and the flankers to be beaten down; so that the defendants, although they strove to repair the breaches, consult-

ed together about demanding a parley before the enemy should advance to scale the walls, and become so heated with the fury of the fight as to render a conference impracticable. But the governor would not consent to it, telling his men that the danger was not yet so great as to render that ignominious measure necessary, to which they might at any time have recourse. The battering of the walls continued the next day with great fury. After the cannonade had continued two days, and a practicable breach was effected, Scanderbeg appointed the third morning for the assault, and commanded his men to be ready by break of day. When the ensigns, at the appointed time, were displayed, and the soldiers, with loud shouts, were advancing in good order to the assault, two men came suddenly from the town to meet them; who, being conducted into the presence of the prince, requested a truce. This was readily granted. They then asked what terms would be conceded to them if they yielded up the town. Scanderbeg replied, "Such terms as are due to men who submit; that is, their lives, and liberty to depart with their arms and with bag and baggage; that, as for the rest, all should belong to the victors." When the messengers returned, and declared the answer which they brought back, the defendants were much grieved that such hard terms should be demanded, when as yet so little injury had been done to them. The Christians in the town said not a word, although by the terms proposed their property would all have gone into the hands of the besiegers. It is true that they hoped, if the place were surrendered, to obtain from Scanderbeg more honorable treatment. But when asked by the governor what was their mind, they replied that they did not expect to be questioned but to be commanded by him, and that whatever he thought for the general good, they would adhere to. The greater part of the day was spent in consultation; and it was at length resolved that a truce for one month should be proposed, during



which time if no succors arrived, that at the expiration of the month the town should be surrendered upon the conditions that had been proposed. These terms being sent to the Christian camp, Scanderbeg treated them very lightly, and desired the besieged to be better advised, or to prepare themselves for a general assault. Finding, however, that they would not remit even five days of the truce required by them, he was much enraged, but was restrained from further action by the coming on of night. He called a council to deliberate upon the matter. Some of his principal lords and officers were of opinion that he should not altogether reject the proposition of the besieged, but endeavor to ascertain whether they might not be brought to admit of a shorter cessation of arms. It was urged that the situation of the place upon the top of a mountain rendered the access to it difficult; that the natural defences were very strong, and that the siege might be of long continuance; that if the sultan should come upon them when they were exhausted by fighting, their danger would be much greater than if he should attack them before they had been engaged in combat; and that if he should not come, or come too late, the town would be won without any bloodshed. Other arguments were offered which had not much weight with Scanderbeg, for he entirely dissented from the opinion of his officers, and thought that the siege should be immediately urged on. However, he at length yielded to the will of the majority; and after much discussion, a truce for sixteen days was at length agreed upon. A cessation of hostilities being thus determined, Scanderbeg directed his attention particularly to the keeping of a careful guard on all quarters; and, in addition to the scouts under the direction of Tanusee, he selected twenty-five soldiers upon whom he thought he could depend, and stationed them upon the summit of a neighboring mountain, with orders, if the enemy should be seen afar off, to give notice thereof by fires and torches, and

to descend speedily and return to the camp. In order to allow more room to his troops, that they might be less oppressed by the heat of the weather, he himself, with Amese and some of his nobles, took up their quarters upon the mountain next the town, accompanied by 3000 horse and 1000 foot. He disposed all things with singular care and discretion, planting some pieces of ordnance against the town, to guard against a sudden sally by the garrison. Musache and Tanusee with the rest of the army were encamped on the plain beneath him. The soldiers were ordered to abstain from all acts of hostility until the truce should be ended.

## BOOK VIII.

WHEN the news of the siege of Belgrade reached Mahomet he was near to Romania, marching to the assault of Constantinople. He gave vent to his vexation and rage in violent exclamations against Epire, and he resolved to delay his attempt upon Constantinople, and to turn his immediate attention to the relief of Belgrade. Some of his bashaws would have persuaded him not to interrupt his great enterprise for the sake of an object so comparatively trifling as the town of Belgrade; but he resisted all their arguments, alleging, among other things, that a fire within their own doors ought to be quenched before it increased in violence and spread abroad.

For the expedition into Epire, Mahomet chose as commander Sebalias, an officer who was more remarkable for subtle policy than for adventurous daring, and who had more than once been tried against Scanderbeg. This general was intrusted with the command of 40,000 horse, all chosen troops and well appointed: a powerful force, and formidable both for numbers and valor. Mahomet, before the departure of Sebalias, in a long discourse offered him all manner of rewards if he brought the war to a happy conclusion, and especially if he should bring to him the head of Scanderbeg or Scanderbeg himself as prisoner. It is also stated that two of the boldest and most powerful soldiers of the whole army, named Acmath and Barach, engaged with the sultan, for a large sum of money, to accomplish the death of the prince.

Sebalias, when he had received his orders, made no delay, and being very anxious about Belgrade, lest the garrison

should not hold out until his arrival, he determined to dispatch a messenger at once to give them notice of the intended relief. The service was so dangerous that a man could not immediately be found to undertake it, notwithstanding the great reward offered.\* At length a very quick and light fellow was mounted upon the swiftest horse in the army, who, spurring on night and day, and not being overcome by fatigue or heat, in three days or little more arrived at a town under the dominion of the Turks, named Gyrocastra, about 125 miles† from Belgrade. Having communicated his business to the magistrates of the place, he in pursuance of their advice remained there until night, when, changing his dress, he continued his journey on foot, and at length got near to the town on the side where Scanderbeg was encamped; and so carefully and secretly did he approach, that he got close to the wall almost unperceived by the town sentinels themselves. He, however, made himself known to them, and was immediately drawn up by cords into the city. His coming excited great interest among the inhabitants, as the truce was nearly expired. The governor dispersed the crowd, and in the presence of but a few persons conferred with the messenger, to whom, when he had read the letter brought by him, he gave credence; and it was resolved upon by the officers of the garrison to defend the place until the coming of Sebalias. The news was on the following day imparted to the people, not by proclamation, but quietly, and they were enjoined to keep it secret from the besiegers; for it was intended that the Christian army should both be deceived

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\* "The Turks have no ordinary and set posts in *Turkey*, but instead of them, and because upon such occurrences their couriers (whom they call *Flack*) shall not be unprovided of horses, the *Sultans* have established and laid down this order: that in running on their journey, they may dismount as many men as they meet with on the way without any exception; and so by often changing of their horse, they may make way with incredible speed and diligence."—*Lavardin*.

† I know not if the miles mentioned by *Lavardin* be French.

with respect to the truce and be taken unawares by the force which was coming to the relief of the town.

The inhabitants were somewhat doubtful whether the succors could arrive before the expiration of the truce. If they did not arrive in time it would become necessary for them either to defend themselves, in violation of the articles of agreement, or to deliver up the town. Such being the state of things, they set themselves to repairing the walls where they had been battered by the cannon. The Christian chief when he perceived this suspected some treachery, and being greatly enraged, was tempted to assault the place; but, as the truce was to expire in three days, he moderated his anger, and contented himself with sending word to the people of the town that what they were about was an infringement of the articles agreed upon and a plain indication of some intended fraud; that they should cease from the work or be ready to impute to their own want of faith the miseries which might be brought upon them. Hereupon the inhabitants in appearance discontinued their repairs; but they still did, under cover of the ramparts, what could be done without being perceived by their enemies. They day and night carried earth to strengthen the walls, and collected large heaps of stones and other missiles wherewith to annoy the assailants. As was natural, those within the walls anxiously watched the arrival of the army which was coming to their relief, ascending to the tops of the houses, the towers, and the highest places in the city, to seek some indication of the approach of Sebalias. Nor did the Christians less anxiously watch the coming of the Turks, and look to the tops of the mountains to see whether the scouts there stationed gave any signal of the approach of the enemy, so that they might have time to arm and prepare to mount; for the heat of the weather was so great that they could not keep their horses continually saddled and themselves armed. But the standards of the enemy appeared in

sight, and their shouts were heard without any warning being given by the scouts who were stationed upon the heights. This was the only instance of Scanderbeg's ever having been surprised by so sudden a tempest; for in all his wars he had never failed to be well informed, by means either of spies, or deserters, or letters or tokens from his friends. The great armament made by Mahomet having been long in preparation, and intended against Constantinople, and a part of those forces having been suddenly and secretly detached against Scanderbeg, there may have been no time for information of their coming to reach him soon enough to put him on his guard. As for the scouts stationed upon the heights, they gave no sign of the enemy's approach, nor was it ever known what became of them; it was said by some that they were corrupted by the Turks; by others it was supposed that, being very remiss in their duty, they were surprised and put to the sword by the van-couriers of the Turks. It appears improbable that so many could have been bribed; and, as their dead bodies were not found, it is not likely that they were slain. It is thought most probable that they were taken prisoners. The other sentinels who were to watch the enemy did not perceive them until they were very near. Nor had it been in the power of Scanderbeg to send out troops as he was wont, and to beat about the country, as it was in possession of the enemy.

The troops under command of Musache were encamped in the quarter opposed to the advance of the Turks, and where their first attack would be made. The account most generally credited is, that he had very little time to prepare for the enemy, but that as soon as their light troops and standards came in sight, he made the best disposition which the shortness of the time would allow; and that he was at first in doubt whether to abide the assault of the Turks or to flee to the main body of the army; but as the enemy was so near that he thought his retreat would cause him the

greatest loss of men, and as he did not suppose the hostile force to be so strong as it really was, and being, moreover, unwilling to lose his life with dishonor, he resolved to stand the charge. For a while he bravely maintained his ground, being determined not to lose his life without being avenged upon his foes; but perceiving the slaughter of his men to be so great that his flanks were exposed, and that resistance was vain, he endeavored to make his way to the mountain as the only place of refuge. But the multitude of his enemies being so great as to inclose him on every side, and seeing no chance of escape, he fought with a rage and fury which astonished his foes, and fell gloriously in the midst of them, leaving a reputation worthy of all honor and commendation for the worthy services he had rendered to his prince and to his country. Tanusee Thopie, on his part, was in no great distress; yet the situation of his uncle so affected him that he appeared to forget every thing else, and by charging furiously, again and again, upon the enemy, endeavored to open a way for escape. But at length, finding all his efforts vain, he thought it best, in order to save those who had not fallen, to endeavor to escape by flight. Tanusee Gynache did the same. But their flight did not serve much to diminish the slaughter; for the Turks dividing themselves into separate bands, some continued to invest the troops of Musache as long as any remained; and others pursued the fugitives, making such slaughter that Fortune seemed at length to have deserted the Albanians and to have transferred her favor to the infidels. Scanderbeg, whose tents were somewhat removed from this scene of action, was more than once on the point of rushing down into the plain to succor his men, even at the sacrifice of his own life; but he was earnestly entreated by his nobles not to attempt any thing without a favorable occasion, nor to expose himself to certain destruction. He gnashed his teeth, and, with his mouth all bloody, rushed about in every direction, storming with fury

and rage. It is remarked of him, that when he was about to charge his enemies, and also in the heat of battle, besides other uncommon changes in his countenance, his under lip would commonly burst open and discharge a great deal of blood. The same would happen to him in his civil transactions, when he was roused to an unusual degree of anger.

The Turkish general having cut to pieces Musache and his troops, pursued the bands of Tanusee with great slaughter, not appearing to make account of the Christian troops that were encamped upon the mountain. Whatever may have been the cause of this indiscretion, it was the occasion of his failing to obtain a complete victory over his enemy.

When Scanderbeg saw that no danger was to be apprehended from the rearward of the Turkish army, he drew out his squadrons with great skill and judgment, and descended into the plain as fast as the prevailing confusion would permit. He placed his infantry in the midst, and surrounded them with his cavalry. It is remarkable that the besieged made no sally upon the Christians at this time, nor while they were engaged in fight, nor when they departed, especially as they must have seen the great advantage which their friends possessed.

Scanderbeg with great fury followed and attacked those who were in chase of the Christians, crying out to the fugitives to turn and take advantage of the succors which he brought to them. Those of the Turks who were not in chase of the Albanians dispersed themselves over the field to spoil the bodies of the slain, by which means Scanderbeg was much relieved from danger, and enabled to give more effectual aid to his flying troops. When Sebalias found that Scanderbeg was pressing upon his rear and retarding his victory, he ordered his troops to face about and attack the Christians, in doing which some loss was sustained on both sides. After a while the Turk withdrew a little, in order to arrange his battle and gather his scattered men. Scanderbeg



did not interrupt him, for he also took that opportunity to reorganize his troops. But although the Turks were much wearied, and not yet completely in order, their general could not restrain his impatience, but again made a charge upon the Christians, at the same time threatening Scanderbeg that now was the end of his pride and insolence, that he should receive the reward of his rebellion, and that he would utterly destroy that handful of enemies, both men and horses. And, in truth, their numbers were greatly diminished, for besides those who were slain in the flight of Tanusee, more than 3000 were killed with Musache, of whom 2000 were foot, the rest cavalry. Yet Scanderbeg encouraged his men to try the fortune of another battle, crying out to them with a terrible voice to follow him, their companion in arms, to the slaughter of those miscreants; and uttering exhortations, reproofs, and encouragements, he threw himself into the thickest of the enemy's squadrons, filling every place where he fought with blood and terror, and surpassing all his former deeds of valor. His troops also, animated by his example, followed their general through all dangers as men incapable of fear.

George Thopie, the brother of Tanusee, being thrown to the ground, and nearly overwhelmed by the shot of the enemy, his companions had great difficulty in rescuing him and setting him on horseback. The infantry of the Albanians found themselves inferior to the cavalry of the Turks, and to remedy this evil they seized and mounted the horses of those who were slain, both of their enemies and of their own men; and thus, it is said, nearly doubled the strength of their army. This circumstance seems to show how different the relative power of infantry and cavalry in those days was from what it is at present.

Scanderbeg had broken and disordered a strong troop of the enemy's cavalry, and had pressed in even to the body-guard of the general, intending, as he was wont, to attack

him, and begin the victory by his death ; but just then, the two soldiers who had offered their services to the sultan, to slay Scanderbeg, came forward with their swords drawn. Musache de Angeline, in the effort to assist his uncle, received a grievous wound in his right shoulder. The Epirots, at the same time, were so beset by their enemies, that they could afford no relief to their general, so that he alone was obliged to contend against both his adversaries. These two Turks, with hand and voice, kept back their companions, that they might obtain for themselves alone the honor of the death of the Prince of Albania, and the reward offered by the sultan. These men continued a while moving about him, in hope of taking him at a disadvantage. At length, both at once, spurring on their horses, charged him in full career. The noted prowess of Scanderbeg gave comfort to his followers, as they had often known him victorious over more than two enemies at once, although the bold bearing of the Turks caused many to be apprehensive of the issue of the combat. While the forces of Scanderbeg were endeavoring to advance to his relief, he discharged a blow upon the head of Barach, which, cutting him over the eyes, nearly clove his head in twain. The other Turk, after many ineffectual blows on both sides, let his sword fall, and, being very active, pressed his horse close to Scanderbeg, and clasping both his arms about his neck, and quitting his horse, he hung upon the prince's shoulder, thinking to have pulled him to the ground. The infidels, anxious to aid their companion, pressed forward, and surrounded the prince ; but their efforts were vain, for Scanderbeg cut off his adversary's head as he was hanging upon him, and thus freed himself from that danger. This act of their commander greatly encouraged the Christians, who furiously rushed forward in his defence, and beat down and slew great numbers of the enemy, who now began to give way. Although the Christian forces were elated with the hope of victory, yet fatigue

of body and the approach of night obliged both parties to give over the combat. Sebalias was the first to withdraw, and ordering his troops to keep close to their standards, he retired with them to an eminence, before night closed in. Scanderbeg, wearied and grieved, did the same with his forces, taking possession of another mountain, about two miles distant from that occupied by the enemy. About two hours after dark, he quietly decamped, neither he nor his troops having had any refreshment of food or sleep.

The general of the Turks did not enter the town that night, but having abundance of victuals furnished by the inhabitants, he lodged his army partly on the heights, and partly in the suburbs. He placed strong guards on all sides, and the victory was celebrated with great joy and triumph. It was thought by Sebalais that the Christians would attack him the next morning. He therefore had his army in good order by break of day, and led them down into the plain, sending out troops to entice their enemies to combat; for although he had perceived noises in the night which seemed to indicate the departure of Scanderbeg's forces, he supposed they had only removed to some other station, where they might be more commodiously lodged, or where they might lie in ambush to surprise and entrap him. But when it was found that the Christian forces had departed, and that the country round was quite free from any hostile power, the Turks vented their anger and malice upon the dead and wounded of Scanderbeg's army. Some, whose limbs were broken, so that they could not move, were still further mangled, and left to languish and die. It is, however, said that some who had been beaten down by the maces of the Turks, and left for dead, crept out of the field to other places in the night, and, when the danger was over, got without further harm to Croia. The Christians lost in that fight about 5000 men, 3000 of whom were foot, and the rest horsemen. Few or none of the Neapolitan succors escaped, except some

squadrons which Scanderbeg kept with himself on the mountain, as the greater part of them were with Musache, and shared his fate. About eighty of the Albanians were surprised and made prisoners. The brutality exercised by the Turks upon the dead bodies was very great, cutting off their heads, to take with them as trophies of victory, and scattering the limbs and trunks in the places around, to be devoured by wild beasts and birds, so that the smell of putrefaction might not infect the city.

Scanderbeg, not despairing of revenge for his losses, filled up his army with new recruits, and closed up and fortified certain passes through the woods and thickets, lest the Turks, pursuing their advantage, should proceed further into the country. He would gladly have adventured some desperate attack upon them, but was deterred by the great superiority of their numbers, and the wounds of his own soldiers. The news of this defeat soon spread over all Epire, and caused universal sorrow. It was by some reported that the whole army was routed, and the king himself slain. Others said that Scanderbeg alone, after a long and extraordinary fight, had escaped by means of the swiftness of his horse. The report which came nearest to the truth was, that a great number of the Epirots were slain, and that Scanderbeg had shown such incredible proofs of valor and of bodily power, that, by his personal efforts alone, he had broken the forces and the courage of his enemies, and, having snatched from them the honor of the combat, had retired in safety to Croia with the remainder of his army. In consequence of these different rumors, the country was filled with apprehension and tears.

While the good fortune of Scanderbeg continued unchecked, the infidelity of Moses feared to show itself; but after the unfortunate battle of Belgrade, he no longer concealed his treachery; and, to make it less odious in himself, and of more worth to Mahomet, he endeavored to excite

others to take part in his defection. He bethought himself how he should seduce some of his most familiar friends, whom he considered as the fittest instruments to effect his purposes. At first he artfully represented to them, and at the same time deplored, the condition of Scanderbeg and his country, and proceeded to hint the good-will of the Turkish monarch towards himself, and the great offers which had been made to him; so that, by plausible arguments in favor of Mahomet, and slanderous accusations against Scanderbeg, he finally succeeded in drawing them off from their allegiance to their prince, and induced them to join with him in his treachery. He would have attempted to seduce the common people also, had he not been aware that their affection towards the Prince of Epire was so deeply rooted, that all his efforts would prove fruitless, and that any such attempt might be the occasion of his own ruin. He therefore made his preparations, and having appointed a time for the conspirators whom he had obtained to be in readiness, he led them, in the dead of night, to Sfetigrade, in order to obtain from the governor letters and a safe conduct to the Ottoman court. The governor received him courteously, and granted him both letters and an armed force to protect him in his journey.

Sebalias remained at Belgrade a short time, during which he caused temporary repairs to be made to the fortifications, and took measures to have them effectually repaired, when proper materials could be collected. The garrison was increased by 700 effective men, and good store of provisions laid up. The artillery taken from the Christians was placed in the town, with the exception of some small pieces. When their hostages were delivered up to the citizens, who received great commendations for their behavior, the Turkish general began his journey to Adrianople with great joy and exultation, although he also was not without cause of regret, for his loss at the battle of Belgrade amounted to little less than three thousand.

The morning after the departure of Moses from the garrison of Dibria, his absence caused great surprise and disturbance. Some supposed that he had gone secretly to reconnoitre the enemy ; but from seeing the private consultations of the day before between him and his confederates, it was by others suspected, as was the truth, that he had been corrupted by the Turks. The troops of the garrison were in great perplexity and apprehension at being left without a commander-in-chief, while their enemies were still in Epire, and they were sorely grieved that their prince should be deceived and abandoned by one whom he could the least have mistrusted ; but by the majority of voices, they elected a chieftain, and made such other arrangements as the exigency of the time required.

Among the chief and noblest young men of the country were two brothers named Demetrius and Nicholas, of the great and ancient family of the Berisians, noted for the good and faithful service which they had often rendered to the Prince of Epire by their deeds of arms and valorous exploits. These brothers, when they heard of the loss sustained by their army at the unfortunate siege of Belgrade, and of the defection of Moses, hearing it also rumored that Sebalias was still within the limits of Epire, betook themselves with all speed to the garrison on the frontiers, from which Moses had deserted ; and being apprehensive that the soldiers of the garrison might disband themselves and leave the passes into the province without defence, they, with great promptness and decision, levied new forces with which they strengthened the garrison ; and at the same time they encouraged the men to be of good heart, and to remain faithful to their prince, telling them that they could hardly believe Moses had left them with an evil design, but that he would probably soon return. The garrison being thus strengthened, and the men quieted, Demetrius left his

brother there, and, together with some Dibrian gentlemen, proceeded by long journeys to join Scanderbeg.

In the mean time, it was ascertained by scouts sent abroad over the country, that Sebalias had left Belgrade and was beyond the limits of Epire. The troops, when this was known, were very desirous that the bodies of their companions who had been slain should be buried, and not left to be devoured by wild animals. Scanderbeg yielded to their wishes ; and to prevent any further misfortune, he sent such a force as would be secure against any attack from the enemy without, and from the garrison within the walls of the town. Tanusee requested to have the conducting of this force, which was granted to him ; and without colors or standards or any warlike pomp, he speedily departed with 7000 chosen troops towards Belgrade.

When Scanderbeg, with his army, approached Croia, he was met without the town by the mass of inhabitants, whose conduct, as it is described, was such as might be expected from a multitude anxious to learn the fate of their relations and friends, and every particular which they could gather concerning them.

Demetrius and the gentlemen of Dibria who accompanied him overtook Scanderbeg just before he reached Croia. Their language to him was that of condolence, on account of his misfortune, mingled with words of encouragement to induce him not to despond, but to be persuaded that all was ordered by Providence for the best. Yet were they not able always to restrain their tears. At length they informed him of the treachery of Moses, and expressed apprehension that he had gone to Sebalias with the intent to draw him into Epire.

Scanderbeg was at first thunderstruck, and appeared scarcely to credit what was told him. But when he had learned the particulars of what had taken place, this conduct of his friend caused him more distress than his ill suc-

cess at the siege of Belgrade. Yet, with a loud voice, he openly declared, that with all his heart, he pardoned Moses, because the calamity which had induced him to desert was so great as might have caused any other man to waver in his fidelity; nor would he listen to the opinion of those who maintained that Moses had long intended this defection, which was the reason of his not going to the siege of Belgrade, and that he took advantage of the unhappy termination of that expedition to carry his purpose into effect. Scanderbeg received information which relieved him from the apprehension that the Turks would return into the country. But as it was a matter of importance to secure the province and to relieve the apprehensions of the timorous, he remained in Croia only one night, and the next morning by break of day he proceeded towards Dibria, accompanied by Amese and a good troop of horsemen.

Tanusee had by this time arrived at Belgrade. When the inhabitants first perceived him, they supposed he had come to renew the siege, and they hastened to their several appointed stations, to resist the expected attack; but when they saw how comparatively small his numbers were, and that the troops marched in an irregular manner, they were relieved from their alarm. The duty which the Christian troops had to perform was sad and disgusting, from the mangled and decayed state in which they found the remains of their slaughtered companions in arms. Tanusee caused pits to be dug, in which the dead were laid, and the earth thrown upon them, making a number of hillocks or small mounds. Scanderbeg could not have chosen a more fit man to perform this office than Tanusee Thopie. He manifested great tenderness of feeling while engaged in the mournful task which he had undertaken; but when he had finished his duty towards the slain, he resolved to leave with the living some such token of his resentment and vigor as should prevent his enemies from jeering at him for leading an army



only to bury the dead. He accordingly laid waste the country all around, and approached to the very walls of the city; from which, according to some accounts, the garrison sallied and had a sharp encounter with the Christian army, who finally drove them back within the walls; after which, Tanusee, fearing to be attacked by the frontier garrisons of the Turks, retired with many execrations from the place which was rendered hateful to him by being the scene of so much bloodshed among his fellow-soldiers.

While Scanderbeg was in Dibria, he endeavored, by consulting with the principal and old inhabitants of the country, to discover whether Moses had left behind him any of his fellow-traitors, and if any seeds of mischief still remained. Besides the secret inquiries which were set on foot, proclamation was made by sound of trumpet, offering great rewards to those who should discover any such conspirators. But nothing came to light that could justify a suspicion of any such treachery remaining. Whereupon the Dibrians received great commendations, and had liberal rewards distributed among them for their good faith and loyalty. The property of Moses was confiscated, and his pensions and offices were either retained by the prince, or bestowed upon others. The government of Dibria and of the garrison was not immediately filled, but retained by Scanderbeg for a while in his own hands, much to the satisfaction of all men, and particularly of the soldiers. The affairs of Dibria being arranged, and a good garrison established, Scanderbeg returned to Croia, where Tanusee had just arrived with his army, which he delivered to the prince, and retired sorrowful to his own house amid renewed lamentations for the death of Musache, whose widow Mamisa, having assembled many ladies, as was the custom of the country, continued long with tears and lamentations to celebrate his obsequies.

Scanderbeg, having disbanded his own army, resolved also to send back to Alphonsus, together with an embassy, the

Neapolitan troops who survived the battle of Belgrade. And as soon as they were in condition to depart, he courteously thanked them for their services, and embarked them for Italy. After this, Scanderbeg proceeded to that part of the country which appertained to Musache, to visit and condole with his sister, and to consult upon the affairs of the realm. Tanusee was appointed tutor and guardian of the persons and property of Musache's children; and a parent could not have shown more affection, care, and diligence than Tanusee exhibited in the discharge of his trust. The government of the territory, and the accompanying honors, remained with Mamisa, the widow. And with so much moderation, skill, and address did she conduct her affairs, that there never had been known greater union and concord among the people than during her government. It is generally acknowledged that Scanderbeg availed himself much of her counsel and advice, in the management of his own concerns. She would never consent to a second marriage, esteeming the loss of her husband irreparable; who, indeed, is represented as having possessed every quality, both of person and mind, which could render the loss of him such as was not to be repaired.

The account of the good success of Sebalias at Belgrade was rumored at Adrianople before his own arrival there. This good fortune of the Turks against the Epirots had become so unusual, that the sultan was in doubt what to believe; but as Moses reached the Turkish court before Sebalias, his account of all the circumstances which had taken place tended to confirm the truth of what had been reported, and the defection of Moses was hailed with exceeding joy. Sebalias was received with great triumph by all the people; and his successful expedition is said to have caused more general exultation than all the conquests obtained by their sovereign. The captives, with their hands bound behind them, and the ensigns of the Christians, were first presented

to the sultan; next were exhibited the other spoils and war-like implements, together with the heads of the slain. These heads, from which the brain had been taken and the void filled with straw, were sold for their weight in gold, and kicked about the streets by the children like footballs. The Italian prisoners were offered for sale, and many of them sold to the highest bidders. Some who were aged, and all the Epirots, were either impaled, or hanged upon hooks, and left to die in the midst of their torments. The cruelty which was exercised upon the Albanians, and from which scarcely any of them escaped, exceeded that shown to the others, either on account of the malice borne them by the Turks, or because they were considered as not fit for slaves—being, like the Hungarians, of too proud and lofty a nature, and men who never would make good Mussulmen.

When Mahomet heard of the chivalrous conduct of Scanderbeg at the battle of Belgrade, he declared that his own army was vanquished, and that the Epirots were the victors; and that the fame of Scanderbeg would be more increased by this battle than by all his other exploits. And, indeed, almost superhuman qualities were generally attributed to Scanderbeg, as though his body was not liable to be injured by the sword, or by any human violence. Sebalias, however, received large rewards, and was held in great honor, as being esteemed the first who had shown that Scanderbeg was not invincible. Moses was treated with great favor, and gratified with an ample pension. But when he asked of the sultan a body of troops wherewith to attack Scanderbeg, his request was not complied with, upon the plea that winter was too near at hand. Whether this was the true reason or not, Mahomet resolved to rest for a while, and intermit the war with Epire.

Scanderbeg's ambassadors returned from Italy, loaded with presents, as was customary, and accompanied by ambassadors sent by Alphonsus, to offer consolation to Scan-

derbeg for his misfortunes, and to tender him whatever supplies he might stand in need of. Many messages to the like purport came to him from other princes and states in Italy, and from neighboring powers. To all of these he made suitable answers; and desired them not to be apprehensive for the fate of Epire, which possessed strength and vigor enough to resist its enemies and to recover its former prosperous state.

He spent the following winter partly in Croia, and partly in Dibria, and other places of the province. The garrison of Dibria he reduced to its former number of 2000 horse and 1000 foot. Strong guards were appointed, and many spies were dispersed abroad, to watch the motions of the Turks. No incursions were made into the enemy's country during the winter by the garrison, both on account of the season of the year, and because the land had already been overrun and wasted; to which may be added, that Scanderbeg had in his mind schemes of more bitter revenge against his mortal foes. The winter consequently passed away in great tranquillity.

When the spring of 1453 opened, Moses was very urgent with the sultan to renew the war against Epire. During the winter Mahomet had taken great pains to become thoroughly acquainted with the character and abilities of Moses, who, in conversations which they had together, endeavored to lower the reputation of Scanderbeg, and engaged to encounter him in single combat, if permitted to have the command of an army of 15,000 horsemen, to be chosen and ordered by himself.

The sultan was easily persuaded to intrust such a force to the command of Moses, who had full power to direct it as he thought best. The soldiers who were put upon this service felt apprehensive that the force would not be strong enough; nevertheless, they were encouraged by the sanguine confidence of their new general. It was also a consideration

of some weight, that the credit and authority of Moses in his own country, and the connections which he had there, might be of great assistance to him. And he assured the sultan that he held correspondence with some of the principal men, who were ready to join him with a number of able followers, as soon as his troops should set foot within their territory, and to turn their forces against Scanderbeg. When all his preparations were completed, he began his march from Adrianople, about the 23d of February, 1453, and displayed his ensigns within sight and in the bosom of his own country. While Moses was engaged in this attack upon Scanderbeg, Mahomet resumed his movements for the siege of Constantinople, which had been interrupted by the war of Epire, and marched against that renowned capital with an immense force; the history of which famous siege does not properly belong to the biography of Scanderbeg.

The rumors which preceded the approach of Moses caused Scanderbeg to hold his forces in readiness. Although prepared to meet with firmness and resolution any attack which might be made upon him, he could not persuade himself that Moses in reality entertained hostile feelings towards him; but hoped that, under the appearance of an enemy, he intended to subserve his interests and to work mischief to the Turk. He did not prepare any stratagems by which to overreach the army which was coming against him; for he knew that, whatever might be the purpose of its commander, his own forces were sufficient to encounter it openly.

In consequence of this moderation on the part of Scanderbeg, Moses entered without interruption into lower Dabria, and encamped near to the plain of Oronichea in Epire. But he made no attempt to excite the inhabitants to revolt, nor did he plunder or lay waste the country. For, being informed that Scanderbeg was approaching, and as he purposed to engage with him in single combat, he thought best not to spend the time in skirmishes and devastation,

but to come at once to open battle. Scanderbeg made no delay; but, meeting his enemy in the open plain, made ready for battle. The soldiers in his army were greatly excited, and could with difficulty be restrained from rushing to the charge. But the feelings of Scanderbeg were different from those of his men; he would willingly have conferred with Moses, his old friend and companion, and have discovered the real state of his mind; but neither his own dignity, nor the fury of his soldiers, nor the purpose of Moses himself, would permit this. For the Dibriani was desirous of beginning the onset, that he might have an opportunity of engaging in single combat with Scanderbeg, as he had promised the sultan. But his purpose was delayed by a private soldier, named *Ahimaz*, who suddenly proposed to him to permit a single combat to take place before the armies should engage. This proposal of the soldier was approved, and he was permitted to arm for the combat. A trumpet was sent to Scanderbeg, who consented to what *Ahimaz* had suggested. When the Turkish trumpet returned with Scanderbeg's answer, *Zacharie Groppe*, an Epirot horseman, came forward amid the shouts of his companions, and presented himself to his general with the request that he might have the honor of being chosen for the combat. He was approved by Scanderbeg, and commended for his bravery. His fellows, who assisted him to arm, prayed to God that he might be as successful as *Manessey*. He equipped himself with only his ordinary weapons; but wore rich ornaments upon his armor. The Turk, who was not inferior to his opponent, was the first to take the field, imagining that hardly any one could be found bold enough to encounter him. But when he saw the Epirot completely armed advancing towards him with his lance on his thigh, he called out to him to stop, that they might have a parley before they engaged. He asked the name and condition of

the Epirot, and began to propose terms much like those which, on a similar occasion, had been proposed to Paul Manessey, and by him rejected. Zacharie interrupted his speeches as not worthy of regard, and they both wheeled about, to such a distance apart as might afford a full career to the horses; then, putting spurs to their chargers and giving them the reins, they rushed upon each other at full speed with their lances couched. Neither of them missed his blow, but their spears striking their targets they were shivered in pieces without reaching their bodies; they held on their course, however, and met each other with so rude a shock that both men and horses were overthrown and fell to the ground. The two combatants quickly sprang to their feet unhurt, and began a fierce conflict with their swords. This lasted a long time without injury to either party, until their swords, which were crooked and heavy, more fit for horsemen than for foot-soldiers, fell from their hands; whereupon, throwing away their targets also, they closed upon one another, and each endeavored by wrestling to overthrow his adversary. The two armies stood and looked on in a state of suspense. After a long struggle they fell together, the Turk on his back underneath the Epirot, who, quickly clenching his dagger, stabbed his adversary in the throat. *Ahimaz* gradually became faint, and his hands relaxing their hold, Zacharie freed himself from him, amidst the loud acclamations of the Albanians, and springing to his feet seized his sword, which lay near, and cut off the head of the Turk, before the breath was yet quite out of his body. With this trophy and the spoils of the slain, the Epirot returned towards his companions, who came to meet him. The horses of the combatants, at the beginning of the fight, both fled to the army of the Christians, which was considered by them as a happy omen. Zacharie received from Scanderbeg rewards equal to those which had been bestowed upon Manessey; but the

praises which he received from the whole army were far greater than those which had been given to Manessey, because the difficulty and variety of the combat appeared to enhance its merit.

This success of their champion greatly encouraged the Epirots, and equally disheartened Moses; yet, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his troops, he put spurs to his horse, and making towards Scanderbeg, he challenged him to single combat. The troops of Scanderbeg were astounded at the suddenness and strangeness of this conduct on the part of Moses. As to Scanderbeg himself, his former feelings were not yet quite obliterated; and he hesitated to imbrue his hands in the blood of his old friend. But the other continuing to defy him, and upbraiding him in a most insolent and provoking manner, all his other feelings were converted into wrath and fury; and disregarding the persuasions of his nobles, who would have taken upon themselves to avenge the insults offered to him, he made directly towards the Dibrian. But as soon as Moses saw him approach, he suddenly wheeled about and galloped back to his own army, and ordered his troops to advance to battle. Scanderbeg also, on his part, returned to his forces, who were well pleased that their prince had not engaged in the expected combat; and still greater was the satisfaction of the Turks, who well knew the great disparity between the two warriors.\*

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\* "He that should compare the braverie of the challenge made by the defiant with the shamefulness of his flight, would thinke that either *Moses* being ashamed of his promise made to the *sultan*, was willing to be acquitted of it as of an ill debt, and that being terrified with the present danger, it made him to turne his backe: or else that he did it of a foolish and rash presumption, thinking that *Scanderbeg* would not have stirred out of his place to meete him, and himselfe confessed no lesse afterwarde at such time as he returned into *Albany*. But for my part I am rather of this minde, that God, even that great God which hath established the kings of the earth in their thrones, hath imprinted in their countenances certaine characters of his divinitie, which maketh them venerable and terrible above other men. And so *Moses*, who had never seen his king in choller and



The army of Scanderbeg, which consisted of six thousand horse and four thousand foot, was so numerous, and his men were so encouraged by what they considered happy omens, that he felt confident of victory. Still he omitted nothing which his consummate skill could suggest to render his victory certain. And having addressed his men in a manner which excited loud shouts of approbation, they advanced against the enemy.

The Grecian army was divided into two wings, one of which was commanded by *Musache de Angeline*, and the other by *Giurize de Vladienne*. Scanderbeg took his wonted station in the centre, supported by a squadron of pikes and halberds and a number of Italian horsemen. In the front of his wings he distributed his archers, crossbow-men, and such as fought with missile weapons. The rearward was similarly disposed.

The front line of the Turkish army consisted of about four thousand horse. The second line was composed of the same number, intermingled with some of the best troops, so ordered that they might sustain the front line, and check them if they gave way. The rearward was commanded by Moses in person; who was principally attended and guarded by Epirots, with whose language being most familiar, he could most easily consult with them, and give them directions. To many of this nation he had also intrusted divers commands in the battle, without any opposition on the part of the Turks, because the whole ordering of the expedition had been intrusted to him by the sultan.

When the two armies met, the Christians bore upon the vanguard of their enemies with such force and fury that they obliged them to give way. Many of those in the

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displeasure with him, could not then bear nor endure the mailestie of his angrie visage: so that herein he verified the olde and common proverbe: namely, when the eye seeth that it never saw, the heart thinketh that which it never thought."—*Translation of Levardin.*

second line also deserted their ranks in spite of the cries of their companions, who endeavored to recall them. This was especially owing to Scanderbeg's arquebusiers, who advancing very boldly did such execution as to cause great terror. Moses, during the conflict, was not inactive, but, without regard to danger, presented himself wherever he thought he could be of service, and omitted no exertion to restore the battle; in which he was partly successful, for the second line was preserved from entire defeat by the troops which were placed in the rear to support it. But the continual charges made by Scanderbeg at length forced a way even to the rear line. When Moses perceived this, he led on a strong corps of his bravest men to meet the Albanians, and by his presence rendered the conflict more bloody, but his defeat not the less certain; for the squadrons of Scanderbeg followed close upon him, and the two wings hemmed in the Turks, whose general, however, with great courage endured the assaults of the Christians, and refused to yield notwithstanding the great slaughter which was made of his troops. When he saw Scanderbeg coming against him he shunned a single encounter, but urged forward the strength of his battle in hopes to overwhelm him. The Christians pressed upon the Turks in front and in flank, overthrew their vanguard, broke their main battle, got possession of many of their colors and ensigns, and slew many officers, whose heads they put upon spears and spikes to the terror of their companions. Yet the Turkish commander, although both his flanks were exposed, and the battle appeared to be irretrievable, still continued to defend himself, and manifested no disposition to retreat. He rallied his scattered troops, reproaching them with their cowardice, and continued the fight with such obstinacy as to excite the wonder of Scanderbeg, who declared that he did not believe that Moses could fight with such fury for his country or for his children. But the prince, accompanied

by Amese, Tanusee, and the two Streeses, his nephews, again made towards him with great violence; and some of the Epirots called upon him by name to stay and obtain the crown of Epire, which was ready for him. The Dibrian heeded not these taunts, but with his rear-guard bravely withstood and checked the impetuosity of the charges made upon him. At this juncture one of the Turks, of singular address and boldness, as Scanderbeg was approaching, put spurs to his horse, and with his lance bearing full upon him, encountered him so rudely that he threw him backward upon the crupper of his horse, and the Turks, supposing him to be dead, raised a loud shout of exultation. This accident tended to renew the spirits of the Turks, who still maintained the fight. But "our peerless chieftain" having recovered his seat and his stirrups, and a feeling of disgrace making the blood to mount into his face, he would suffer none but himself to avenge the insult. In a furious rage he rushed upon his enemy, and followed him so hard with many wounds, that he at length left him dead at his feet. Scanderbeg pressed on, calling aloud to Moses, and directing all his wrath against him; but he being forsaken both by the light of day and by his troops, was obliged to flee with the rest of his army. The Epirots continued the pursuit of their enemies for a mile or more, in the hope of taking Moses alive or dead, of which Scanderbeg was very desirous. But, although many who were hindmost fell by the sword, Moses escaped, and being well acquainted with the country, he arrived at a place of safety, worn out with fatigue and hunger, accompanied by the remnant of his army, which did not at the utmost exceed 4000 men. And here he remained until daylight. The loss of the Epirots is represented to have been not as many as 100 missing, and about 80 wounded. Among the prisoners of the Turks was only one of special note, who, being grievously wounded, had yielded himself to Zacharie Groppe, and was after-

wards ransomed at a great price. This was the only prisoner kept alive. The others, whether by the command of Scanderbeg or not is uncertain, were put to death with tortures, to satisfy the revenge of the soldiers for the cruelty practised by the Turks at Belgrade.

The army of Scanderbeg retired with their own baggage and the spoils of the enemy to the stationary garrison. But they made no long abode there; for Scanderbeg, on the 4th of April, commenced his progress towards Croia. The triumph for this victory was particularly celebrated by the Dibrians with more than common exultation, because they thought the stigma brought upon their country by the defection of Moses now wiped away. Scanderbeg also sent an embassy with presents to his friend Alphonsus, king of Naples, in token that his affairs were in a more flourishing condition than they had for some time been. This embassy was honorably received, and after a while dismissed with valuable presents in return; although by a late war with the Florentines, and an unsuccessful attempt upon Plombyn, the treasures of Alphonsus were much exhausted.

Moses and his companions, in the mean time, for several days wandered up and down upon the marches of Albania, uncertain what course to take or what counsel to decide upon. He felt ashamed to present himself before the sultan, and his forces were so much weakened, that to renew his attempt to overcome the Prince of Epire would be altogether vain. Still he endeavored to persuade his men that his knowledge of the country was so perfect that he could lead them without being discovered to the Christian garrison upon the frontiers, which they might easily overcome. But his efforts to persuade the soldiers were all ineffectual, and they forthwith began their march towards Greece. Their general, with a heavy heart, was obliged to go with the multitude.

Between the departure of Moses and his return to the

sultan nearly two months elapsed. During this time Mahomet remained in a state of uncertainty and of great anxiety respecting the fate of his army and of its commander. But when those who had escaped returned discomfited and in evil plight, the wrath of the sultan was extreme, and Moses was generally blamed as the cause of what had come to pass. He himself was overwhelmed with shame and confusion, and dreaded to appear openly among men. His soldiers, however, with whom he had much ingratiated himself, testified to the bravery and conduct which he had exhibited in the battle of Orinochæa; and as to his declining his own challenge to Scanderbeg, that was attributed to the invincible valor and virtue of the Albanian prince.

Mahomet would have inflicted signal punishment upon the unfortunate general, had not some of the tyrant's intimate friends interceded for him. But although all proceedings against him were stopped, he lived in such contempt and neglect that scarcely any care was taken for his maintenance. He dissembled as well as he could the pain and anxiety caused by his situation; but when he had come to a sense of the unworthiness of his conduct, after much consideration, he finally resolved to throw himself upon the mercy of his prince, being especially induced thereto by the known clemency of his disposition. Having resolved upon this course, he constantly turned his thoughts to the means by which he might escape from the Ottoman court and carry his purpose into effect. The night-time being most suitable for his design, he one evening departed so as not to be perceived by the watch, and continued his journey that whole night and the day following without intermission until he reached the borders of Macedonia, when he proceeded more deliberately. When he had thus within a few days arrived on the borders of Epire, he went directly to the garrison of which he had formerly held the command, intending to go thence and prostrate himself at the feet of Scan-

derbeg. The former feelings of the Dibrians seemed to revive and their hearts to melt at his presence, and he was received by them with marks of great kindness. Being informed that the king was not far distant, he went immediately to present himself, and was accompanied by a number of the garrison. The evening was not far distant when he, putting his girdle about his neck, proceeded to the place where he found Scanderbeg walking before his tents. Falling on his knees before the prince, while tears trickled down his cheeks, he besought his pardon, protesting that if his life were spared, it should ever after be devoted to the service of his country. Those who accompanied him joined their entreaties to his. Scanderbeg took him kindly by the hand, and raised him up, freely granted his pardon, and received him to his favor. After many embraces, he conversed with him in so frank and friendly a manner as to show that he was truly reconciled to him, and that his heart retained no feeling of revenge. The generosity of Scanderbeg was not content with merely pardoning the offence of Moses, but he also restored to him his property, which had been confiscated, and reinstated him in his former offices. All this was very pleasing to Scanderbeg's subjects, who testified their joy for the return of the penitent offender by bonfires, and other tokens of rejoicing. And it is stated that a decree was made that no one should ever mention the rebellion of Moses.

While the people of Epire were rejoicing at the return of Moses, the sultan was beyond measure exasperated at his departure. He heaped opprobrious epithets upon him, and declared that all, from the beginning, had been a stratagem contrived by Scanderbeg. Although bent upon revenge, Mahomet was persuaded to defer his attempts upon Epire for the present year, as troubles were threatened in Asia, and it would be desirable to be free from all other wars before his attention should be turned towards the contest with

Scanderbeg. A small force was, however, dispatched towards the borders ; of which Scanderbeg receiving notice, he assembled a running camp, and kept on the watch for several days ; but as the Turks proceeded no further than Alchria, the expedition produced no effect of consequence. Scanderbeg having, from different sources, learned the intentions of the Ottoman court, after settling some affairs of consequence, and having left Moses on the borders, he retired with the queen to a country on the sea-coast called Redona, and there passed the remainder of the summer, and most of the autumn, in hunting, and other rural sports.

Moses was continually making inroads with his garrison upon the territory of the Turks, both by day and night, and whatever spies, foragers, or others, fell into his hands, he put to the sword. But as the Mahometans ventured upon no undertaking of any importance, nothing worthy of note occurred.

While Moses was endeavoring to do away the remembrance of his ill conduct, a spirit of evil took possession of Amese, the nephew of Scanderbeg, and induced him to revolt from his uncle. The object of his defection is not certainly known, but it is supposed that, being of the blood royal, he was prompted, by the suggestions of Turkish emissaries, to aspire to the crown of Epire. He took with him, when he went over to the Ottoman court, his wife and children, as pledges of his fidelity, and delivered them into the hands of the Turk. His departure caused great astonishment and tumult throughout the province, and was bitterly complained of by Scanderbeg.

The winter season having arrived, Scanderbeg retired with his train to Croia, and there passed the winter. He did not, during that season, levy any forces, or make warlike preparations, but he frequently visited the garrison in Dibria, and, by spies, and other means of information, kept himself in readiness to meet the troubles which were soon to arise.

The Turkish monarch was not so much struck by the appearance of Amese, as he was by his power of speech. His stature was so small and unsightly as to afford no indication of the rare qualities of his mind, for he was of a quick and subtle spirit, never at ease when idle—courteous and liberal. Whatever he obtained for himself, he distributed among his soldiers and friends. He was ready to serve others, and very friendly and accessible, but withal possessing great power of dissimulation. By these qualities, he so gained the good-will of all men, that, next to Scanderbeg, he stood higher in general estimation than any other person. It is even asserted that some of the most intimate friends of Scanderbeg advised him to be on his guard against a spirit so keen and aspiring; but the generous-spirited prince would hearken to no such insinuations. Yet, when the revolt of Amese took place, his uncle, in consequence of the hints which he had received, more readily credited it than he had done that of Moses, and, when too late, reflected upon the natural disposition of the man, which had been more accurately observed by others than by himself.

The address which Amese is reported to have made to Mahomet, when admitted to his presence, was made up of complaints against his uncle, the Prince of Epire, and of professions of fidelity to Mahomet, and of abject submission to his will.

Amese was well received by the sultan, and a large and honorable pension assigned to him.

Not long previous to this time, Mahomet had suffered a great defeat by Huniades, before Belgrade, in Hungary, formerly called Alba Græca, or Taururum, having lost 40,000 men, and all his artillery, baggage, and munitions; he himself also having been grievously wounded and put to flight. Although sorely grieved and tormented by a desire of revenge for this disgrace, the sultan, by the advice of his council, resolved to intermit the Hungarian war, and to bend



all his efforts against Albania, so as to put an end, if possible, to his troubles in that quarter. A commission was consequently granted to levy 50,000 horsemen, and Amese was appointed to attend the expedition, and to take part in its guidance and direction.

The heats of summer (1456) began to prevail before Mahomet's preparations were completed. When all things were in readiness, the army commenced its march under the conduct of Isaac, the bashaw of Romania. Amese had command of 5000 horse, and it is by some said that he was created a Sanziack.

Scanderbeg did not at first credit the rumors of these great preparations of the Turks, for he could not believe that Mahomet would direct his wrath against Epire, and submit to the disgrace of the overthrow which he had lately received in Hungary. He, however, neglected no means of obtaining information respecting the movements and intentions of the Turk; and when he received certain advice of the magnitude of the force that was coming against him, and that his nephew was there in person, whom the bashaw was expressly directed by the sultan to crown and invest as King of Albania, he no longer delayed to assemble his forces. He called a council of his confederate princes, and of the chief men of the country, as well as of certain Dibrians, to deliberate upon the course to be pursued in the existing posture of affairs. The place of meeting was in Lower Dibria, where the camp was usually situated. Moses, with some of his garrison, also attended the meeting. The number of volunteers from different countries which flocked to the standard of Scanderbeg was so great, that he soon assembled a sufficient army of able and high-spirited men. So confident and eager were they, that he thought it advisable, in some measure, to repress their ardor. He therefore made an address to them, of which the chief purport is represented to have been the danger of risking all in an open battle against the

powerful force which was coming upon them, and the propriety of being cautious and wary in their mode of carrying on the war. He represented to them the evils which always attend a battle, whether it be lost or won; and that therefore the enemy should be overcome by stratagems, and not by open force, which, however, would require great judgment and discretion, as Amese was among their enemies, and was well acquainted with that mode of warfare. He also gave it as his opinion that the country people should retire into the fortresses and strongholds.

The address of Scanderbeg was listened to with great silence and attention, and when he ended Tanusee and Urancontes arose in their places and declared that their prince had so admirably discoursed upon every point, there was no need of any further deliberation. Hereupon the ardor of the common soldiers was cooled, but some of them could not forbear to request their prince to inform them more particularly by what means he purposed to repel the enemy. Scanderbeg, smiling, answered that they ought to be content to put their trust in him, for that he would share the same fortune with them, and that it would be useless to give them any assurances in a case which Fortune might take into her own hands and turn in her own way.

After this, Scanderbeg immediately named the several charges throughout the country, and the officers were sent to the different places, and their duties assigned to them. The harvest was not yet quite ended, so that the corn was gathered into the towns and castles partly in the sheaf; for the rumor of the approach of the Turks grew every day louder, and so great was the haste that the soldiers were employed to aid the husbandmen. But at length a sufficient provision was made to last many months. Scanderbeg having left Moses in command of part of the army, went to Croia, where he remained about three days engaged in the ordering of important matters, and especially in having the

queen and her household removed to Petra-Alba. He then returned to Dibria, and set himself to attend diligently to his business, and with a watchful eye to prepare himself for the reception of his nephew, whom he resolved to treat as a mortal enemy.

The Turkish army had now passed nearly through Macedonia and were entering upon the borders of Albania. They sent forward their scouts to explore the country, lest they should fall into any of Scanderbeg's wonted snares. And it is said, that for this reason Amese would never suffer them to march during the night, insisting that his uncle would not have the rashness to meet so powerful a force in the open field during the day, but would take advantage of the night in order to practice his accustomed stratagems. Although Scanderbeg was ready to march at any moment, he would not retreat until the enemy was very near to him; when, trussing up his baggage, he retired in such manner that they who followed could perceive which way he went. The Turks would not pursue him, because of the roughness of the way and through fear of ambuscades. Only some horsemen were dispatched after him with orders to harass his army as much as possible, and to discover the course which he was taking and whither he was going. The main army of the Turks entered the upper Dibria by the way of Alchria, and marched on leisurely, scouring the country on all sides as they advanced. When they found that no enemy was near they gladly spread themselves over the country in the hope of plunder; but their joy was turned to disappointment when they found that every thing which could invite their rapacity had been placed in security. They held on their course until about an hour before noon, when they pitched their tents near to Oronichea, in Dibria, where the Christian forces had been used to encamp; and there they waited for the return of their scouts, and rested themselves during the extreme heat of the day. They remained in this place at least two

hours, keeping strict guard, until the men who had been sent forward returned and reported that Scanderbeg and his forces drew towards the sea-coast, in the direction of the city of Lyssa; and, on being questioned as to their number, they said that they were scarcely sufficient to make up a legion.\* The truth, however, was, that the Albanian army amounted to more than 11,000 fighting men, of which 6000 were horsemen and the rest foot soldiers. The mistake probably arose from this circumstance, that the foot had been sent forward from Dibria ahead of the cavalry, in order to be secure from a sudden attack, so that they were screened from the view of the Turkish horsemen.

The author, of whose work this biography is in a great measure an abridgment, is of opinion that the intention of Scanderbeg in suffering the enemy to approach so near to him before he retreated, was to induce the belief that his first purpose was to meet them in open field, but that upon discovering their great superiority of force he was intimidated and hastily retreated; and that his reason for going towards Lyssa rather than among the forests and valleys, was to prevent the suspicion of his meditating any stratagem, and to make it supposed that he was retiring through real apprehension of his danger, and that he thus designed to render the Turks less careful and more likely to afford him some opportunity of taking them at a disadvantage. The event seems to justify these conjectures.

The bashaw, not being free from apprehension with regard to the stratagems of Scanderbeg, asked Amese what he thought to be the cause of his so unusual conduct. The answer of Amese was, that his uncle expected the troops under Moses, and had consequently only assembled a flying camp as was his custom, and fed himself with the hope of victory, but that upon discovering how idle his imaginations were, that

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\* 6000.

he could have no chance of success against such mighty odds, nor remain in safety within his own dominions, he had fled towards Lissa in order to obtain succors from his neighbors the Venetians. This opinion of Amese was by the bashaw thought very probable, but subsequent events proved it to be very ill founded.

The bashaw, after dinner, assembled his officers to take counsel with respect to the course which appeared most advisable to be pursued. In this council it was deliberated whether the camp should be moved that day, or whether it were best to remain quiet until some certain intelligence should be received concerning the movements of Scanderbeg. It was the opinion of Amese and of some others that they should remain stationary that day, and not move until the next morning. But the majority were for pressing on immediately; and the trumpet sounding to horse, the men with joyful cries trussed up their baggage, and with ensigns displayed began again to march forward. Amese himself, being of a cheerful and accommodating disposition, was not much averse to this movement. He thought there could be but little danger, for a day or two, of any attempt on the part of Scanderbeg; yet, as he was very guarded and wary in his military proceedings, he advised the bashaw to be extremely circumspect, and to maintain strict discipline; which advice of Amese was carefully followed. The battalions and squadrons were well ordered and divided; and the men were forbidden, on pain of death, to quit without leave the places assigned to them. The bashaw, having offered up his prayers to God for victory, sent for Amese who was engaged in arranging his regiment, and after bestowing upon him many great commendations, caused him to be proclaimed by the soldiers *King of Epire*. Useless invectives were also uttered against Scanderbeg and his noble deeds. Amese did not reject the honor conferred upon him, but manifested great activity and diligence in the ordering of his affairs, and

sought to win the favor of the multitude both by his words and his actions.

The Turkish army now resumed their march, sending forward their van-couriers to scour the country; part of their baggage being in front and a portion of it in the rear. The part of Epire to which, by the advice of Amese, they directed their march, lay to the eastward of Croia, at the distance of about eighty miles. They chose this district because, being the least furnished with forces, it was likely to afford the best opportunity for plunder. There was also some hope of surprising the town. The heat, however, was so intense that they did not advance far that day; nor did they find any spoil to reward their search, for the whole country was stripped of every thing valuable which could be borne away; and they abstained from destroying the trees, and committing such ravages as are prompted by fury and revenge; for they hoped to meet Scanderbeg and to reduce the province to subjection.

At the approach of evening, the bashaw ordered his troops to halt, not daring to advance during the night. He, with part of his army, encamped on a mountain, having first caused Amese with some horsemen to reconnoitre the place. The remainder of the army took up their quarters along the valley and in other places as securely as they could. And care was taken to set strong guards both in the plain and on the surrounding mountains, especially on the side towards Lissa. It was purposed here to pass the night, and, on the next day, to proceed to Emathia.\*

It has been related that some peasants, issuing unadvisedly from the neighboring forests, were surprised by the Turks and put to torture, and that they were thus forced to betray some of the secret recesses in the mountains of Epire known to Scanderbeg; for in those mountains are thickets

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\* Or Pharsalia.

of wood so inaccessible that the country people consider themselves more secure from enemies in them, than in the strongest fortresses. It is also said, on the other hand, that a number of Turkish deserters came over to Scanderbeg, and that some scouts or spies fell into the hands of the Christian guards, who put them to death, with the exception of one who was brought to Scanderbeg, and gave him much information concerning the purposes of the Turks.

The direction taken by Scanderbeg towards the town of Lissa was with a very different view from that imagined by his enemies. When he had gotten out of their sight, he directed his course to those parts on the borders of Albania, in which were many passes into the country well adapted to ambuscades. He remained there one day, until sunset; when, leaving his forces, he went with a few horsemen to the high grounds, whence he could descry all the plain country about Emathia. He disposed, upon the tops of the mountains, watchmen with penons or streamers in their hands, which they were ordered to hold aloft that they might be seen, and to throw them down the mountain on that side where they should perceive the enemy to be encamped. These were the only signals which, on this occasion, were made use of. The men who were placed upon this service were from among the best soldiers in the army; one of whom was Peic Manuell, a gentleman of sound wisdom and approved valor; for upon the care and fidelity of these sentinels the success of Scanderbeg's designs greatly depended. Having made these dispositions, he returned to his camp in the dead of the night, the greater part of which he passed in silence and repose. He then very secretly and without noise, removed with all his forces into a valley, very near to the one last mentioned, where he placed himself in ambuscade, waiting to be guided in his further operations by the signals which should be given from the mountains.

At early dawn, the bashaw drew forth his troops from the

camp, with the intention of reaching before the heat of the day, the plains of Emathia, where, he was informèd, some booty might be found for his soldiers. Marching on therefore, greedy of prey, while the grass and herbs were still wet with the dew, they trod those fields which had long before been rendered famous by the blood and slaughter of the Romans. As another bloody battle was soon to be fought on these far-famed plains of Pharsalia, there are those who relate prodigies or omens which preceded it, such as the stumbling to the ground of the Turkish standard-bearer ; the flight of innumerable birds of prey ; and the raining of blood. Upon which pretended prognostics Lavardin thinks it worth while to offer a philosophical discussion.

The entrance of the Turks upon the plain country of Pharsalia, was soon announced to the inhabitants by the artillery of the neighboring fortresses ; by which those who had driven out their cattle to pasture, were warned to drive them back again with all speed. At the same time, the signals upon the mountains gave notice to Scanderbeg of the route taken by the hostile army. Whereupon, calling in his scouts, and arranging his bands, he marched secretly under cover of the valleys and the mountain passes, still following the Turks without being perceived by them. When he thought himself near enough to them, he again placed himself in ambush, where he waited for the coming of night, near to a hill called by the inhabitants *Tumenistiola* ; having first placed sentinels, and carefully ordered every thing. The Mahometans, on their part, continued, during the whole of their march that day, to lay waste and spoil the plain country ; growing more and more confident and secure, the longer they proceeded without any enemy in sight. This was perfectly known to Scanderbeg, and was the effect he intended to produce by his movements ; he did not, however, think it yet time to show himself, but secretly led his troops that night towards the enemy, with much difficulty, through



the deep and extensive forests, without giving any alarm to their camp. The Turks, being thus left undisturbed, passed the night in mirth and amusement. Amese also was much pleased to be attended with pomp through the camp, as though he were already settled firmly on the throne of Albania. Although not entirely free from apprehension, yet the three days which the Turks had passed without molestation or the appearance of an enemy, produced so much remissness that they even neglected to place guards and sentinels anywhere but towards Lissa, which was the only quarter whence they apprehended any danger.

At break of day, they displayed their ensigns, and continued their ravages ; laying waste that part of the country which had not been spoiled, and committing all kinds of outrage and cruelty. The main body of the army, with the baggage, encamped on a plain between the river *Mathia* and the waters named by the inhabitants *Albulæ*, placing guards and sentinels only on the side towards Lissa. At the foot of the mountain Tumenista, towards the west, a guard of horsemen was placed, in order to secure that pass. Their camp was extremely well fortified. The bashaw himself and many of his principal officers remained within it, while Amese, as being better acquainted with that kind of warfare, had the command of those forces which went out to forage and to plunder ; and far and wide did he extend his excursions ; even to the Suffades, as they were called, and to the sea-coasts. The husbandmen had not secured all their property, because they did not suppose that Scanderbeg would so long permit the enemy to spread themselves at random. He might probably have performed some notable exploit, had he suddenly attacked their camp while they were so dispersed ; but he was not yet near enough, and thought there was danger of being inclosed between the forces in the camp and those which were abroad. At length, hunger and the heat of the day recalled the Turkish

soldiers to the camp ; when the booty was divided, which, after after all, amounted to very little.

By this time Scanderbeg had concentrated his forces, and placed them upon the tops of the mountains, where, with their weapons in their hands, they prepared to call the Turks to account.

Scanderbeg, in preparing for the approaching conflict, is related to have exhibited wonderful diligence and activity. In order to impress the enemy with dread, he had provided an unusual number of trumpets, drums, and other instruments, which he distributed among the squadrons. He then arranged his forces, both horse and foot, according to the nature of the ground and the number of his men ; reserving the greater number for his own immediate command, amounting to 4000 horse and as many foot. With this force he immediately seized upon *Tumenista*.

The Turkish troops, who had returned weary from their predatory expedition of the morning, quitted, for the most part, their ensigns, and stretched themselves on the ground to rest, all over the extensive plain, suffering their horses, without saddles or bridles, to go loose and feed. Some of the men lay in the shade and amused themselves ; others, having fed to the full, slept upon the grass without fear or suspicion. The heat of the season, which was the month of July, and of the time of day, which was near noon, produced a general lassitude in the army, and as general a negligence and want of discipline.

The bashaw and his principal officers, together with Amese, were in consultation as to what plan they should adopt, and whither they should direct their course at the next remove. Two different opinions were entertained. One was, that they should spread desolation over the whole province by fire and sword, and leave the ruin of the country as a token of their victory ; the other, which originated with Amese, was to march direct to Croia and try the minds of

the inhabitants, whether they would be willing to come under the government of the nephew of Scanderbeg, and to threaten them, if they refused, with the total ruin of their country, and with sieges so unremitting as should at length compel them to surrender and yield themselves to an ignominious bondage. The latter opinion prevailed; but they delayed to move their camp until the heat of the day was abated, and the men had somewhat recovered from their fatigue.

But Scanderbeg no longer put off the execution of his purpose. Having carefully surveyed the enemy from the top of *Tumenista*, he arranged and encouraged his soldiers, telling them what order they should observe, how to terrify their adversaries, and on what quarter to assault them. But seeing the guard placed by the Turks at the foot of the mountain, some asleep, and the others very negligent of their duty, he himself, with only eight others, descended very silently and put them all to death, one only excepted, who escaped by the swiftness of his horse. The rest of the army then began to descend into the plain, unperceived by the Turks. The guard who had escaped ran with all haste, and with a loud cry gave the alarm to his fellows, telling them that Scanderbeg was there; that the guard were all cut to pieces, that the army of the Christians was coming, and was close upon them. The Turks would hardly have believed him, had not the terror which he showed added credit to his words; for they felt no apprehension of an attack on that quarter, nor did they suppose that the enemy could so soon be at hand. But Amese was not so incredulous. He thought the alarm very likely to be well founded; and hasting immediately to his troops, many of whom were asleep, he ordered them to mount with all expedition, and did every thing he could to encourage them. Scanderbeg, perceiving that his approach was no longer concealed, ordered his infantry to follow him with as great speed as possible; and while the

enemy were preparing to receive him, he charged them most furiously, his soldiers at the same time uttering loud shouts and cries, which were augmented by the noise of the drums, trumpets, and tamborins, which he had disposed so as to excite the idea of a large force, and also to give notice to the other bands which lay concealed in the mountains. Amese, with his own regiment of horse and others who had been appointed to guard the camp, was the first to oppose the Christians, and with great bravery sustained the first charge. Many also joined him on foot, not having had time to saddle and make ready their horses. A great tumult was excited in the camp, and the men were filled with dread at the name of Scanderbeg. The bashaw would not move from the camp before his squadrons were put in order, and flanked with chosen horsemen, well armed and appointed. While this was doing, the neighboring mountains and valleys echoed with the mingled sounds of voices, trumpets, drums, and clarions, heightened by the discharges of numerous arquebuses, which struck great terror into the Turks, and, together with the other noises, made them much to overrate the number of their enemies. On all sides they were ready to fly, ere Moses with his troops could descend from the mountains and reach the plain; but they feared to be intercepted in their flight, and their horses, terrified by the surrounding noises, broke from them while they were getting them ready. Amese, however, saw through the stratagems of his uncle, and cried out, to his men not to heed the clamor of voices and sounds of instruments, which were only contrivances of Scanderbeg to hide his weakness, but firmly and quietly to await the onset of their enemy. By such words he persuaded many to stand to their duty, yet without firm and resolute minds, so much were they confounded by the sudden alarm which had come upon them.

The bashaw, not less firm than Amese, led on his troops to the combat with great resolution. As he was advancing

to the aid of Amese, he was checked in his progress by Moses, who had now descended to the plain, and made a stand until Tanusee and Peic Manuell, who commanded a squadron of archers and arquebusiers, could come up with him. As soon as they joined him, the cavalry on both sides rushed furiously upon each other. The infantry also fought bravely; and the arquebusiers played upon the Turkish troops where they saw them thickest, so that their shot all told; and at length the bashaw was obliged to withdraw his forces in disorder within the camp. Whereupon the arquebusiers and bowmen took to their swords and followed hard upon the Turks, doing great execution both upon those who fled and those who offered resistance. The greatest slaughter was where Scanderbeg fought, because the forces under his immediate command were the most numerous, and because the enemy on that side were most suddenly surprised, and unprepared. Amese, by his words and deeds, endeavored to keep up the spirits of his men; telling them that the Christian forces were so few that their only hope was in the fury of the first onset; and that when that was abated they would become an easy prey to their more numerous adversaries. He thus endeavored to prolong the conflict, in hope that the bands which were dispersed over the fields would rally and restore the battle. But in this hope he was disappointed; for many of the scattered Turks were intercepted, and the rest so panic-struck that they betook themselves to flight; so that the number of those who maintained a regular fight was not great, and, for the most part, they were put to the sword by the Albanians. And now Moses, anxious to retrieve his honor, took advantage of the disorder of the enemy and pressed hard upon the bashaw, giving him no respite, and at every blow of his sword fiercely calling aloud to his men to charge and destroy the miscreants who opposed them.

A few squadrons of the Turks, both horse and foot, more

mindful of their duty and honor than the others, formed a body which continued unbroken until attacked by a number of arquebusiers led by Moses. Scanderbeg had sent some horsemen to pursue Amese, charging them not to kill him : he was by them taken alive. Scanderbeg, as long as there was a possibility that the enemy might rally, pursued after the bashaw ; but he escaped by the fleetness of his horse. The companions of his flight were not so fortunate, for many of them were made prisoners ; and among the rest, a Sanziack named *Messeit*. The Christians did not think of spoil as long as they could pursue the enemy. Great numbers of those who had thrown down their arms and yielded themselves prisoners were bound and fettered.

This battle or rout of *Pharsalia* continued until night. Neither weariness nor darkness prevented the Christians from reaping the spoils of their victory. The bodies of those who had fallen were stripped, and many not yet dead were put to the sword. Twenty standards or ensigns were taken, and the prisoners amounted to about 5000. The horses and other articles of all sorts were given to the soldiers as a reward for their exertions, and amounted to an immense value. The reports of the number slain vary from 20,000 to 30,000. It is agreed by all that not sixty of the Christians were missing. This vast difference between the losses of the two armies is not considered at all incredible by Lavardin, who asserts that many battles are recorded in which the disparity is equally great. Many tents and pavilions were found prepared and furnished, which were occupied during the night by the victors.

Amese was brought prisoner to his uncle, with his hands bound behind him, silent and downcast, exposed to the gaze of the soldiers, who commiserated his misfortunes, and some of them lamented his unhappy lot.

The next morning, lest the air should be infected by the heaps of dead bodies, Scanderbeg caused them to be buried,

together with their horses, in pits dug for the purpose. Great numbers were found dead upon the shores and banks of the nearest river, and of the waters of *Albulæ*. Thus the plains of Emathia, or Pharsalia, were again distinguished by a battle as remarkable as any which had there before been fought. The greatest part of the day was consumed in burying the dead; and thus the multitudes of birds of prey, as Lavardin observes, assembled to little purpose.

When this work of interring the dead was finished, the Albanians began their march towards Croia, which, however, was somewhat delayed by a dispute between two soldiers belonging to the same squadron. They had agreed to share the fortune of the day, and to divide equally whatever booty should be obtained by either. Having been very fortunate, when they came to the division of their spoil a dispute, as usual, arose between them; and from abusive language they were about to proceed to blows, and to decide the matter by the sword. Scanderbeg being informed of what was going on, had them both brought before him, and asking them if they had dined, they answered yes. Whereupon smiling, for he was of a most pleasant disposition, he said to them: "Bacchus has made you enemies, and I will have Bacchus, and not Mars nor any other of the gods, make you friends again;" and when he had privately rebuked them, he sent them away, commanding them to go and drink together; and he directed that Uranocontes should settle the contest between them, and see that each had his proper share.

As the prince and his forces advanced towards Croia, they were joined by a multitude of the country people who had concealed themselves in the neighboring forests until after the battle. The citizens of Croia also met them, and all proceeded, with the sound of instruments and loud shouts of joy, to the town, making a glorious triumph and

a noble display ; for Scanderbeg caused his army, arranged in battle array, to follow the multitude, and marched the troops into the suburbs. There was not one of the commonest soldiers who had not obtained at least one horse from the enemy, loaded with much spoil ; all which was marched in front of the army. A long train of prisoners, bound together two and two, preceded the prince, many of whom were made to carry the standards which had been taken from them. The pavilions, tents, and canopies of the Turkish general, all of purple, and very showy, were carried aloft by some of the Albanian soldiers, and spread abroad so as to increase the magnificence of the spectacle. Amese had entreated his uncle not to lead him into Croia in this degraded condition of a captive ; he was therefore suffered to go unbound, and to march side by side with the Sanziack who had been taken prisoner. At their entry into the city gate, the companies were dismissed, and the soldiers were sent away joyful to their own homes, after the abundant booty, including prisoners, had been fairly divided among them. The ensigns and other things which served for public show, and which fell to the share of Scanderbeg, were carried with great joy into the city. The Sanziack and Amese were placed in safe custody, until they could be otherwise disposed of.

The fame of this victory spread abroad among the Christian countries, and was a subject of admiration to all who heard it, and became a favorite theme of the songs which the inhabitants of Epire were in the habit of singing at their entertainments and public banquets. Numerous presents were sent to Scanderbeg ; many were the feasts given in honor of his victory ; and countless the congratulations which he received from all quarters. Mahomet himself was so confounded with amazement that, contrary to his usual manner, he heard from the bashaw the circumstances of the battle without uttering any invectives or ex-



pressing any anger ; but silently devoured his disappointment and vexation. He turned his attention to the redeeming of the prisoners of greatest note who had been taken from him, and especially the Sanziack, for whom he was much interested. Money was therefore provided in the usual manner, partly by contributions from the friends and relations of the prisoners, and partly from the coffers of the sultan. It remained that Scanderbeg should name the amount of the ransom, and that a messenger should be sent from Epire with a safe conduct for those who were to transact this business. Scanderbeg sent to the sultan two persons named by the Sanziack, for whom the sum demanded was 15,000 crowns, and for the other prisoners, about 40,000 were required ; all which was agreed to without difficulty.

The mind of the sultan was much perplexed as to what course would be best for him to pursue. Some advised him to entirely discontinue the Albanian war until the condition of his affairs should be such as to permit him to direct his undivided attention to that quarter, as the late misfortunes in Hungary, and the tumults newly raised in Misnia, put it out of his power to make any immediate effectual attempt against Albania : others were for placing a strong garrison upon the confines of Macedonia, with orders not to enterprise any thing against the enemy, nor to be drawn by them into any conflict, but only to guard with care the frontiers of the country : the opinion of others was, that a truce should be demanded of Scanderbeg for a number of years, during which the Ottoman empire might take breath and recover from its troubles. This last advice was embraced by the majority of the council, and although not a little displeasing to the haughty spirit of Mahomet, yet such was the distracted state of his affairs, that he deemed it advisable to submit to the will of his counsellors. When this was decided, he called into his presence one of the mes-

sengers who were to carry the ransom for their companions, and intrusted him with the object he had in view, and desired him to treat with Scanderbeg about it in his name, and to undertake the management of the business. He also wrote private letters to the Sanziack, which afterwards fell into the hands of the Christians, telling him to beware, while seeking peace with the Albanian, of lowering the dignity of the sultan, and of exciting the pride and disdain of the enemy. The messenger departed very joyfully, in the expectation that the Turks would now have some respite. But when Messeit, in counting the money for the ransom, introduced much conversation in accordance with the commands of his master, Scanderbeg received the money, but put an end to his overtures by words to the following effect: he said, that when he was in adversity he had refused to make peace, and that it was not to be expected that he would now hearken to overtures on that subject when his affairs had become more prosperous; that he was well aware of the instability of all human affairs, but that notwithstanding he would agree to no peace but such as he should conquer by the sword, and when once so obtained, he was resolved to maintain it by the sword. This and much more he is reported to have said, which, nevertheless, did not restrain the Sanziack from urging his suit, and employing all the arguments he could devise to persuade Scanderbeg to yield his consent to a truce of ten years. Scanderbeg at length appeared to relent somewhat from his first resolution, but he absolutely refused to hearken to any cessation whatever of arms unless Sfetigrade and Belgrade were yielded up to him. Thus Messeit and his companions returned to their own country without having concluded any thing respecting peace. A cessation of arms was granted until the sultan could be informed of the terms upon which a truce might be obtained. Many other prisoners besides the forty who were ransomed, were permitted freely to depart with

the Sanziack. The remainder were also delivered out of prison, of whom some became Christians and remained in Epire. The rest were sent with other presents to the princes of Europe. To the kings of France and Spain were also sent many horses and other spoils. The city of Rome was not only filled with the renown of the late victory, but also decked with many of its trophies. Together with these presents, Scanderbeg sent ambassadors who were charged to exhort the European princes to rouse themselves against the Mahommedan power, and unite to avert the ruin which was threatened by it to the Christian liberty and religion. He also sent magnificent presents to his friend Alphonsus, His nephew Amese was also sent to Naples, at the same time with these presents, where he was kept in close confinement, which was intended to be perpetual.

When the terms upon which Scanderbeg would consent to a truce were stated to the sultan, he would not deign to give an answer, or to take any notice of them. He maintained this haughtiness of spirit, although much embarrassed by the affairs of Hungary, and aware that the Pope was without intermission endeavoring to stir up the powers of Christendom against him. A strong garrison was prepared to be sent towards Epire, for the defence of his own frontiers. This force was placed under the command of two experienced and prudent warriors, named *Hamur* and *Synam*. Each of them led ten thousand horse and four thousand foot, which was thought to be a power sufficient to keep the stoutest enemy in alarm, and to wear out the strength of Epire. Yet they were both expressly forbidden, upon any account whatever, to engage in any enterprise, but ordered merely to protect the limits assigned to them. It was about the middle of autumn when these forces marched from Constantinople, whose intended movement had not been known to Scanderbeg; for he relied upon the Sanziack to acquaint him with the answer of the sultan to the terms

proposed for the truce. But when the rumor of their approach reached him, he left Croia with all possible speed, and hastened to Dibria; where, having levied new troops and reorganized his old companies, he anxiously watched the coming of the enemy. It was not long before they came within ten miles of Albania, where they encamped, but did not at all encroach upon the limits of the kingdom. Scanderbeg did not stir; but, learning that the Mahomedans approached, he arranged his troops for battle and remained quiet in his camp; for rumor represented these forces to be so great that he doubted not they would without hesitation attack him in his trenches. Afterwards, being informed by his spies and scouts, who had been placed upon the mountains, that they were encamped under *Alchria*,\* with all their carriages, he supposed that, after having refreshed themselves during the night, they would in the morning offer him battle. He therefore, very noiselessly, in the dead of the night, filled some of the neighboring woods and valleys with armed men, intending by this ambuscade to have inclosed them with his forces when they approached. Two days and nights he kept watch in this manner, but neither saw nor heard any thing of them. Scanderbeg, who hated all delay, determined to visit them the following day and provoke them to battle. But he received information that the infidel host was divided into two parts; that Hamur remained still at *Alchria*, and that Synam, with the other division, had occupied the fields of *Polonia* towards *Mocrea*, where was the usual entrance into the lower Dibria and Modrissa. *Alchria*, where Hamur was stationed, adjoined the upper Dibria and Sfetigrade. Thus they lay close upon the two provinces of Dibria, in order to hold the Albanians in continual alarm on both sides. Between these two garrisons was a distance of at least thirty miles; for so far

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\* In Macedonia.

it is from Modrissa to Sfetigrade. Scanderbeg, therefore, gathered in all his soldiers, and determined to levy more troops, to the intent that he might be able to divide his forces against the enemy. He quickly augmented his army with fifteen hundred foot soldiers, for horsemen could not so easily be raised, and divided it into two bodies. To the command of Tanusee, to one of the Streezes, and to Peic Manuell, one third part was committed, for the protection of the lower Dibria; with orders not to scatter themselves, nor to be drawn beyond the limits prescribed to them, nor to attack the enemy except in self-defence. The other two thirds Scanderbeg retained under his own command in upper Dibria, keeping Moses with him. Thus having about him the greater part of his army, and especially his horsemen; and bearing in mind that Albania was most accessible on that quarter, he resolved to induce the infidels to advance and try the fortune of the field with him. As winter was approaching, which would embarrass his proceedings, he made no long delay; but, the next morning, before daylight, he left his camp with one thousand horse, and proceeded directly towards Alchria. Before he began his march, he placed a number of soldiers in some thick woods and other suitable places, lest he should be inclosed between Sfetigrade and the camp of the enemy. He marched on for awhile in the dark, and placed his men in ambush in different places near the town, after which he returned to his camp. It being now near daybreak, he took no repose, but commanded his troops to march, taking with them provisions for one day. The tents and carriages were not moved, but he left a strong guard for their protection. The whole morning was spent before he came within a mile of his ambuscade; when it was time for the troops to take some refreshment, and for Scanderbeg to determine how he should entice the enemy from their camp and bring them to battle. Moses desired to be intrusted with that service,

which request was granted. Nor could a man have been found more suited to perform such a duty. Scanderbeg gave him six hundred horse, fearing that if he gave him a fewer number, the artifice would be discovered. But this attempt proved altogether fruitless; for Moses, having spent the greater part of the day in unavailing skirmishes, returned to Scanderbeg, who was in great perplexity, not knowing how to deal with the enemy; for he could not, without imminent danger, attack the whole force of the Turks within their camp and under the town, beneath which Hamur had entrenched himself. He led his forces to an adjoining hill, where he remained until night, and gave signals to his men who were in ambush to join the main body. The next morning he displayed his ensigns in the field, and, by wasting the country, thought to have provoked the enemy to issue from their trenches. But the Turk was not to be moved, and remained patiently within his camp. It is said that when the Albanians were about to depart, a herald was sent by Hamur to entreat Scanderbeg not to weary himself and his enemies with that unprofitable kind of warfare, and at the same time informing him of the sultan's purpose. To which Scanderbeg is said to have replied, that they might for a time put off their fate, but that he was determined no dangers nor difficulties should prevent him from eventually forcing them to fight. The cold weather approaching, things were left for the present in this state. Moses was appointed with his ordinary force to guard the province, and the greater part of the army was permitted to depart. Scanderbeg with a small company went to visit the lower Dibria, which was then under the command of Tanusee. He there also attempted, by devices similar to those above described, to have entrapped Synam; but all his arts proved vain; and, leaving there one of the Streezes with a small force, he returned to Croia.

During the following winter, Moses was very troublesome

to the Mahommedans, by continually disquieting them with alarms, but without any advantage ; for which reason, Scanderbeg would that neither he nor the garrison of Modrissa should any more waste their strength in such unavailing attempts. The spring of 1457 being arrived, Scanderbeg again assembled his troops, and led them towards the Turks, hoping, by continual efforts, to bring them to battle. One day in particular, having entered boldly into the country of Alchria, he was tempted to attack the enemy's camp ; but from the nature of its position, which was very strong, and by the vigorous resistance of those within it, he was easily repulsed. Although foiled in this attempt, he determined not to abandon his design of forcing the camp, but to augment his army, and to keep his troops exercised, with the view of finally accomplishing this purpose.

Whilst the war was thus inefficiently carried on, Hamur, thinking that he should not only be doing great public service, but obtain much favor with the sultan, if he could persuade Scanderbeg to a cessation of arms, obtained from him leave to confer with him. For this purpose, he went to Dibria, where Scanderbeg was then encamped, taking with him very rich presents. The Turk began by enlarging upon the advantages of peace, in order to work upon the mind of Scanderbeg, and bring him to a more pacific disposition. Then after expressing an ardent desire to enjoy his favor and esteem, he at length concluded with often repeating how goodly and desirable a thing it would be to see two such great and powerful princes united in the bonds of friendship and peace. Scanderbeg would not rudely reject the presents of the Turk, but gave him, in return, others of equal value. To the proposal of peace and amity, he indignantly replied, that the conduct of Mahomet had been such as to render any overtures from him suspected and odious. As to Hamur himself, he was willing, as far as he could with propriety, to manifest towards him the sense which he felt of

his "honest and good carriage." Hamur having kissed the hand of Scanderbeg, returned to his camp, neither quite pleased nor quite displeased with the answer which he had received.

Synam also, within a while, presented himself to Scanderbeg with similar flatteries, and found him not more repulsive than he had been towards Hamur; and the minds of the common people, as well as of the soldiery, inclining to peace, the summer was passed in a state of inactivity.

About this time died Alphonsus, king of Naples, the dear and bountiful friend of Scanderbeg, and by him deeply and long lamented; having, however, this consolation, that he was deprived of him not by any reverse of fortune or unexpected casualty, but by the decay of nature, and the weight of years. He speedily dispatched ambassadors to his son Ferdinand, to condole with him for the death of his father, and, at the same time, to compliment him upon his accession to the throne, and to renew the alliance and friendship which existed, during the life of the deceased king, between the kingdoms of Naples and Epire. This embassy was accompanied with splendid presents to Ferdinand. The ambassadors also had strict orders to bring Amese back with them, who had never ceased to make interest to be reconciled to his uncle. Upon the accession of the new king, the prisons were opened, and most of the prisoners set at liberty; but, to avoid giving offence to Scanderbeg, Amese had been still retained in bondage. The embassy was received with as much honor as the troubled state of the kingdom would permit; for, after the death of Alphonsus, the peace and order of the affairs of Italy became much disturbed.

Amese was brought back to Epire, and again committed to safe custody, though not to so strict imprisonment as formerly, and the resentment felt by his uncle began gradually to abate, in consequence of the ceaseless lamentations and entreaties of his nephew, until, at length, Scanderbeg's natu-



ral affection got the better of his angry feelings, and Amese would have been restored to his former state and dignities ; but he was greatly distressed on account of his wife and children, and, when he had expressed his sense of the clemency of his uncle, he is reported to have said that, while he remained prisoner in Albania, his wife and children would probably be safe under the Ottoman power ; but that if Mahomet knew him to be reconciled to his uncle, they would either be put to death, or sold as slaves. He therefore proposed that, with the connivance of Scanderbeg, he should appear to escape from prison, and that he should make his way back to Mahomet, and persuade him that he had returned to his service : thus he hoped to find an opportunity of taking his family home again to Epire. In the mean time, he promised to give Scanderbeg a faithful account of all that was doing in the Ottoman court.

Scanderbeg easily yielded to this proposal of Amese, telling him that as he had granted him his life, he would not hinder him from employing it to the best advantage. He told him to depart, and act as he should think best, and correct his folly while he had opportunity so to do ; and that when he returned, he should be heartily welcome.

All was executed as had been arranged. Amese, by his uncle's connivance, was soon out of prison, and out of Croia. The keepers of the prison were sharply reprov'd, and Amese went back to Constantinople. Upon his arrival, he easily induced the Sultan to believe his representations ; but his honors and profits were not such as had been bestowed upon him before his unfortunate expedition, and it is said that, within a few months, he died at Constantinople, leaving there behind him his wife and children. By many it is supposed that he was poisoned, by order of Mahomet.

During this time, Hamur and Synam continued quiet, nor were they molested by the Albanians, except that, occasionally, the soldiery would make an incursion without the

leave of Scanderbeg. He himself visited the different parts of the country, and caused many buildings to be erected, and improvements to be made, especially in Emathia, where many goodly remnants of antiquity lay overthrown and defaced.

The sultan did not cease to endeavor, by means of Hamur and Synam, to obtain a truce with Scanderbeg, in which, though he did not succeed, yet the animosity between the Turks and Albanians became so much abated, and a state of quietness was felt to be so desirable, that the name alone was wanting to a state of entire peace.

## BOOK X.

AFTER the death of Alphonsus, Ferdinand's right to the Neapolitan throne being contested, and he having been defeated by the French, an embassy was sent by him and his allies to Scanderbeg, requesting his aid. When the ambassadors arrived in Epire, bringing letters from the Pope,\* King Ferdinand, and the Duke of Milan, Scanderbeg willingly gave them audience; at which they related to him that the King of Naples had lost two great battles in the heart of his realm; that his nobles and subjects, and the greater part of his towns, had revolted from him; and that he himself was besieged in a town† ill fortified, ill provided, and hardly defensible, unless he should obtain speedy relief; that they therefore besought him, if he had any remembrance of the strict friendship which existed between him and Alphonsus, the father of Ferdinand, to lead his forces without delay into Apulia, and deliver him from the bondage of strangers, and not him alone, but all Italy, and perhaps even the holy Roman See itself. To this effect the ambassadors all most earnestly entreated him.

Scanderbeg required no great persuasion to yield consent to what was requested of him; for, besides that he was devoutly attached to the Church of Rome, the memory of his intimate friendship with Alphonsus, induced him to set aside all other concerns, and prepare to embark at once in the war of Naples. Before leaving Epire he managed, by the intervention of others, to have a truce with Mahomet. He then set in good order the affairs of his government, and appointed the queen to be regent of the kingdom during his

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\* Pius II.

† Barle.

absence, and named as her council some of the most trustworthy persons in the realm ; afterwards he dispatched his nephew Goie, a valiant knight, with a chosen troop of 500 horse towards the kingdom of Naples, with orders there to wait his coming, and in the mean time to harass the enemy by daily incursions.

Public processions were then made, and prayers offered up for the safety of the prince and his army, and for the success of his expedition ; after which he ordered his forces to march, part of them to the gulf of Rizic, where Italian galleys waited for them ; part to the port of Duras ; another part to Acrolissa, or Media ; and the remainder of his forces he led in person to Ascrinia, and thence to Ragusa, where his own vessels were ready to receive him. When he approached Ragusa, the inhabitants with great joy went out to meet him, and received him into the town with all imaginable honor. The day following, after divine service, he took a view of the town ; the third day he visited the haven, the arsenal, and the fortifications ; the day following was passed in divers entertainments ; and on the fifth day he went to the senate-house, where many valuable gifts were presented to him, and an oration was pronounced with singular grace, by David, the chancellor of the commonwealth, in praise of his exploits. This oration was answered by Paul Angell, archbishop of Duraz, who was the constant companion of the Prince of Epire in all his counsels and movements. After this, Scanderbeg remained at Ragusa only long enough to assemble there his whole fleet, during which time no sort of sport or entertainment in honor of him was omitted. In all manly exercises the Albanians continued to exhibit great skill, as became well-trained soldiers, until they were ordered to prepare to embark.

The prince thought it best to assemble all his vessels and troops at Ragusa, and to sail thence with the first fair wind for Apulia. He accordingly dispatched messengers

along the coast to order the transports of every kind to assemble at Ragusa; all which composed a fleet too large for the harbor, and the multitude of people was greater than the city could entertain. All were in high spirits, and delighted with the expedition in which they were embarked. There is much diversity in the accounts of the number of the forces which Scanderbeg led into the kingdom of Naples. Some state the numbers at 5000 foot and 2500 horse; others say 2000 foot and 3500 horse; others name no number, but say that he took with him a great multitude.

Scanderbeg took upon himself to direct the embarkation of his troops. He appointed Guirize de Vladienne commissary of victuals, who provided sufficient for fifteen days, of which enough for five days were ready dressed. When all were embarked, Scanderbeg sent small boats through the fleet with orders that the commander and two soldiers of each ship should come to him upon the shore to receive his orders. When they came, he inquired of them whether they had fresh water and biscuit on board for as many days as their other provisions were intended to last. The answer was, that provision of all things was made for fifteen days. He then gave charge to the soldiers that they should keep themselves quiet, and be ready to assist the mariners if it should be necessary, and that every man should attend to his duty without any noise or altercation.\*

At daybreak Scanderbeg, being on board the *Admiral*, and having commanded silence by sound of trumpet, with a loud voice uttered this prayer :

“ Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the ever-living God, which sittest at the right hand of the Father most high and omnipotent in the eternal glory, who in the beginning didst create all things out of nothing, governing and guiding them ac-

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\* I pass over the description which I find given of the order of sailing.

ording to thy good will and pleasure: who from all eternity hast forechosen the holy Christian faith, and by the effusion of thy most precious blood, and by the blood of thy holy Martyrs and Apostles, hast laid the foundation of the same, and in most wonderful manner hast caused it to be dilated and dispersed throughout the universal world: having appointed the most blessed St. *Peter* to be the Vicar and the Prince of the Apostles, and hast given to him and his successors the whole and full authority of binding and loosing both in heaven and in earth: and hast willed and commanded all men living, especially the Christian and elect people, to be obedient to their admonitions and commandments, and to sustain, maintain, and defend the Catholic faith and the Church of *Rome* even to the death: Behold, O Lord! I a most humble and poor sheep, altogether unworthy to be one of thy fold, have with a free heart and willing, taken upon me the burden of this journey and expedition by their direction and commandment, to the intent under the conduct and protection of thy mercy, I may maintain, and with all my power defend the liberty of thy holy Church, thy Catholic faith, the city of *Rome*, and the country of *Italy* against those that have invaded it, and are their professed enemies. Wherefore, most merciful God and Almighty Father, who art both venerable and fearful, I do invoke thy divine Majesty, and do most humbly require thee to be favorable to this my enterprise: reach out thy hand, thy outstretched arm, and send unto me *Michael* thy Archangel, thy holy messenger and minister: whose favor may be with me, and may accompany me day and night (for I do gladly reverence and honor him): who may give unto me and furnish me with force, strength, and courage: that this voyage and passage may be happy and prosperous unto me, and that I may attain in health and safety with this my army to the country of *Apulia*, that the enemies being discomfited and put to flight, I may tri-

umph in the spoils and prey of the enemies, and that having obtained the sum and end of my desires, I may return into my country and to my own home with safety, health, and victory.”\*

After the above prayer, mass was celebrated by the archbishop, which being ended, the trumpet gave signal to the men to take to their oars. They were soon off the coast of Albania with a fresh breeze; but they were soon enveloped in so thick a fog that it was with difficulty they could prevent the vessels from running foul of one another. Yet they held on their course till the approach of night, when they perceived a small island. The pilot asked Scanderbeg if he should direct the course of the fleet thither; for it was evident that a storm was approaching—the waves of the sea beginning to swell, and the season of the year being autumn. Scanderbeg ordered him to make for the island. The whole fleet came to anchor in the port, where they were detained by the weather eight days: at the end of this time, the wind abated and the sea became calm. Early in the morning after divine service they again put to sea; and having made sail all that day and the following night, early the next morning they came in sight of the coast of Apulia. Scanderbeg inquired what land it was which he saw before him, and was told that it was Mount St. Angell (or Mount Gargan). “God be thanked,” said Scanderbeg; “bend your course thither, for I have ever had a great devotion to Saint Michael;” and as soon as he had the mountain in view, he fell on both his knees, and prayed that this his first discovery of Apulia might be for his glory, and for the benefit of himself and his confederates. He then ordered them to hoist the sails, which filling with a merry breeze, the whole armament soon came safe to the shore. Scanderbeg, with the archbishop and a number of

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\* Lavardin

soldiers, having landed, scouts were sent out to obtain information respecting the enemy. His men brought him word that they were not far off. He, however, remained undisturbed; and after having somewhat recruited himself, he returned on board ship. Then he proceeded directly to Bari (or Barlet), where he landed all his troops and discharged his vessels.

Duke John and Count Pycenin were encamped before Bari; and when they saw so large a fleet, they immediately suspected what it was; for a rumor had got abroad in the French army that Ferdinand was expecting the King of Epire to come to his assistance, and they immediately raised the siege, and removed to a distance of about 30 miles. Upon the departure of the French, the King of Naples came out of the city with great joy to meet Scanderbeg; and after mutual congratulations and embracements, they entered Bari amid the acclamations of the people. The inhabitants were in a state of great excitement at the coming of the Epirots; and they on their part busied themselves in preparing for active service. The morning after his arrival, Scanderbeg took with him a small company of men, and went out to forage upon the lands of those who had rebelled against Ferdinand, and returning soon with abundance of booty, he equally divided what he had taken between the people of the town and his own soldiers; after this, a little before evening, he assembled his troops, and encouraged them by various considerations to encounter their foes with stout and confident hearts; summing up his speech by declaring that, with the help of God, he was determined the following day to visit the enemy.

The Albanians, who had no greater desire than to meet the French, were still more excited by the address of Scanderbeg, and the following morning, by break of day, were in arms ready to march against the enemy. After per-



forming their devotions,\* they took the field with ensigns displayed. The policy of Scanderbeg was, not to encounter the enemy at once in a regular engagement, but to try their strength and skill at first in light skirmishes. The French, however, in this encounter lost thirty men killed, and twenty taken prisoners. Of the Albanians none were killed, and only four wounded. They all returned to Bari with great joy.

The following day a council of war was held, to which Scanderbeg was introduced by King Ferdinand. The result of the deliberations was, that the combined forces of Ferdinand and Scanderbeg should march into Abruzza, in order to open the passages to the troops of Ferdinand's confederates, that they might join his forces, and in conjunction give battle to the enemy. Orders were accordingly issued to the troops of both Ferdinand and Scanderbeg to be in readiness, and that every man should have provisions, for five days, ready dressed. The armies then set forward, commanded by Ferdinand and Scanderbeg; a good garrison being left in the town. It was dark when they began their march; which they did with great silence and seerecy, and in close and good order; so that they were not perceived by the French camp, which lay not far distant. They marched immediately into the country of Abruzza; and coming suddenly upon those who guarded the passes, they charged them so furiously that they were either dispersed or cut to pieces. The ways were thus opened to the troops of the league, commanded by Frederic, duke of Urbin, and Alexander Sforce, which having joined the forces under Ferdinand and Scanderbeg, the united armies encamped near to Ursara, a town which held for King Ferdinand.

The allied armies being far distant from Bari, their leaders

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\* Lavardin's translator says—"and having served God."

apprehended that Pycenin, a most subtle and skilful warrior, might take advantage of their absence, and by some manœuvre get possession of the town. It was therefore determined to send an able commander with sufficient forces to secure the town against any enterprise of the enemy. This being an important and not very easy commission, it was freely conceded by all to Scanderbeg, who offered to undertake it. He had a great desire to see the French again, and to come to closer quarters with Pycenin. When he arrived, with his own troops, at Bari, he found every thing there in such condition as he could desire. Whereupon, after providing as much as possible against contingencies, he speedily decamped, and marched directly to the French camp. When he approached it, he sent a defiance to the enemy, and challenged them to the combat. They, who were accustomed to be always victorious, were not backward to accept the challenge; and both armies took the field in good order and with resolute minds. Scanderbeg divided his forces into three parts. Moses of Dibria led one of the battalions, Guirize had command of the second, and the third he reserved to himself, intending therewith to oppose Pycenin. He advanced against the French with the three divisions of his forces at once. But the manner in which he fought was with the view of harassing and distressing the enemy, by sudden onsets and as sudden retreats, by pretended fear and flight, and instant wheeling round and renewed attacks. This mode of fighting, which lasted the whole day, so wearied the French, that the result of the contest answered the expectation of Scanderbeg; for many of the enemy were slain, and many were made prisoners. Of the Albanians, though many were hurt, only one was killed and very few taken. But the French general perceiving that by this new mode of fighting against troops so well trained and expert, his men would, if not reuted, at least have much trouble on their

hands, resolved to have a parley with Scanderbeg, and to endeavor to obtain a cessation of hostilities. He therefore advanced alone in front of his squadrons, and with a loud voice called upon Scanderbeg by name, and invited him to a conference. The Prince of Albania, being of a courteous disposition and without a shadow of fear, did not refuse the invitation; but likewise put himself at the head of his troops. The two chiefs made choice of a place for their conference equally distant from the two armies, and on all sides open, so as to be free from all suspicion of ambuscades. When they met, the French general, greatly struck with the appearance of the King of Epire, stood without speaking, and examined him from head to foot. Scanderbeg was the first to dismount from his horse, and approaching the French general took him round the body, as he was of very small stature, and, lifting him up, kissed him, as was his custom, and then gently replaced him on the ground. Pycenin pretended that he had important matters about which to consult with Scanderbeg, expressing the greatest desire to arrange all things to the satisfaction of the Italians and to the honor of Scanderbeg himself. He therefore proposed that the Albanian prince, as night was at hand, should sound a retreat, he also doing the same; and that they should the next morning, each with few attendants, meet at a place to be appointed by him, where they might confer without suspicion upon the affairs in hand. The purpose of Pycenin must have been to get Scanderbeg into his power, or to have protracted the conference so that night should prevent another engagement; for he plainly saw that Scanderbeg had the better in the conflict of the day. The commander of the French being a man of renown and great authority, Scanderbeg reposed confidence in what he said, and caused a retreat to be sounded. At this time Moses and Guirize, who in the late skirmishes had taken prisoners four squadrons of the enemy, presented their captives to

their general; which being seen by Pycenin, he blushed for shame, and for a while stood confounded. But when he recovered himself, he is said, in his usual artful manner, to have addressed Scanderbeg to the following effect:—

“I perceive, most noble and generous prince, and I cannot but be abashed at it, to see that thy captains and soldiers do show themselves to have but small discipline, and to have but little regard and respect of thy command. For, as thou seest, after we had set down an order and published it with one voice and consent, that the soldiers of both the armies should withdraw themselves from the battle: these men notwithstanding have assailed and forced these my squadrons, who were obedient to our edict, and they have now brought them hither prisoners unto thee, to our great reproach and dishonor, a thing in my judgment unjust and injurious, and contrary to thy faith and reputation. Nevertheless, trusting in thy virtue and valor, for that I have ever reputed thee to be a prince of great magnanimity and faithful of thy word, I have good hope that thou wilt observe the faith and promise which thou hast given me, and wilt cause these soldiers to be set at liberty, as being unjustly taken and made prisoners.”

Scanderbeg is reported to have replied as follows:—

“Certainly, Count *James*, I cannot choose but greatly marvel that thou being a man so famous and renowned, wouldst either speak or so much as think such speeches, not only vain and frivolous, but of little truth or appearance. For to say that our captains and men-at-arms have taken or defeated thy squadrons when they were disarmed, or after that publication of our edict and agreement: thou thyself hast seen the contrary, and thou mayest not deny it, but that at the very first that we two met together in this place, my men had both foiled and taken those prisoners before that ever there was any abstinence of arms either concluded or signified throughout our armies; and therefore I know

not how it should be that this matter should seem so strange and injurious unto thee ; for if our troops, as thyself hath confessed, have been in fight all the day long, is it possible that our agreement should in so short a space be published and made known throughout all the quarters of our camp ? and can it be that thy men seeing my forces still in arms and in fight, could so simply lay down their arms and give over fighting ? Then must I needs think, that whilst thy soldiers would show themselves, as thou sayest, precise observers of thy commandments, they are justly and to their shame made prisoners unto us : or rather in despite of their wills being overcome by right of arms, they have lost the victory and have deserved this captivity. Moreover, how canst thou call or account my men either rebellious or careless of discipline, with whom many times, in fewer and less numbers (be it spoken without boasting), I have broken and overthrown so many puissant and mighty armies of the barbarians ? with whom I have tamed, subdued, and made captives so many proud and brave chieftains of the Turks and infidels ? And if I should speak the truth of their obedience, and their order in military discipline, I dare avow that they fear and reverence me more as their leader and general, than they do stand in fear of you being their enemies. And as concerning that request of thine, that these thy squadrons (being by right of war made my prisoners) should be freely restored and redelivered unto thee, truly thy demand shall not be in vain, for those whom the fury of the fight hath spared alive, it is not my use nor custom to deprive them either of life or liberty."

The number of those who were thus made prisoners was about one hundred, all of whom, with their equipments, Scanderbeg freely gave up to Pycenin ; who then returned to his camp, and Scanderbeg to Bari. Early the next morning, Scanderbeg went from the town accompanied by only seven horsemen, to confer with the French commander, ac-

ording to appointment. On his way he met a messenger, by whom sent is not certain, who informed him that the parley of the day before was but a trick of Pycenin to get his army out of danger, and that the proposed conference was only intended to inveigle him, the place appointed for their meeting being surrounded by ambuscades prepared to entrap him. He was requested not to proceed any farther, lest he should be slain or taken prisoner. Scanderbeg sent forward some horsemen to ascertain the truth of what was said; and they found that an accurate report had been made. When Scanderbeg ascertained the fraud and perfidy of the count, he broke out against him with the most bitter reproaches, and forthwith sent to him a defiance, desiring him to prepare for battle the next morning. But Pycenin, without returning any answer, at about the first watch of the following night, together with the Duke John and his French forces, trussing up his baggage, made a long march that night and retired to Nocera; for he apprehended that Scanderbeg might attack him before day, being informed that the prince often chose the night in which to execute his boldest exploits. Early in the morning Scanderbeg took the field with his army in good order, and ready for battle. But he found no one to oppose him. Whereat he was greatly disconcerted, and frustrated of the hope which he had entertained of revenge. He therefore returned to Bari, where making all things safe and sure, he proceeded to Ursara, where Ferdinand with his Italian forces lay encamped.

Ursara is a small town in Apulia, situated upon the side of a mountain, eight miles distant from Nocera, four from Troja, and six from Mount Segian. Between the two armies, which were not above eight miles apart, was the hill of Segian. It was considered an object of great importance by both Scanderbeg and Pycenin to get possession of this eminence.

It is observed by Lavardin, that Count Pycenin was an excellent and vigilant chieftain, but that he did not rise early enough that day to prevent the activity of Scanderbeg, who was already in possession of the hill when his adversary was going to occupy it. It is said that the count was much disheartened by this disappointment, but that nevertheless he exerted all his powers and military skill in conducting the engagement which followed. The commanders of the opposite armies endeavored by their speeches to encourage and inflame the minds of their men before the fight began.

A description of the battle shall not be attempted; but the result of it was, that Scanderbeg and his allies obtained a complete victory, although Count Pycenin, by the confession of Scanderbeg himself, had ordered and conducted his army with singular skill and ability. Pycenin and Duke John, with a few horsemen in their company, saved themselves by the goodness of their horses. The count wandered about Italy in disguise, and in poor condition, until he was befriended by Francis Sforze, duke of Milan, who, says Lavardin, "beguiled him under the color and pretence of a feigned marriage, and made him his son-in-law," and shortly after sent him as a friend to King Ferdinand, by whom he was treated as an enemy, and put to a cruel death. Duke John, by singular good fortune, escaped from the Albanian horsemen, who closely pursued him, and reached Troy (Troia), over the walls of which he was drawn up with cords; and flying thence by night to Genoa, he there chanced to find a bark which took him to France.

The spoil of the French camp served to enrich the soldiers; and the king entered Naples in great triumph, accompanied by Scanderbeg, the prisoners being led before them. Rejoicings were continued during three days. Ferdinand then, with the aid of Scanderbeg, proceeded to recover all the towns and places which had revolted to the Angevins;

and in a very short time, by the aid and mediation of the Albanian prince, he pacified and reduced to obedience all the revolted country. For more reliance was placed upon the word and faith of Scanderbeg than upon Ferdinand; inasmuch as it was dreaded that the latter might be inclined to punish their revolt, while all persons felt satisfied that he would not venture to violate any assurances given to them by the Albanian prince. Thus by means of our hero, Ferdinand was in a few days re-established in the possession of his whole state, and the Neapolitans continued peaceably under his dominion, all past transactions being forgiven and forgotten.

One difficulty still remained to be remedied in Apulia, which Scanderbeg effected in a quiet and friendly manner. Ferdinand, before the coming of the French into Apulia, had placed in the town of Trana as governor a Sicilian named Fusian, noted as a fierce and warlike man. He had fortified this place very strongly, and during the French invasion and the troubles of Ferdinand, he seized it in his own right, supposing that the king would never be able to recover it from him. Many vagrants, enticed by the hope of gain, daily flocked to him; which being reported to Scanderbeg, he consulted with the king about the matter, with whose consent he left the camp with a small troop chosen from among his own men, and marched directly towards Fusian; who, being informed that Scanderbeg was approaching, came out of the town, very well accompanied, to meet him. They having separated from their attendants, caused them to retire to equal distances, and the two conferred together by themselves. Scanderbeg began the conference by reminding Fusian that the French army being defeated, Ferdinand was now reinstated in his kingdom, and that all except himself had submitted to his authority. He therefore exhorted him peaceably to surrender to his lawful sovereign the town and fortress of *Trana*, promising him that



by so doing he should obtain the favor of Ferdinand, and such advantages as a wise man would by no means forego ; but that if he continued refractory, war should be denounced against him as the king's enemy. Fusian, being elated by the favor of the rabble and by his good fortune, was very proud and arrogant, and answered Scanderbeg very insolently ; saying that he would not surrender the place to the king unless he were first paid all that was due to him from the very hour that he entered the king's service ; and, moreover, were gratified with the first place under him in the government of the realm. Many other conditions in like manner did he insolently prescribe derogatory to the king, and unfit to be heard by Scanderbeg. After which he also uttered many contumelious speeches against Ferdinand and the queen. Scanderbeg could no longer endure his insolence, but being aroused to anger, and his countenance changing, he seized him by the neck, and his men immediately coming up, they bound the prisoner, and set him on horseback without any difficulty, as the opposite party did not offer to interfere or make any resistance. Fusian, finding himself a prisoner, at the mercy of Ferdinand, changed his tone, and offered to yield up Trana on condition of receiving his liberty. Scanderbeg assented to this, and with his company took possession of the town ; and having secured it with a sufficient garrison, he released Fusian, who embarked with his train and baggage in a vessel which conveyed him to Sicily.

I shall end this account of the expedition into Italy in the words of Lavardin's translator.\*

" *Scanderbeg*, after this happy exploit achieved, returned to King *Ferdinand*, after which both of them being very glad and joyous to see all troubles and seditions appeased and

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\* I give this long quotation in the words of Lavardin, because there is a *naïveté* in it which would be lost in more modern phraseology.

suppressed within the realm, and having provided and taken good order for the surety and safety of all the towns and places of any importance, they returned back again to *Naples*, the chief and capital city of the kingdom, with new joy and exceeding great triumph. And for the better increasing and honoring of the same, the Bishop of *Rome*, the Duke of *Milan*, and almost all the princes and potentates of *Italy*, in sign of the joy and great contentment which they conceived for their good and happy success, did visit the King of *Naples* and *Scanderbeg*, with most honorable ambassades, and rich and sumptuous presents. But, above all the rest, did the Pope honor the Prince of *Albany* with excellent gifts and rewards; for he did not only gratify him with gold, silver, and other goods and temporal things, but he adorned him with most ample and large privileges, prerogatives, and spiritual graces; making him also a faithful and assured promise, that as soon as his holiness, with the army of the *Crusado*, could possibly get into *Epire* (which he purposed to do very shortly, and to march in proper person against the Turks), he would then crown him King of *Epire*, *Macedonie*, *Thrace*, and *Romania*, and would commit the army of the Christians to his charge, and that he should have the command and government of the same, as chief general of the wars against the infidels.

“By this time there was a full and whole year past and fully complete since the arrival of the *Albanois* into *Apulia*: now was the war ended and determined, *Ferdinand* restored and re-established in his kingdom, and all things settled within the province according to his own desire. *Scanderbeg*, therefore, having had long conference with the king touching many affairs of great weight and importance, was now willing to prepare for his departure, and to appoint a time for his journey by sea homewards. Wherefore *Ferdinand* (before he would accord or agree to any thing) first caused all his chieftains and the captains of his army to be

assembled, and in their presence made a long oration; wherein he gave *Scanderbeg* great thanks and infinite praises and commendations, oftentimes repeating and calling him by the name of father; and by which ever after, as long as he lived, he never ceased to honor him. Afterwards he commanded general processions and public prayers to be said from church to church, whereat the king himself, his court, and all the people were present, and did assist them in all humility and devotion. Other like services and religious ceremonies were presented and offered up unto God for their good and happy victory, as to the sole and only author and giver of the same. After this he fell to triumphs, as tournaments, justs, and combats, to public and solemn huntings, to pleasant spectacles and shows of all fashions; the which being ended and finished, the king made a great and bountiful largess amongst the soldiers of *Albany*; but principally unto their king, for a perpetual sign and memory of their mutual good-will and singular love and amity; for besides the inestimable treasures, horses barded, proud and rich caparisons, and such like presents fit for knights and men-at-arms, of singular prize and estimation, bestowed upon him, he gave him also the city of *Trana* and two other noble and strong places in *Apulia*; one of the which was the Mount *Gargan*, commonly called *Saint Angell*, where is seated the famous Town of *Syphont*, and the venerable church consecrated to the honor of *Saint Michael* upon the Sea *Adriatic*; the other was *Saint John de Ronde*; all which places, with their territories, he granted unto *Scanderbeg* and his heirs forever; and he ratified and confirmed his said gift and grant by good and authentic writings and charters.

“To conclude, *Scanderbeg* having caused the most part of his army to go to *Trana*, where his ships and galleys did then attend him, and having taken his leave of King *Ferdinand*, not without many kind farewells, tears, and tokens of

sorrow, with many friendly embraces and mutual congratulations, he departed from him at the last, being accompanied and conveyed on his way throughout *Apulia* with many princes and great lords of the country; the highways also being filled with people, who came scattered from all places, both out of the towns and country, to see and to salute him. Thus being come at length to the port, and going aboard his vessels, as it were, in pomp and triumph: he found the winds favorable, and serving well for his passage. Wherefore leaving the coasts and banks of *Apulia*, he crossed the seas with a merry wind, and in few days arrived safe and sound with all his troops in his own country of *Epire*; some of them landing at *Duraz*, and some at another little gulf called by the inhabitants *Cape de Lach*; and from thence he went to *Croia*, where he found all things in good and prosperous estate. His coming was no sooner spread and published throughout the province, but that daily there arrived unto him new ambassades of the princes, lords, and estates, his friends and allies, in demonstration of their joy, and in congratulation of his good and happy return. This was the end and issue of the war of *Naples*, in the seventeenth year of the reign of Scanderbeg."

## BOOK XI,

ANNO 1460.

DURING the truce between Scanderbeg and the Turks, Mahomet had greatly extended his empire both in Asia and in Greece. For in Asia he subdued Sinope, the country in which Mithridates was born and buried, all the province of Paphlagonia, and the city of Trebisond, with its riches and royal treasures, taking prisoner the Emperor of Trebisond, named David, and his two sons, whom he caused to be cruelly put to death. After adding these territories to his realm, he attacked Piramet, king of Caramania, whom he conquered and despoiled of many towns and cities in Cilicia. Before his Asiatic expeditions he had obtained possession of the Morea or Peloponnesus, driving the Venetians out of it, and destroying the wall of Hexamile. These successes rendered the sultan still more impatient of being foiled in his attempts against Scanderbeg, and increased his desire to crush him. He accordingly levied an army of 20,000 men, and placed it under the command of Sinam, one of his Sanziacks, whom he dispatched in the hope of taking Scanderbeg by surprise. But the Albanian prince being always on his guard, had, on his return to Croia, renewed his secret spies about the sultan's court, and thus received intelligence of what was going on in time to raise an army, and be the first to take the field. But he kept himself close and concealed, in expectation of the approach of the Turkish force; of whose advance, as soon as he received notice, he marched a whole night towards the enemy, and, without being perceived, he took possession of the Mountain Mocrea, with

8000 fighting men, both horse and foot. Here he quietly awaited the coming of Sinam, who was of necessity to pass that way. The Turk was so suddenly and unexpectedly assailed by Scanderbeg, that his whole army was easily defeated with great slaughter. More than two-thirds were left dead on the field, and all their ensigns and baggage were taken. The general himself with difficulty escaped. Those who surrendered themselves prisoners were subsequently redeemed for money, which, together with the spoil, Scanderbeg freely gave to his soldiers.

Nearly at the same time that the army of Sinam marched against the Albanians, Mahomet sent another general, named Assembeg, against them, with a force of 30,000 men. This second army had passed a little beyond Ocrida, when it was entirely vanquished and broken by Scanderbeg in one battle. And Assembeg had proof as well of the clemency of his enemy as of his martial skill and fury; for while fighting valiantly, his body-guards were all slain, his horse was badly hurt, and he himself wounded in the right arm with an arrow. In this ill plight, being nearly deserted by his men, and night overtaking him, he retired to a thick wood on an eminence about four miles from the camp of the Christians, in a country with which he was totally unacquainted. He was soon discovered by one of Scanderbeg's men, who reported his discovery to the prince, at the same time stating the number of fugitives who accompanied the Turkish general as greater than it really was, for he had been deceived in consequence of the shades and density of the wood. Scanderbeg himself hastened with all his cavalry to make sure of these remnants of the defeated enemy. When the Turks perceived Scanderbeg approaching they held a consultation, of which the result was, that they determined to advance without their horses or arms to meet him. The general himself, covered with blood and filth, led the way, and when he came near to Scanderbeg he took hold upon his horse's bridle, and by

a few well-timed words he saved the lives of himself and his companions; for Scanderbeg, being touched with compassion, took him by the hand, smiling, and assured him that he should suffer no further harm if he could help it. Thereupon he sent him away, and directed that his wound should be well attended to, and that he should want nothing, and he afterwards had him conducted to a place of safety. Scanderbeg marched forward with his forces, and scouring the country on all sides and finding it clear of enemies, he returned to his camp, and thence to Croia, where he solemnized the triumph for his victory.

Within a few days after Assemebeg, another general, named Jusumbeg, was sent by the sultan, with 18,000 men, against the Epirot; who, when he was informed of the approach of these Turks, wondered much at their temerity, and at the insatiable thirst which they appeared to have for his blood; and addressing his troops, he encouraged them to go and meet this new enemy, at the same time promising them an easy victory. His words were received with loud acclamations, and the men prepared to follow their chieftain. When Scanderbeg drew near to Scopia, he learned from his scouts that the enemy had taken the field, whereupon he gave the signal to his men to begin the attack. The Turk did not think that Scanderbeg would venture to attack him so far from the frontiers of Epire, and by this boldness of the prince was disheartened at the very first onset; so that he set his people the example of a base and ignominious flight, and was followed by them with the exception of about 800, who, preferring honor to life, died valiantly with their arms in their hands. Those who fled hoped to escape in safety, as it seemed improbable that they should be pursued in their own country. But they were greatly deceived; for the number of those who were slain during the pursuit, together with those who before fell in the fight, amounted to at least 2000. Very few prisoners were taken, because of

the length of the retreat which was to be made through an enemy's country. Jusumbeg wished to rally his troops, and place them in ambuscade, so as to entrap his enemy. But his men would not listen to him; and continuing their desultory retreat, chose rather to return home and meet the resentment of their emperor, than to run the risk of not getting home at all.

Among the oldest of Mahomet's officers was one named Carazabeg, of great reputation for the many places of trust which he had held, and for the worthy manner in which he had always performed his duties. He was greatly esteemed by the sultan, as he had been by Amurath, and was retained near his person. He also, notwithstanding his age, felt a desire to try his fortune against Scanderbeg, and requested the sultan to intrust him with the command of an army for that purpose.

The request of Carazabeg was freely granted, and 10,000 men were added to the number required by him; for he thought that 30,000 were enough for his purpose. This commander sent before him spies, to discover and give an account of the movements of the enemy. But Scanderbeg, on the other hand, was not without intelligencers throughout Epire and Macedonia, and the heart of the enemy's country, so that the intended expedition of Carazabeg was soon made known to him, and sufficient time was afforded him to make his preparations. When Scanderbeg heard of the coming of this Turk, he is said to have declared that were it not for his age and decrepitude, he should have feared this chieftain alone more than all his power; for they were old companions in arms, and knew each other intimately. He assembled a greater force than he had done to oppose Assembeg, because of the great reputation of the commander who was now coming against him. He proceeded immediately to Dibria, and thence, with 2000 horse, he advanced even to the confines of the Trybullians, where the Turks were ex-



pected to pass. Here he placed his troops in ambush among the hills. Carazabeg stationed the main body of his army at a place in Macedonia commonly called Chieri, and sent forward 4000 horse, who were suddenly charged by the Albanians, and the greater part of them slain; the remainder were dispersed, and in their flight carried the news of the disaster which had befallen them to their general, before he reached the confines of Epire. This misfortune increased the illness and infirmities under which he was already laboring, causing him not so much distress on account of the loss of his men, as because his coming was discovered by the enemy. He was in great doubt whether to push on his expedition, or to return to Constantinople, and delay it until the following spring, for the autumn was now near its close. At length shame and the dread of dishonor prevailed upon the old man to persist in his enterprise. He, therefore, continued his march, and within two days came near to the Christian army. It was about the first watch of the night when he came to a plain, named by the people of the country Livad, where he encamped, and the same night made ready for battle. The next morning he sent a herald to Scanderbeg, challenging him to a fair and open engagement, and not to a fight like that of thieves and robbers. Scanderbeg, calling him a crazy old dotard, returned answer that he should hear of him before long; and without any delay set forward to assault the old general, who was not yet prepared to receive him, but was still engaged in consulting upon his affairs. But he was enabled to withstand the charge of the Albanians by means of a heavy flood of rain, which fell just at the beginning of the onset, and soon separated the combatants, so as to render the encounter of very little effect. For three successive days the rain continued to fall in such torrents, that if the Turk had not removed his army to higher ground, it is probable that the contest would have been terminated by the drowning of his forces in the

deluge of water. And, with all his care, a great number of his horses were lost. Carazabeg, taking this to be an ill omen, abandoned his enterprise; and as soon as the weather would permit secretly decamped, and by long marches bid farewell to Epire. Upon his return to Mahomet with the portion of the army which he had saved, it is reported that he was at first very coldly received; but that he was afterwards commended for having preserved so many of his men.

But the sultan, finding that Scanderbeg was not to be conquered by arms, resolved to attempt his overthrow by means of art and subtlety. He accordingly sent to him an embassy with valuable presents, and a letter to the following effect:

“Sultan Mahomet, lord and emperor of the east and of the west, and of all parts of the world, unto Scanderbeg, prince of Albania and Epirus, sendeth greeting:

“I think, Friend *Scanderbeg*, that no Acquaintance can be greater, or Friendship more firm, than that which hath grown of long and mutual conversing and living together, and especially if the same have taken beginning from Childhood and tender Years, as you know it hath done betwixt us Two; who have of long time, even from our Childhood, lived together in great Love and Friendship, when as you first lay as Hostage in my Father's Court. Wherefore, beloved *Scanderbeg*, when as I call to remembrance all those things, with others, wherewith our Youthful years were then delighted; and being mindful also of all those things which you have oftentimes done for the advancement of our Empire and Kingdom, and for the glory of the *Othoman* Family, I cannot choose but embrace thee with singular Zeal and Affection. For I take God to witness, that nothing could chance more welcome or pleasing unto me in my life, than to have thee with me, and for a while to enjoy thy Company. Neither needst thou to fear any thing to come unto me, for

that my Soldiers without my Knowledge or Commandment have of late broken in and spoiled thy Kingdom ; which thing as reason required, was unto me exceedingly displeasing ; neither did it any whit offend me, that they were by thy Forces vanquished and overcome, and so received the just Reward of their evil deserts, and that all things fell out with thee according to the equity of thy Cause, and as thy Heart could have desired. But to let these things pass, the remembrance of our old Love and Friendship persuadeth me to come to agreement, and to joyn together with thee in a perpetual League of Amity ; to the intent that our ancient Acquaintance and Familiarity, which by reason of long absence is almost worn out, may again take life, increase, and be confirmed. Of which Peace, let these be the Capitulations, if they shall seem unto you reasonable ; for I know it belongeth unto him that requireth not the Peace to appoint the Conditions of the same. First, we require of you freely and peaceably to suffer our Armies to pass through your Kingdom, for the besieging of the Cities and invading of the Countries subject to the *Venetians* our Enemies : Then, to deliver unto us your Son *John* in Hostage, whom we will always use as one of our own natural Children : And afterwards, that our Merchants and Men of Trade may peaceably come and travel into all parts of your Kingdom with their Merchandise, and there freely and safely use their Negotiation : Last of all, that your Self in Person may at your pleasure safely and without all fear repair unto us, and in like manner return again. In which things if you will yield unto us, I promise in the Faith of a King, to grant unto you and your Kingdom sincere Peace, with perpetual Tranquillity ; and that there shall not be any more dearer unto me than your Self ; and will never to the uttermost of our Power permit your Kingdom to be infested or molested by any of our Subjects, or others. Whatsoever you shall further receive from us by the mouth of our Ambassador *Mustapha*, you may thereto

give full Credence. Fare you well. From our Imperial Palace at Constantinople the 10th of May, 1461.”\*

This letter being read in a full assembly and general council of the princes, lords, and captains of Epire, they did unanimously agree that it was greatly to the honor of Scanderbeg, and of the realm of Albania, that so powerful and fortunate a monarch as Mahomet, the ruler of so many nations, should petition to him for peace, and ask his friendship. And they with one voice agreed, that, rejecting all the other propositions tendered by the sultan, they would make peace with him upon this only condition, namely, that the trade between the dominions of Mahomet and of Scanderbeg should be free and open to the subjects of both realms. This being the opinion of the council, Scanderbeg returned the following letter :

“The soldier of Christ Jesus, George Castriot, otherwise called Scanderbeg, prince of the Albinenses and Epirots, unto Mahomet, prince of the Turks, greeting :

“Your letters (most Magnificent) are delivered unto us, wherein you write of your exceeding Love and singular Affection towards us, confirmed as you say by old Acquaintance ; which being grown up betwixt us, and by tract of time firmly rooted, and as it were into nature converted, shall always retain his force and strength. But forasmuch as it seemeth unto you good to awake the same, having of long time and many years lien as it were asleep ; and to make a motion that we should enter into a certain new League and Confederation, whereof amongst other Conditions of the League by you propounded, this is one, That your Forces may freely pass through my Kingdom, to invade the *Venetians* ; Unto this your Request, worthy *Mahomet*, it stand-

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\* From Knolles.

eth neither with Equity nor with mine Honor to consent, for so much as the *Venetians* are my especial good Friends and Confederates. As for that you desire to have my son *John* with you in Hostage for the better assurance of the Peace betwixt us, I should peradventure do it (most noble *Mahomet*), if fatherly affection would give me leave; but sithence I have no more but him, and he as yet a tender Child, it is not for the good either of him or us to have him now taken from us, when as he ought of us to be most tenderly cherished, and carefully instructed. As for that you requested concerning your Merchants, That they may freely and safely Traffique into my Kingdom at their pleasure, I can be content thereunto, and wish heartily that there might be a free Entercourse for our Merchants indifferently with their Commodities into both our Kingdoms. Further, whereas you earnestly persuade me boldly and without fear to come unto you, that by such Enterview and Personal Presence, our great desire, grown of long absence, might be the better satisfied: in this thing most excellent Prince, I cannot but praise your most Honourable Disposition, and commend your good Nature; and would therefore boldly follow your perswasion, if my other urgent Affairs, with the Government of my Kingdom, would so permit. But what shall I do? My Son *John* (as I said before) but little, and as yet unfit to Govern; and my people (as you know) love always to have something to do, being by Nature a fierce and restless Nation, whom I my Self have much ado to Rule and Govern: For all that I will come unto you according to your desire, expecting only a more commodious time. So fare you well, and love me still. From our Camp the 30th of *May*, 1461."\*

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\* From Knolles.

Upon the receipt of this letter, Mahomet sent the following reply :

“ Sultan Mahomet, emperor of all the parts of the world, unto Scanderbeg, prince of the Albanenses and Epirots, greeting :

“ Your Letters we have received by our Ambassador *Mustapha*, wherein you give us to understand, that you like none of the Conditions of Peace by us propounded, but only that concerning our Merchants and men of Trade that they might freely and at their pleasure use their Traffique and Trades with their Merchandise to and fro, and upon this condition only you grant us Peace. This your Offer we accept of, and all the rest of your excuses we willingly admit ; wherefore I promise unto thee (my loving *Scanderbeg*) and will perform all that thou dost require, and upon that Resolution rest ; and will so long as I live observe and keep a sincere and inviolable Peace with thee for ever, except thou first give cause of violating the same. And for that purpose have we with our usual and Imperial Seal signed these our Letters, which we by our Ambassador *Mustapha* have sent unto thee, as thereby confirming unto thee this perpetual Peace. Wherefore you also (if you be so content) may subscribe, and with your Seal confirm this of Ours, that I in like manner may have also your like Consent and Agreement. And would farther, That you would Command knowledge thereof to be made by open Proclamation through all your Kingdom, as I will in like manner cause to be done through mine. And for the more manifestation of this my love towards you, I would also that you should understand, That of my own mere notion and bounty, I do freely give unto you all those things which you by force of Arms have taken from my Father in *Albania* and *Epirus*, so that you may possess and enjoy the same, as if they had always been yours and your Ancestors : Wherefore I give, grant, and confirm unto thee and thy Heirs, all the Right, Title, or Interest, which I here-

tofore had therein, and from henceforth will always account and repute thee as Prince of *Albania* and *Epirus*, and so call thee. And as I have promised thee in the Faith of a King, will never hereafter with Wars molest thee or thine except thou thy Self give cause thereof. Wherefore after you have with your Seal confirmed these things, you may commend them to our faithful Embasssador *Mustapha*, to be by him brought unto us; unto whom I would you should in all things give full Credit. So fare you well, and render us love for love. From our Imperial Palace at *Constantinople*, the 22d of June, 1461."\*

Forty days after the delivery of the first letter of Mahomet to Scanderbeg, a herald from the Turks again appeared with the above second letter from the sultan, which, being openly read in presence of the Albanian princes and chieftains, was approved by the whole council; and peace between the two realms being solemnly ratified, it was proclaimed throughout the dominions of both the sovereigns, to the great joy of all their subjects; and was faithfully observed on both sides for the space of about two years. But the motive which prompted the Turk to seek this peace, being to lull the Epirots to sleep while he enlarged and strengthened his power, at the end of the above-mentioned space of time it began to be infringed by the Mahommedans, who invaded the Albanian territories, and carried off very valuable spoil. Scanderbeg complained to the sultan by letters and by ambassadors. But he received for answer, that it was done without his consent or knowledge; and, giving plausible words and fair promises that the evil should be rectified, at the same time feigning anger at the aggressors, he ordered a part of the booty to be restored.

About this time the Turks were overrunning and spoiling

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\* From Knolles.

the territories of the Venetians, who were in strict league and amity with Scanderbeg. The senate sent to him their ambassador Gabriel Trevisan to exhort him to break off the peace concluded between him and the Turk; which it was said he might do with a good conscience, since the latter had first violated the compact which was between them. The ambassador warned him to be on his guard, and to prevent the danger which now threatened all Christendom. He told him that it was evident that the perjured traitor had made peace with him only with the view of first subjugating the other Christian powers his neighbors, that he might then, at his leisure, bring him also under subjection; that no true friendship could exist between the Turks and the Epirots, since they were natural enemies to each other; that he should attentively bear in mind how the Infidel, when secure of not being troubled by the arms of the Albanians, had immediately directed his forces against the Rascians and Tribullians; and, after subduing them, against the Thracians and Illyrians, and when the empire of the Greeks was subverted, had likewise added the territory of Trebisond to his dominions; that now, when fortune seemed to smile upon this Turk, and he had conquered so many kingdoms, what remained for him but to attempt the subversion of all that remained? that it therefore behooved them to unite their forces, and hold him their open enemy rather than to have him their cruel and selfish lord and master; that it would be absolute folly to suppose that the Ottoman policy looked only to the possession of the *dominions* of the Christians, and not to the destruction of the Christian religion, for that the name and profession of Christianity were so hateful to those miscreants, as to render it their main object to extirpate the knowledge and remembrance thereof from the face of the earth; that the safest and most proper course to be pursued was, to get the start of the Infidel, and prevent the threatened mischief before it should be present and irremediable;



that all Christendom called upon him and entreated him thus to act ; and that the senate of Venice, in particular, did instantly pray him to take up arms, at the same time offering to furnish him with money and men, and all other things whatsoever which he might require.

Although the mind of Scanderbeg, after hearing these exhortations of the Venetians, was resolved how he ought to act, yet as it was his custom, in all matters of consequence, not to move without the advice of his people, he called a council of his chief officers. No one in this council approved of renewing the war with Mahomet, who seemed unwilling to break the peace, and had restored the greater part of the booty, which, he protested, was carried by his soldiers out of Epire through sport and military licentiousness. The Venetian ambassador, when he heard this determination of the council, departed very sorrowful. But he directed his course to the Archbishop of Duras, whom he knew to be in extraordinary credit with the King of Albania, and so much respected by the people of Epire that their confidence in his persuasions was almost unlimited. He hoped that by the influence of this prelate he might yet accomplish the object he had in view, of rousing the Albanians to arms against the Turks. In consequence of the great consideration in which he held the senate of Venice, this good bishop undertook a journey to visit Scanderbeg. He was an Epirot born, of the city of Drivasta, the son of Andrew Angell ; of excellent mind and understanding, of great eloquence, well instructed in both human and divine learning, and thoroughly acquainted with the Greek and Latin languages ; of a life so pure and unblemished, and of zeal so sincere and fervent in the cause of Christianity, that he was by all men commended and admired. This eminent person coming to see Scanderbeg, and having requested him to assemble his council, he addressed to them a speech in which he set forth the various motives which he thought should induce Scan-

derbeg to yield to the wishes of the Venetians and other Christian powers.

This address was delivered by the archbishop with great animation and vehemence. After which, Scanderbeg, with his chieftains and soldiers, withdrew to consult upon the subject. The conference lasted a long time; but it was at length determined to renew the war with the sultan, and take arms for the common weal of Christendom. It seems unnecessary to rehearse the arguments urged for and against the war, as they must readily present themselves to the mind of the reader. It may, however, be noticed that the will of the Pope, and counsels of the archbishop, had great influence in bringing about the decision which was made. The archbishop, by his excellent character, had acquired wonderful influence over the Albanians. He usually dwelt at court, and acted an important part in the public counsels. The king listened to him with great respect, and profited much by his instructions; he was also exceedingly beloved by the chieftains, lords, and princes of Albania. The war being thus resolved upon, commissions were given out for the levy of troops, and the equipment of an army, which, as soon as ready, was to march against the enemy.

When the news of this war spread abroad, the soldiers of Scanderbeg who lay in garrison on the frontiers were the first, to take the field. They entered into the Ottoman territory and committed great devastation, carrying off an immense booty in cattle and horses, and laying waste the country with fire and sword. When Mahomet was informed of what had taken place, it is said that he was at first beyond measure enraged at Scanderbeg, but that he afterwards repressed his fury, and stroking his forehead with his hand, said, with a cheerful countenance, "What is thy meaning, Scanderbeg? and what do you purpose to do unto me, who am the great potentate of both the east and the west?"

In his breast, however, Mahomet conceived a bitter spirit

of revenge, and vowed the destruction of Scanderbeg; but as he found that the Christian forces were ready to march against him, he felt much perplexed; and to keep off the threatened danger he had recourse to his wonted arts.

It was currently reported that Pope Pius II. had assembled from all parts of Christendom, numerous forces with which he was shortly to march against the Turk, and that it was his purpose as soon as he should arrive in Epire, and have celebrated mass within Duras, to confer upon the archbishop of that place the cardinal's hat, and to crown Scanderbeg King of the *Albanians* and *Epirots*. And so great was the dread caused by the very name of Scanderbeg, that it was generally believed among the infidels, that if Scanderbeg took the command as general-in-chief of the purposed expedition, there was little doubt that the Christians would be victorious. This was the chief reason which induced Mahomet to try all means to prolong and confirm the peace between Scanderbeg and himself. He therefore wrote to the Albanian prince a letter of the following tenor :

“Sultan *Mahomet*, emperor of the East and of the West, unto *Scanderbeg*, prince of the *Albinenses* and of the *Epirots*, greeting :

“I have always had thy fidelity and upright dealing in great admiration, most noble Prince *Scanderbeg*, for which cause I thought it a thing incredible, that thou being a Prince of such an heroical and princely perfection, shouldst so inconsiderately and without any occasion break the Faith and League which thou not long since solemnly contractedst with me. For as I am advertised, thou hast entred into the Confines of our Dominion with a great Army, and with Fire and Sword destroying all that thou couldst, hast carried away with thee a great Booty. Of which thing I know right well, that the *Venetians* are the only cause, by whose Counsel and Perswasion thou hast been set on to do this

deed; and seduced by their allurements and subtil perswasions, hast made War upon me, and art become the faithless breaker of thine own League, and of the sacred Law of Nations. Yet do I little or nothing blame thee therefore, regarding more the cause of the ignominy than the despiht it self, and lay the blame upon them who have alwaies been my Foes and capital Enemies, rather than upon thee. But alas, what is this unto me (*Scanderbeg*) that thou hast done, which possess so many and so large Dominions? Didst thou think to do so great hurt unto our Kingdom, by spoyling a little peece of our Country, and by stealing our Cat-tel, more like a Thief and Robber, than an open Enemy? Which thing I yet account not worth the name of an Injury. But if thou think it so good, proceed in these thy doings; for I make more account of thy Friendship and Love, than of whatsoever is to me dearest; because (as thou knowest) I have always born unto thee an especial favour, and loved thee most entirely. And therefore as often as I call to remembrance our tender years and old familiarity whilst we lived together in my Father's Court at *Hadrianople*, I cannot but think myself bound unto thee in all Courtesie. And therefore my good *Scanderbeg*, I most heartily request and entreat thee, That we renewing the former conclusions of Peace, may of new confirm the same by solemn Oath; wherewith if the former Peace had been established, thou wouldst not have suffered thy self to have been now of the *Venetians* so circumvented or seduced. It is therefore needful, that we now again for ever confirm a League and Peace betwixt us by solemn and sacred Oath on both sides; which if thou shalt do (as I hope thou wilt, and in this be advised by me), thou with thy Posterity shalt undoubtedly always reign in peace, and in safety possess whatsoever is yours. Whereas if thou shalt do otherwise, believe me it will repent thee, and that right quickly. Thou knowest already my force, which whethet thou be able to

withstand or not, thou wert best to be well advised. The poor Princes thy Neighbours, the *Venetians* thy Seducers, cannot deliver thee from my Forces and Power. Dost thou not see the *Grecians* almost all rooted out before thy Face? the Emperors of *Constantinople* and *Trapezond* by us deprived of their Empires? the Princes of *Servia* and *Rascia* destroyed? the King of *Bosna* put to death, and all the Kingdoms of *Asia*, with many other Kings and Princes more, vanquished, and overthrown, and made subject unto me? Wherefore, *Scanderbeg*, I advise thee in this to follow my Counsel, keep thy Promise, and so believe me thou shalt not be deceived. Concerning these matters, we have given further Commandment to our Ambassador and Servant *Mustapha*, which cometh unto thee; unto whom doubt thou not to give credence in any thing. Farewel. From our Imperial City of *Constantinople*, the seventh of May, 1463.\*

To this letter Scanderbeg, on the five-and-twentieth of the same month, returned an answer from his camp. He said that the sultan ought not to think it strange that the Albanians sought a just revenge for the wrongs which they had suffered at the hands of his subjects; that it was not to be wondered at if the Albanians, as well as his own soldiery, gave loose to what he excused as a military kind of licentiousness; that, although the Albanians were greatly incensed against the Turks for the injuries received from them, he would nevertheless have restrained the violence of his people, had Mahomet made full compensation for the property which had been plundered or destroyed, and if he had chastised the licentiousness of which he confessed his soldiers to be guilty; that as to his imputing to the *Venetians* the blame of renewing the war, it was a groundless

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\* From Knolles.

slander upon them ; that the power of the Venetian commonwealth was sufficient of itself to withstand the Turks without stirring up any other enemy against them. With regard to those vain and magnificent titles of Emperor of *Orient* and *Occident*, in which he seemed to take such pride, Scanderbeg reminded him of many realms which had scarcely heard the name of Mahomet, and told him that however great the extent of his dominions might be, he ought not to be so puffed up and so to exalt himself above all others, but to consider the inconstancy of worldly things ; to remember that the Assyrians, once monarchs of the whole world, the Medes, the Persians, the Grecians, the Romans, Tamarlane, of late the proud and mighty king of Tartary, the scourge of the Ottoman race, the terror of all nations—that all these were now consumed and extinguished by the extinguisher of kingdoms, empires, and nations, even the finger of the Great God ; that he ought therefore to acknowledge himself to be but an earthly mortal creature, the slave of fortune, and not to put his trust in the multitude of his legions and the immensity of his military resources: he declared to him that he in vain solicited his friendship and alliance, as his faith was suspected by him, and his friendship odious : he concluded by warning him that the power of Christendom was about to overwhelm him, and by exhorting him, as a friend, to abjure the Mahomedan faith, and embrace the gospel of Christ, that he might not only save his soul, but preserve his dominions in peace and security. Such was the main tenor of Scanderbeg's reply to Mahomet ; which was no sooner dispatched to him than letters came from the Pope, announcing that he purposed shortly to leave Rome, in company with immense forces which had engaged in the crusade against the Ottoman power : he declared his intention to embark at *Ancona*, and thence to pass over to *Epire*, where he would grant the cardinal's hat to Paul Angell, the archbishop of Duraz, and

having crowned Scanderbeg King of *Epire* and *Albania*, commit to him the sole command of the Christian forces. He therefore exhorted him to march with his own army and commence the war against Mahomet. These letters of the Pope caused great joy to the Albanians of all degrees; and Scanderbeg, with a powerful force, made an inroad into the territory of the enemy, and laid the country, wherever he went, waste and desolate. Upon the receipt of the news of these depredations, Mahomet, in great wrath, dispatched Seremet, one of his bashaws, with 14,000 troops to check the violence of the inroads made by the Albanians; and calling together his chief officers, he addressed them in a speech said to be greatly approved by all who heard it. All swore, at the peril of their lives and fortunes, to maintain the dignity of the Ottoman empire.

In the mean time Scanderbeg returned to his camp enriched with the spoils of the Turks, where he had no sooner arrived than he was informed that Seremet, one of the sultan's bravest captains, with a powerful force had arrived upon the confines of Thrace and Macedonia. Scanderbeg, no less prompt than usual, took the field three hours before day; resolved, if possible, to encounter him. The object of the Turkish commander was only to protect the frontiers from the inroads of the Albanians. He stationed part of his men in *Ocrida* or *Alchria*, and part of them in the neighborhood, where they intrenched themselves very strongly. Near to the town was a large lake, from which the river Drine derives its source. Scanderbeg advanced to within about three miles of this spot, and placed himself in ambush with ten thousand men. He sent forward about five hundred horse, chosen men, commanded by Peic Manuell and Andrew Angell, brother to the Archbishop of Duraz, men of high quality, both for their lineage and their military virtues. He directed these officers to endeavor to draw out the enemy to combat;

which he thought might be accomplished, because he had been informed that among the Turkish forces was the sultan's treasurer, or receiver of the revenues, a very wealthy man, and who took great delight in martial deeds, and whom he supposed likely to be foremost to promote any military encounter. He charged his two captains, if the enemy came out to skirmish, to offer but a faint resistance, and to recoil, as if in flight, towards the place where the ambush lay. This decoy succeeded according to the wish of Scanderbeg; for when the Turks came near to where he was, they were suddenly attacked on all sides with such fury, that, being soon broken, more than ten thousand were left dead upon the place. Great numbers were also made prisoners; among whom were the treasurer above mentioned and the son of Seremet, with twelve others of high rank, who paid to Scanderbeg a ransom of forty thousand crowns, and, when set at liberty, distributed many rich gifts in the Christian camp. The treasurer in particular made a largess of fish, both fresh and salt; which, to use the words of Lavardin, "came in very good and convenient time, as if God had sent it of purpose. For it was then the vigil of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin, the mother of our Saviour, upon which day, as men religiously disposed, they did abstain from eating of any flesh-meats. Thus making merry amongst themselves, they said by way of mirth, that their prince was the apostle of Him who had fed the Jews with five loaves and two fishes." After this they returned joyfully into their own territories, and anxiously awaited the crusaders, who were daily expected to pass over into Epire.

But all the hopes and expectations which were excited by the great force which was about to attack the Ottoman power soon vanished into air. For, ere long, Scanderbeg received news that the Pope, having begun his march with an army of Germans, Hungarians, Spaniards, French, and



Italians, and accompanied by the Duke of Venice, reached Ancona and there died. In consequence of which event, as if all depended upon one man, the troops were disbanded, and returned to their own homes. The death of this Pope Pius II., and the breaking up of the expedition which had been undertaken through his influence, caused great grief among the subjects of Scanderbeg, who were thunderstruck when they heard the news. But he, bearing a mind capable of enduring all the assaults of fortune, maintained his wonted serenity and cheerfulness, and in terms expressive of his confidence in the wisdom of Providence, consoled his friends and companions.

While Scanderbeg thus calmly endured his disappointment, Mahomet, on the other hand, was filled with rage when he learned the defeat and slaughter of his troops under Seremet; and speedily sent, in their place, Ballaban Badera, one of his colonels, with fifteen thousand horse and three thousand foot. This was an officer of great experience, and had given many proofs of his valor and ability, especially at the taking of Constantinople, where he was the first who mounted the wall and entered the city. For this exploit he was raised by the sultan to the rank of aga, or colonel. He was an Epirot by birth, of a low and obscure origin, and a subject of John Castriot the father of Scanderbeg. While a boy, as he and other children were tending cattle in the fields, he was carried off by the Turks, and presented as a slave to the sultan. His stature was of the middle size, he had a quick and ready wit, a lofty, resolute spirit, and undaunted courage. His limbs were firmly knit, he was very active, eager for battle, and fierce and hot when engaged in fight. When this officer reached Alchria, on the confines of Macedonia, after reviewing his army, he secretly sent, as is by some reported, very valuable presents to Scanderbeg, as tokens of friendship, and, probably, to secure for himself kind treatment at the hands

of Scanderbeg, in case he should fall into them. But, whatever might be the real purpose of Ballaban, Scanderbeg, who well understood the wiles and artifices of the Turks, rejected his gifts, and sent to him a mattock, a ploughshare, a hedging-bill, and other instruments of husbandry, desiring him to abandon the profession of arms and return to the business of tilling the earth, in which his family, who were all low peasants, had been brought up. Ballaban was deeply offended by this insult, and in consequence of it conceived a more deadly hatred than ever against Scanderbeg, and vowed to be revenged upon him if ever he could find an opportunity. In the hope of accomplishing his purpose, he determined to make a sudden assault upon him in the dark; and accordingly he began in the night to move his camp. But Scanderbeg having advice of his motions, advanced immediately to meet him. Whereupon the Turk checked his march and pitched his tents within about two miles of the Christians. Scanderbeg had with him not more than four thousand horse and twenty-five hundred foot; the smallness of which number was not caused by the difficulty of assembling more, if that had been his wish, but because he thought it best to choose out his veteran and experienced troops, the flower of his army, and in whom he reposed his greatest confidence. He was wont to say that the captain who could not beat his enemy with ten or twelve thousand men at the most, could hardly be able to perform any memorable exploit with greater forces; for that a multitude of men often hindered the obtaining of victory, by the confusion which they caused. It has before been stated that the Turkish force amounted to fifteen thousand horse and three thousand foot. Scanderbeg was encamped at one extremity of a valley of considerable breadth, called Valcala. The Turks had possessed themselves of the other extremity, near to a mountain where the pass was very narrow. On this mountain, and with-

in this pass, Ballaban placed men in ambush; so that if the Christians should have the advantage in battle, and attempt to pursue their enemies through the pass, they might fall into the ambuscade. But the vigilance and foresight of Scanderbeg were not to be overreached; and he, in a short address forewarned his men of the trap laid for them, and directed what their movements should be. He had no sooner spoken than he perceived Ballaban advancing towards him. Whereupon, he sent forward a number of light horse to take possession of the hill on which he purposed to dispose his army, and immediately followed with his whole force, as though he was retreating from before his enemy. The Turks, believing that the Epirots were really running away, galloped furiously after them in a disorderly manner the whole length of the valley. Scanderbeg's men then began to draw close together, and, without heeding the noise and violence of the Turks, they wheeled about, and, boldly and steadily receiving their shock, joined with them in battle. The fight was very fierce and bloody, and for a long time doubtful. At length the obstinate and steady valor of the Epirots prevailed over the Turks, who were slaughtered, and beaten down, and driven back to the straits of Valcala, at which place the Christians halted, all except eight, who were men worthy, each of them, to command a large army. These men being hurried away by the heat and fury of battle, by their eagerness to pursue the enemy and by their hatred of Ballaban, forgot the express command of their general and rushed into the pass where the Turks lay in ambush. Long did they strive against the infidels, and, advancing as they fought, reached at length the trenches of the enemy. There they continued to fight with such valor that they succeeded in gaining the top of a mountain which was occupied by Turkish infantry, whom they mistook for their own men. And here they fell again into greater danger than ever. At length, after wonderful

proofs of their undaunted prowess, both men and horses being wearied with exertion, and faint in consequence of their many wounds, they were taken alive and made prisoners. The names of these valiant but unfortunate men are, *Moses* the Dibrian, lieutenant of the army, *Guirize de Vladienne*, nearly related to Scanderbeg, *Musache de Angeline*, Scanderbeg's nephew, *Gyne Musache*, *John Perlat*, *Nicholas Berise*, *George Chuque*, and *Gine Manesse*. The loss of these men to the state of Albania was greater than any which happened to it during the reign of Scanderbeg. So great was the joy of Mahomet when they were brought to him, that he cried out aloud in terms of exultation over Scanderbeg and praise of Ballaban.

He followed up his commendations of Ballaban by sending to him much gold and silver and other presents, with authority to recruit his army and to pursue the war against Scanderbeg. The captivity of Moses and his companions caused extreme distress to their prince, who immediately dispatched ambassadors with valuable presents and letters to the sultan, requesting him to ransom the prisoners, according to the rules of war, or to exchange them for other prisoners of whom he had a great number. The ruthless tyrant paid no regard to this embassy, but after inflicting upon the prisoners other cruel torments, caused them to be gradually flayed alive for the space of fifteen days; "during which" (says Lavardin), "they yielded up their constant and glorious souls unto God, and did augment (as it is to be believed) the happy company of the Martyrs in Paradise." This infamous cruelty filled the army of the Albanians and the people of the country with grief and lamentation, which more than counterbalanced the victory obtained by Scanderbeg. Many, it is said, put on mourning, and suffered the hair of their heads and their beards to grow untrimmed in token of their sorrow for the loss of those noble and heroic men. The prince was, at heart, no less grieved than his

people ; but having a mind not to be subdued by the assaults of fortune, he immediately invaded the enemy's country, and left nothing uninjured which could be assailed by fire or sword.

While Scanderbeg was engaged in these hostile incursions, Ballaban, according to his instructions, recruited his forces to their original number of 15,000 horse and 3000 foot, and repaired to Achaia on the frontiers of Macedonia. He there endeavored again to inveigle Scanderbeg by sending him presents and making a tender of service and friendship. Finding that his offers were coldly received and his artifices well understood, he turned his thoughts to the discovery of some other way of entrapping and getting the better of his adversary.

Scanderbeg, with 4000 horse and 2500 foot, encamped at Oronichea in upper Dibia, and carefully placed sentinels and scouts around his camp. It chanced that in one quarter were placed some soldiers, Epirots, in whom Scanderbeg had great confidence, but who, he was not aware, were related to Ballaban. These men the Turkish general corrupted by large bribes ; and, in the dead of the night, moved with his whole army towards Scanderbeg, and having passed those traitors an hour before day, would doubtless have surprised and oppressed the Christian camp had it not been for the vigilance of Scanderbeg himself, who, being ever on the alert to guard against all untoward accidents, frequently and habitually went the round on horseback, and visited all parts of his camp, and the guards which were placed about it. He was providentially thus employed at the time the Turks were advancing to attack him, and perceived their approach by the neighing of their horses. The prince himself gave the alarm to his troops, and arranging them as well as the suddenness of the emergency would permit, and having, with a few words, encouraged them to their duty, he led them on furiously against the Turks. Ballaban, not expect-

ing to find the Christians apprised of his approach, checked his course awhile, that he might better arrange his men. Scanderbeg took advantage of this delay, and, with a chosen troop of horse and a number of Italian arquebusiers, passing along the covert of the valley, he got behind the enemy, and immediately attacked them with all his force. The Turks, being charged at the same time in front and rear, had not time to arrange themselves in proper order. The conflict, nevertheless, was long and severe. But, at length, the resistance of the Mahommedans growing faint, the Christians pressed upon them so furiously, that they were constrained to turn their backs and flee. They were so hotly pursued that they were not able to recover their trenches, but were enforced to abandon their camp to be plundered by their enemies. The slaughter and the booty were immense. Ballaban, with a very small train, having lost his baggage and his ensigns, carried the news of his own defeat to Mahomet; by whom he was very ungraciously received, and reproached with being so shamefully overcome by a handful of men.

The sultan was long in doubt whether or not to employ Ballaban again. At length, after much consultation, he determined once more to make trial of him. He was prompted to this by several considerations. Ballaban was known to be a mortal enemy to Scanderbeg. He was a native of Epire, and well acquainted with that country; and, in fine, among all his officers, the sultan knew none of so great ability as this man. Mahomet promised to bestow upon him the crown of Epire, if he succeeded in destroying Scanderbeg. Ballaban was a man of great resolution, and exceedingly desirous of glory; he therefore willingly undertook again to encounter Scanderbeg, although twice beaten by him. The force with which he left Constantinople amounted to 20,000 fighting men; of which 17,000 were cavalry and the remainder foot soldiers. When arrived at Alchria, he again

attempted to lull Scanderbeg into security, that he might surprise him unawares. For this purpose, he sent presents to him of fine swift horses and rich apparel, with entreaties not to disdain his offers of service and friendship, which he protested he should be ready to render to the end of his life. But he did not know with whom he had to deal; for Scanderbeg, who understood his craft and malice, scorned his gifts, and, to show his contempt, sent in return the same sort of mean presents with which he had mocked him on a former occasion. Ballaban, having spent three months in his crafty attempts upon Scanderbeg, determined at length to hazard open warfare in the field of battle; in which mode of proceeding, his enemy was entirely willing to meet him. Accordingly, after public prayers to Almighty God for victory and for the preservation of the state of Albania, Scanderbeg made all ready for his march. He occasionally encouraged his men by short speeches or regular addresses; also by gifts of horses, arms, rich apparel, money, and other things. He then led into the field his army, consisting of 8000 horse and 2500 foot, all chosen, resolute soldiers, and arranged them in order of battle on a plain before Sfetigrade, where Ballaban was encamped. He divided his army into four battalions. The first commanded by Goic Streeze, his nephew; the second by Tanusee Ducagin; the third by Musache, and the fourth was reserved by Scanderbeg for his own body-guard. The infantry were placed on the wings of the cavalry,\* and were commanded by Paul Manessey, Peic Manuell, Demetrius Berisse, and Raian Chuque. The order of the Turkish battle differed very little from that of the Christians. The two armies, encouraged by their leaders, then advanced to the combat, in high spirits and with loud shouts, and joined battle with great fury and mutual animosity. Many were slain on both

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\* Lavardin's words are, "The infanterie he had arranged and bestowed within the wings of the cavallarie."

sides, but more on the part of the Turks than of the Christians. Ballaban, who knew by experience the enemy with whom he had to deal, manifested great prudence and skill. He placed himself, with a strong troop of horse, in front of the battle, where he performed the duty both of a skilful commander and of a brave soldier. Scanderbeg, on his part, was present wherever his men had need of assistance, and on whatever quarter he directed his fury, he was attended by terror and victory; "insomuch," to use the words of Lavardin, "that both the enemy and the Albanois did openly confesse and affirme with one generall consent and voice, that Scanderbeg was the best souldier and bravest warrior in the world." While Scanderbeg was among the thickest of the enemy, prostrating all that came in his way, it chanced that his horse, being mortally wounded, stumbled over the trunk or root of a tree which lay upon the ground, and fell with his rider under him. One of Scanderbeg's shoulders was so severely crushed that he lay, for a while, as if in a swoon. The Turks thought him dead, and began to flock around him, and alight from their horses, in order to cut off his head. But his men-at-arms rushed furiously in, and covered him with their arms and with their bodies, until he recovered himself and mounted another horse. He then rushed again into the midst of the battle with greater fierceness than before, "inasmuch," says Lavardin, "that making way on all sides with the edge of his sword amongst the infidels, he seemed not much unlike to a raging tempest, which, falling in a field of corn, beateth it all down, and presseth it even with the ground." While thus making havoc among the Turks, he encountered one, named Sulyman, "of principal account and chiefest regard in all their army," whom he laid dead upon the spot. This exploit appeared to decide the fate of the battle; for the Turks were seized with so sudden a panic, and at the same time were so hard pressed by the Christians, that they betook themselves



to flight. They were so closely pursued that the slaughter was very great. The spoil obtained in their camp was immense ; all of which was given by Scanderbeg to his soldiers, as a reward for their labors, and to console them for the loss of their comrades, of whom as many as three hundred were slain, and a great number wounded.

It was three months before he recovered from the pain which he suffered in his shoulder and arm, caused by the fall of his horse. Ballaban saved himself by the speed of his horse, and got within Alchria, whence he returned to Constantinople, with very few attendants. He was very ill received by the sultan, who continually upbraided him for his foul and grievous overthrow, and demanded of him the lives of the many brave soldiers and chosen gallant youths who, he said, were betrayed and led to the slaughter by his folly and rashness. But by his fair speeches and wily representations, this man succeeded in appeasing the resentment of his master, and induced him again to listen to what was proposed by him. Notwithstanding his defeat, he appeared not to consider himself inferior to Scanderbeg, who, he confessed, was one of the most accomplished and fortunate warriors in the whole world, but yet mortal, and not invincible. When Ballaban had obtained of the sultan a favorable hearing, he proposed that two separate armies, under able commanders, should be sent out in different directions, as though they were not going against Scanderbeg, but should suddenly and simultaneously fall upon him from different quarters, and by thus inclosing him cause his destruction.

The plan proposed by Ballaban pleased Mahomet so well, that he gave him full power to order every thing in his own way for the prosecution of the war. He told him to take as many troops as he deemed necessary, and to select whatever officer he desired as partner with him in his intended expedition ; urging him not to delay the execution of his project, and declaring that he could not esteem himself a fortunate

monarch as long as that his enemy was alive, from whom he had suffered so many outrageous injuries. Ballaban forthwith caused an army to be levied, so numerous and powerful that it is described as "sufficient to have made the Realm of *Albanie* to tremble for very feare." He chose as his associate commander Iagup Arnauth, in English, James the Albanian, for he was also a native of that country. He was a knight highly esteemed and honored for his deeds in arms. When the troops were assembled and divided between the two commanders, Ballaban directed his associate general to pursue his march along the sea-coast, and in this way to pass by Greece and Thessaly into Epire, and strictly forbade him to discover himself, or to make any attempt upon the enemy until he should be near to his associate. Ballaban took a nearer way through Thrace and Macedonia, and arrived in Albania long before Iagup. The division of the army which Ballaban commanded exceeded 24,000 horse and 4000 foot, and that which was led by Iagup amounted to at least 16,000 horse.

As soon as Ballaban took the field, Scanderbeg was apprised of it by his spies, of whom he had a great number in different parts of the Turkish dominion, and even about the sultan's court. Our vigilant and active prince immediately caused a levy to be made, as quietly and secretly as possible, of 8000 horse and 4000 foot, whom he held in readiness to be led forth when the proper time should arrive. When Ballaban entered the borders of Epire, Scanderbeg determined to attack him before he was joined by his associate. The Turk was encamped in the plain of Valcala, of which Scanderbeg having notice, he, in the night, marched his troops in great silence directly towards him; and sent forward three soldiers, whom he thought most fit for the service, to reconnoitre the enemy's camp, and ordered them to return as soon as they had obtained all the information in their power. One of these soldiers had been bribed by Bal-

laban—being related to him, as is by some supposed—and he prevailed upon his companions, by the promise of large rewards, to take part in his treachery. These men went directly to the Turkish general and revealed to him the plans of Scanderbeg, who, after waiting long for the return of his scouts, began to apprehend that they had been intercepted by the enemy. He, therefore, with his wonted promptitude and boldness, taking with him but five soldiers, resolved to go in person and reconnoitre the enemy, and endeavor to discover what had become of his men. But Ballaban, suspecting some such proceeding on the part of Scanderbeg, thought to entrap him in his own way. He selected some men upon whom he could depend, well mounted, and stationed them at a pass through which he thought it probable that Scanderbeg himself would approach to reconnoitre his camp. Nor was he mistaken in his expectation; but Scanderbeg, when he came to the pass, sent a man before him, as was his usual practice, who soon perceived the ambush of the Turks. They, when they found themselves discovered, issued out upon Scanderbeg with great fury, who, after a slight resistance, was enforced to flee. In a thicket through which he was passing a large tree had fallen across his path; he set spurs to his horse and leaped fairly over it, as did also one of his soldiers; but the others not being able to do the same, drew close together, and set upon their pursuers, and after slaying and wounding a number of them, yielded up their lives like true and valiant men. One of the Turks also leaped over the tree and followed hard upon Scanderbeg, who, looking round and seeing himself pursued by only one person, immediately wheeled and laid him dead on the ground, when he went on his way without further interruption. Scanderbeg having thus happily escaped, returned to his camp near Petra-Alba, about fifteen miles from the enemy, and made ready his squadrons to march against them. The prince, to encourage his men, desired them to ask whatever

they needed for themselves or their horses ; whereupon a contest appeared to arise between Scanderbeg and his men, he being willing to give more than they were willing to receive.

The Albanians marched forward, scarcely taking any rest until they came to the valley where the Turks were encamped. Scanderbeg disposed his army upon the tops of the hills, in the midst of which the valley extended itself, and he occupied all the straits and passes, so as to hem in the enemy, whom he harassed by skirmishing with them, sometimes on one quarter and sometimes on another, and kept them in doubt as to his real purpose.

While things were in this state Scanderbeg called a council of war, to consider in what manner they should proceed. At this deliberation were present his lieutenants Tanusee Thopie, Zacharie Groppe, and Peic Manuell. Some were of opinion that battle should not be offered until the soldiers were completely refreshed and recovered from their fatigue. Scanderbeg was of a different opinion, and vehemently urged that immediate action was the only way in which his designs could be brought to a happy issue ; that Ballaban might be easily overcome if engaged before being joined by Iagup ; but that if their united forces were to be encountered, the issue of the conflict would be very doubtful. This opinion prevailed, and Scanderbeg proceeded to set his troops in battle array. He ordered his army in four divisions ; one he committed to Tanusee, another to Zacharie Groppe, and a third to Peic Manuell. The infantry were mingled among the horsemen, and the arquebusiers and archers among the pikemen and some cavalry, which he sent forward to skirmish with the enemy and to begin the engagement. The residue of the army, including his body-guard, was reserved for his own command. When he had thus arranged his forces, and had offered to his men some words of encouragement, the signal to advance was sounded. The enemy

were drawn up in battle array, as though they were ready to engage; but upon the advance of the Christians, Ballaban withdrew his army, only leaving some to watch the approach of Iagup. Whereupon Scanderbeg, who dreaded the consequences of delay, ordered the advance-guard to set roundly upon the Turks, while he descended into the plain with the determination to bring them to battle before the arrival of the other general. When he came in presence of the Turkish camp, his men endeavored, by all manner of taunts and reproaches, to provoke the enemy to sally forth. Ballaban, however, remained firm in his purpose, and refused to stir; until at length he found it vain to attempt any longer to resist the fury of his own men, who were maddened by the insults of their enemy, and who saw them ready to attempt to force their ramparts. The general of the Turks then ordered his battle in the following manner: he ranged the *Asappi* before the ensigns of the vanguard; next to them, on the left wing, he put the *Alophanes*, who were able soldiers, in opposition to *Tanusee*. He placed the *Alchanes* over against *Zacharie Groppe*; and to face *Peic Manuell* he set the *Janissaries*, who were powerful and veteran soldiers. He himself commanded the right wing, composed of a strong body-guard and the oldest and best troops in the army, and immediately opposed to Scanderbeg. Then began a fierce encounter, in which the generals on both sides greatly distinguished themselves, and the Albanian infantry and cavalry, the veteran bands of *Croia* and the valiant *Dibrians*, on the part of the Christians.

Scanderbeg finding his efforts to break the enemy not successful, detached some squadrons from his right wing, where he thought they could best be spared, and caused them, without being perceived, to get into the rear of the enemy. By this manœuvre the *Alchanes* and *Alophanes* were exposed on all parts; and as to the *Asappi*, they offered little or no resistance, for not being a hardy people

they were overcome by heat and fatigue, and many of them who had quitted their standards the previous night were still lying dispersed about the fields. Ballaban, it is said, who had in previous battles often obtained great honor, behaved himself on this occasion more nobly than he had ever done before, both by his words and example encouraging his men to renew the fight wherever their efforts grew faint, and without hesitation exposing his own person to every danger. But at length, when he perceived that the fortune of the field was on the side of the Epirots, and that their impetuosity could no longer be resisted, he wheeled about, and putting spurs to his horse betook himself to flight. His example was followed by the whole army, who dispersed themselves in every direction, except a few who followed their general and escaped with him. All the rest were either cut to pieces or made prisoners.

The Christian army had hardly removed from the Valley of Valcala, and completed the division of the spoil of their enemies, before an express arrived from Mamisa, the sister of Scanderbeg, who with her guard and household was at Petrella, to inform him that Iagup Arnauth, with 16,000 horse, had entered Epire by the way of Belgrade; that, having laid all waste before him, he was then encamped in the Lower Tyranna, near to a river called by the inhabitants Argilat. This Iagup was an Epirot by birth, and his parents were Christians; but he had himself been taken by the Turks, and professed their religion. He was a brave man, and had given many proofs of his prowess under Mahomet both in Asia and in Greece. One of his soldiers having been surprised by Mamisa's people, the man confessed that the intention of Iagup was to inclose Scanderbeg between his army and that of Ballaban. Upon the receipt of this advice, Scanderbeg determined to advance at once upon Tyranna; and when his army was ready to march, he in a lively address invited them to march against Iagup.

The soldiers were greatly animated by the speech of their general ; and, with loud cries, demanded to be led on against this second enemy. They then cheerfully advanced, with banners displayed, towards Tyranna to encounter Iagup.

When the Turkish general, who had not yet learned the fate of Ballaban, was informed of the approach of Scanderbeg, he removed his camp near to a hill, on which stood a village called Cassar ; and Scanderbeg took possession of the ground which he quitted. The first day passed quietly ; and, during the following night, Scanderbeg continued anxiously on the watch, lest the Turk should hear of the defeat of the other army, and secretly decamp. To prevent this, Scanderbeg caused all the ways and passes to be occupied by armed men. The next morning, at sunrise, the Christians advanced in battle array towards the Turks, and the prince caused the heads of some of the Turks who had been slain to be thrown before the tents of the enemy, and some of the ensigns which were taken from Ballaban to be displayed. Some captives chained together were also exposed to view. Whereupon Arnauth exclaimed, " Now do I acknowledge the misfortune of the house of Ottoman, and the good fortune of Scanderbeg !"

It appears needless to detain the reader with a description of the tokens of joy exhibited by the inhabitants of Croia upon the safe and glorious return of Scanderbeg after the two victories obtained by him, and upon the sudden change from a state of doubt and anxiety to the certainty of a safe deliverance and noble triumph.

## BOOK XII.

THE vexation and astonishment of Mahomet were great beyond measure when he heard the news of the defeat of his armies. In his perplexity he assembled his chief officers and counsellors, and addressed them in a violent harangue against Scanderbeg, ending with the advice that a mighty force, led by himself, should immediately advance against Croia.

This counsel of the sultan being approved by all, levies of troops were made in all his dominions, and munitions of war were provided. When all was in readiness, he began his march, with an immense train, towards the kingdom of Epire.

Scanderbeg, by means of his spies, had timely notice of the approaching storm, and assembled a council of his friends and nobles: among whom were Paul Angell, archbishop of Duraz, the depository of his most secret counsels; and Josaphat Barbare, the Venetian ambassador, a worthy person, of great judgment and experience, and singularly zealous in the cause of Christianity. The archbishop and he were seldom separated from the Prince of Albania. The general opinion of the assembly was, that the towns throughout the realm should be fortified with strong garrisons, and amply provided with munitions of war; especially Croia, the capital of the kingdom, and upon which the rest depended. Scanderbeg accordingly placed in it a large garrison, consisting partly of Albanians and partly of Italians, all men of approved loyalty and resolution. And he appointed as governor of the town an Italian gentleman named Bal-



thasar Perduce, a man highly esteemed for his prudence, judgment, and resolution.

Before proceeding further with an account of the open war against Scanderbeg, it will be well to mention a secret train which was laid for his destruction. Mahomet procured two men well acquainted with different languages, and, by large promises, induced them to feign themselves deserters from the Turkish service and religion, and to offer themselves to Scanderbeg, whose death, if he received them, they were to compass either by poison or assassination. These wretches were not repulsed, but, on the contrary, admitted to baptism, and, it is said, enrolled among Scanderbeg's body-guard. But it pleased God to protect this noble prince from the designs of these assassins; for in a quarrel which arose between them they betrayed one another, and, being put to torture, confessed the whole plot, and were consequently both hanged.

The fortresses of Epire had not long been placed in a state of defence before letters and messengers from various parts arrived to announce the approach of Mahomet with an army of 200,000 men. And his light-horse soon entered Epire, and for two days laid all waste before them; and on the following night invested the city of Croia. Ballaban Badera commanded these troops, amounting to 80,000, all picked men. When they had intrenched themselves, frequent skirmishes, with various success, took place between them and the Croians, who sallied out against them. The sultan, with the main body of his army, at length arrived before Croia, and summoned it to surrender upon certain conditions proposed by him. The defendants returned for answer that they would rather be torn in pieces than be guilty of any thing which should be disgraceful to them, or in violation of their faith to God and their prince, or injurious to the honor and reputation which they had acquired in his service. They made signs with their weapons

to the enemy not to approach any nearer to the town ; and immediately issuing out, they slew a considerable number of the Turks, and returned within the walls, carrying, in token of victory, the heads of many whom they had slain. Mahomet was incensed by this bravado, and ordered the cannon to be planted against the town. He had brought abundance of metal wherewith to cast cannon, and workmen skilled in making all kinds of warlike engines ; and he was resolved to thunder against the place until the inhabitants lowered their tone of defiance. But Scanderbeg, by his incessant and furious attacks, day and night, upon the camp and upon the foragers of the enemy, continually coming down upon them from the hills like a mountain torrent, at length excited in Mahomet a fear for the safety of his own person ; and, finding Croia not only impregnable, but scarcely to be assaulted, resolved to return to Constantinople. Yet, to cover in some measure the disgrace of so soon relinquishing his enterprise, he left Ballaban to continue the siege with 18,000 horse and 5000 foot, together with eight principal Sanziacks, each commanding 7000 powerful soldiers, but all subject to the orders of Ballaban. These arrangements being made, the sultan, not without shame, directed his course towards Constantinople.

Mahomet, during his progress home, succeeded, by misrepresentation and treacherous promises, in persuading the town of Chidna, in Chaona, to deliver itself up to his offered clemency. The consequence of which was, that, to vent the spite which he felt against Scanderbeg, he caused 8000 of the inhabitants, besides women and children, to be put to death.

In the mean time, Scanderbeg was much grieved at seeing so many enemies within his realm ; and especially he was vexed at being still braved by that upstart Ballaban, whom he had so often overthrown. The capture of Chidna also troubled him greatly, on account of the number of brave

soldiers whom he there lost. Wherefore, by the advice of his friends and captains, he sought assistance from his neighboring powers, sending to them letters and messengers. He also went in person to some of those from whom he hoped for aid; and thus succeeded in rousing all his friends and confederates to exert themselves in his behalf. But as the army which besieged Croia was composed of brave and hardy soldiers, and as they had possession of Mount Cruyna, which they had well fortified, he thought his forces not sufficient to dislodge the enemy. These considerations induced him, after consulting with the Archbishop of Duraz and the ambassador of Venice, and no others, to leave Tanusee in command of his army, and to go secretly and in disguise from Epire to the Roman pontiff, in the hope of obtaining further aid from the Christian powers.

When Scanderbeg arrived in Rome he was honorably received by the Pope and the holy senate, and being introduced into the conclave, he in presence of the Pope and cardinals, delivered an address which was generally approved; and it was agreed on all hands that relief ought to be granted to the noble and valiant Christian prince against his barbarous and infidel enemies. Yet, notwithstanding the fair words with which he was entertained, he procured but little aid from the Roman pontiff. For Paul II., though a Venetian by birth, is said to have had little affection for his own country, with whose government Scanderbeg maintained a strict alliance and sincere friendship. All the aid which he received from Rome amounted to three thousand crowns, which were delivered into the hands of Demetrius Franke, his treasurer, a principal citizen of Drivasta and cousin to the Archbishop of Duraz. Yet was not Scanderbeg disheartened, "but, praising God for all," he took leave of the Pope and returned towards Epire. He at one time thought of going to Venice; but, upon reflection, thought it best to send thither his secretary, to ac-

quaint them with the ill success of his application to the Roman see, and to request aid from them. It will be seen that his efforts in this quarter were far more effectual. On his way to Epire, he passed through Scutarie, where Josaphat Barbare, the Venetian ambassador, who has before been mentioned, possessed great authority. Scanderbeg there made a considerable levy of the subjects of Venice, and joined them to his own troops. Lech Ducagin also and his brother Nicholas joined him with four hundred brave horsemen and as many foot soldiers, all of them excellent troops. To these forces were added one hundred men-at-arms, armed all in white, and five hundred footmen, Italians, in the pay and service of the Venetian senate within Scutarie; also one thousand good cavalry and three thousand infantry, furnished by the Scutarians, the Drivastines, the Antivarians, the Lissians, and the Dirrachians: the princes and people of Epire, Macedonia, Sclavonia, and Dalmatia also, being leagued together, did not fail to contribute each a number of troops. These auxiliaries amounted in all to thirteen thousand four hundred chosen men, who assembled at a place appointed, and were at the disposition of Scanderbeg. He divided these forces into two parts; one of which he placed under the command of Lech Ducagin above named, a valiant and experienced knight; and the other portion he committed to the conduct of Nicholas Moneta, a native of Scutarie, and vaivoda or governor of that city, a gentleman highly esteemed and of great valor. It was arranged that these troops should march from Lissa, through the plains of Pharsalia and the forest of Ionimes, and attack the enemy on that side; and that Scanderbeg, with his own forces, should approach the mountain of Cruyna, which is close upon Croia, and assail Ballaban on the opposite quarter.

This plan of attack being agreed upon, Scanderbeg was the first who advanced against the enemy; but when he had

reached the mount Cruyna, he received advice that Iony-me, the brother of Ballaban, was approaching with a large reinforcement, to join his brother, and that he had already passed the mountain of Bulgaria. Scanderbeg immediately took the flower of his army, and marched, as expeditiously as possible, all night, to meet this new enemy. He succeeded in surprising Iony-me, whose troops he easily broke and dispersed, making prisoners of him and his son Heder. The same night he returned victorious to the other part of his army. On the following morning, he exposed to the view of Ballaban his brother and nephew bound together. And making a bold charge upon the Turkish forces which were on the top of the mountain, he drove them thence and took possession of it. He immediately gave order that his confederates should be informed of what had taken place.

Ballaban had some hope of coming to an agreement with the inhabitants of Croia; and finding himself overtopped by Scanderbeg, and placed in a dangerous situation, he advanced to the walls, well accompanied, and endeavored to persuade those within to surrender themselves. The garrison, so far from yielding to his persuasions, issued out and drove him back. But being enraged at this discomfiture, he turned upon the garrison and strove to force them back into the town. But they retiring in good order without any loss, it happened that a skilful arquebusier, named George Alexie, a native of Epire, discharging his piece at Ballaban, wounded him mortally in the throat. He did not, however, immediately fall; but putting spurs to his horse, ran with great speed to his tents, where he had no sooner arrived, than he fell rudely to the ground. The death of their general so disheartened the Turks, that the following night they silently retired from the siege of Croia, and encamped and carefully fortified themselves at Tyranna. The next morning Scanderbeg finding the tents of the enemy deserted by

the men, but stored with baggage and provision, he caused all to be removed into the city; thus adding sufficient to victual it for a year. After this he entered the city in triumph, where he was received with great joy and honor by the inhabitants, on whom he bestowed high and deserved commendations, and many presents in reward of their fidelity and endurance.

While Scanderbeg and his townsmen were thus engaged in exhibiting mutual tokens of joy, two horsemen who appeared to be persons of consequence, came from the camp of the Turks with the request that they might all retire out of the country, leaving their baggage, horses, and armor, and be permitted to save only their lives. The king hereupon immediately assembled his princes, nobles, and captains, to consult upon what ought to be done; and directed the two messengers, in the mean time, to be conducted to a tent and well entertained. The advice of the Venetian ambassador was first asked, but he declined expressing an opinion on the subject before the council. Lech Ducagin, a man of fiery temper, let his mind be known in one word—“*Em-betha!*” which in the Albanian tongue signifies, *To horse!* Most of the assembly were of the same mind, especially Paul Angell the archbishop. But Scanderbeg was not for pursuing the Turks; and in a speech before the council he expressed his opinion to that effect.

The address of Scanderbeg was by some well approved, and his reasons deemed satisfactory; but others differed from him; and he was especially condemned by the common soldiers, who accused him of having become faint-hearted, exclaiming that their general was now wanting to his soldiers, and not the soldiers to their general. So great was the excitement, that it appeared to threaten a mutiny. This ferment of the Epirots was with difficulty restrained by their officers, until it was decided that as soon as Croia was furnished with provisions, they should be per-

mitted to pursue their enemies. The Turkish messengers were then directed by Scanderbeg to carry back this answer to their fellows: that as they had come into that country without his command, so they should not by him be commanded to depart. While this matter was in agitation, Scanderbeg had sent troops to stop the passes against the Turks, and a part of his army to the river Isme, where vessels lay loaded with corn, meal, salt provisions, and biscuit, all which was discharged and conveyed to Croia; so that, in the course of three days, that town was sufficiently victualled for at least six years. Whilst Scanderbeg was thus employed, news arrived that the Turks, being pressed by want of provisions, had decamped in the dead of the night from Tyranna, and with the loss of many men and of the greater part of their baggage, had forced their way through the passes which were guarded by the Christian soldiers. When Scanderbeg's army heard this account, they blamed him loudly, as though the escape of the Turks was to be imputed entirely to him. But he appeased them by large gifts and gracious words; and ordered them immediately to take arms and march against the garrison of Chaonia and other places held in Epire by the Turks, of whom none escaped being slain or taken; and thus the province was cleared of these enemies, and every man returned to his quarters loaded with the spoils of the barbarians, and honored with the thanks, and presents, and commendations of their prince.

It is unnecessary to repeat the high-wrought description of the enraged and mortified feelings of Mahomet, given by his old biographers. He was wrought up to the determination again in person to try his fortune against the kingdom of Epire. Scanderbeg having information of this purpose of the Turk, gave notice of it to his confederates, and desired them to hold themselves in readiness to lend him their aid when he should require it. He took care to supply his

strongholds with all things necessary to secure them against the threatened invasion.

A year was spent on both sides in warlike preparations. When the spring following opened, Mahomet, with immense forces of every kind, began his march towards the dominions of Scanderbeg. He halted on his way at the plain of Saura, and set his artificers and soldiers at work to rebuild the ruined town of Valmes, situated in a corner of Epire near to the Iates, Bratescosages, Cherabes, Buserseches, and Sopotanies; which being completed with wonderful expedition, he furnished it with a sufficient garrison and munitions of war. He then marched forward to the city of Duraz, with the expectation of taking it by surprise, as he did not suppose it had been put in a state of defence. This city of Duraz, or Dirrachium, was formerly called Epidamnum, and is a place of much celebrity. Instead of finding it neglected, as Mahomet hoped, it had been carefully prepared by the Venetians and by Scanderbeg for resistance to their enemies; and the Turks could make no impression upon it, but were repulsed with great slaughter in their attempts upon it. When Mahomet found himself baffled in his attacks upon Duraz, and perceived many of Scanderbeg's men within the town, he imagined that the prince was there in person. For this reason he suddenly broke up his camp, and marched with all expedition immediately to Croia, in hopes of terrifying the inhabitants by the suddenness of his appearance. He summoned them to surrender the town to him, at the same time proposing most advantageous terms in case they complied with his demand; but the only answer he received was from the mouths of the cannon and muskets. A brave sally was also made, and many of the heads of the Turks were carried off in token of victory. The intention of the sultan, as he thus failed in negotiation, was to bring the Croians to submission by a long and close siege. But Scanderbeg, in his wonted manner, hung upon the huge



army of the Turks, incessantly harassing them day and night; and, in the words of his biographer, "the slaughters and butcheries which he committed upon them were notable and wonderful, insomuch that Mahomet, perceiving the small profit which he was like to purchase by this enterprize, was glad to leave the pursuit thereof, and to reserve himself to some other exploit which might be more for his honor and advantage." He accordingly raised the siege of Croia, and marched to a place on the Adriatic, not very distant from Duraz, where Scanderbeg had lately begun to build a town, which he named Chiurill. This town being unfinished and without inhabitants, was entirely destroyed. It was the intention of the sultan to ruin other places during his progress homeward; but the Christian army followed him so closely, attacking him continually on all quarters, both day and night, that he had no leisure to carry his purpose into effect. The people of the country also, who dwelt in the forests and mountains, so grievously annoyed him that he despaired of committing upon the dominions of Scanderbeg the mischief which he intended, and returned to Constantinople with increased rage and indignation.

When the sultan had passed out of Epire, he sent two of his chief officers, named Alibeg and Aiasbeg, with 28,000 Turks, and with orders to attend to the defence of the Turkish frontiers, and not to offer any violence or make any attempt upon the Christians. As soon as these commanders had permanently stationed their forces, they began to practise their arts upon Scanderbeg by secretly sending him valuable presents, in the hope of lulling him into security and of rendering him negligent. But he well understood their devices; and though he accepted the presents, and made others in return, he was in no danger of being overreached. He caused a general muster and levy of men to be made throughout his dominions, with the view of taking

from the Turks the town of Valmes, which had lately been built by Mahomet. But after the prince had visited all parts of his realm, and caused an enrollment to be made of all who were capable of bearing arms, he came to the city of Lyssa, under the dominion of the Venetians, and determined to call an assembly of the princes and lords of the league; but before they could meet in council, Scanderbeg was suddenly seized by a severe fever, which continuing to increase in violence, he became sensible that his end was approaching. He therefore caused the princes and lords above mentioned, together with the Venetian ambassadors, and his chief officers, to be introduced into his bedroom, and is said to have addressed them in a very impressive manner.

He declared that he considered true religion to consist, first, in the reverence, service, and adoration of God most high and omnipotent; and next, in the love, care, and continual regard to the welfare of our country, and entire readiness to shed our blood and give our life for her safety and preservation. He called God and his fellow-men to witness how he had always endeavored to walk by that rule. He said the twenty-third year was now passed since he escaped from the hands of Amurath, and alluded to the success which had attended him during that period; that he now, in the sixty-third year of his age, felt it to be the will of God that he should quit this life; and protested, before God, that the thought of so doing caused his mind no trouble nor grief, for that he did not repine at the law imposed upon us by our nature. He declared, nevertheless, that his willingness to die arose not from a desire to be relieved from the troubles of this life, for that he was willing to expose himself as much as he had ever done, for the service of God and the religion of Christ. He earnestly exhorted his hearers to remain firm in the defence of the Christian religion and the Catholic faith, and to maintain mutual love and

fidelity, as the only means by which to be secure against the Ottoman power. After most tenderly expressing his anxiety about his child, and alluding to the incessant toils he had himself undergone, as well for his friends as for his own state, he thus, in the words of Lavardin, concluded his address :

“ And now (my companions, my friends), behold I die, I leave you, and I must go hence. Wherefore I pray and request all of you, I require and adjure you, that the faith, affection, and love which was never wanting on my part towards you, the same you would bestow and employ towards *John* my son, whom, as the lively image and resemblance of the father, I offer and dedicate unto you, as vicar and lieutenant for me and in my stead.”

When Scanderbeg ceased to address his friends and allies, he sent for his son, and, in the presence of the queen, took leave of him in the most affectionate manner. He “ commended them both” (says Knolles), “ with his kingdom, to the tuition of the *Venetians* ; who, by the articles of the confederation betwixt him and them, were in honor bound to protect his son and kingdom during the time of his minority, and afterwards peaceably to place him in the same. In fine, he willed his wife after his death to pass over with her son into *Apulia*, where they might in safety and quiet live upon such possessions as he there held by the gift of King *Ferdinand*.” The praises bestowed upon the *Venetians* by the dying prince, for their honorable and magnanimous conduct in general and towards him in particular, could not be more exalted. He ended by addressing to his son many precepts worthy of a wise, virtuous, valiant, and experienced military commander and king.

While Scanderbeg was speaking to his son, a rumor arose in the town that the Turks were overrunning the neighboring country. “ At the report of these news, *Scanderbeg*, although

he kept his bed in great extremity, yet could he not repress nor refrain that ancient and invincible courage, nor that lively and martial spirit which was wont to dwell and be resident in his noble heart."\* Raising himself in his bed as well as his enfeebled limbs would permit, he called for his armor, and ordered his horse to be made ready. But when his strength failed him and he again sank down, turning his face to his officers, he said—"Forth, forth, my companions! issue out upon those traitors and infidels; go you before, I will follow after you immediately!"

Hereupon a troop of horse issued from the town in pursuit of the enemy, whom they found encamped upon the brook Clyre, near to the city of Scutarie, whose territory they had laid waste, under the command of the Turkish general Ahamat. When the Turks, who amounted to 15,000, perceived the approach of the Christian troops, they supposed that Scanderbeg was at the head of them, and in great alarm decamped during the night over the mountains, and left behind them the greater part of their booty. It being the winter season, and all places being covered with ice and snow, the enemy was so hard pressed by the lords and inhabitants of the country while endeavoring in a disorderly manner to retreat over the tops and crags of the hills, that many were slain or taken prisoners, and almost all their plunder lost.

On the night when the Turks began thus to flee away through dread of Scanderbeg, he, having with great penitence confessed his sins, and having devoutly received the Sacrament according to the rites of the holy church, commended his soul to God, and gave up the ghost. He died on the 17th of January, in the year 1467,† in the sixty-

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\* Lavardin.

† Knolles says 1466, though he agrees with Lavardin as to the age of Scanderbeg, and the length of his reign. I suspect a typographical error in Knolles's history.

third year of his age, and the four-and-twentieth of his reign.

When Lech Ducagin perceived what had occurred, by the lamentations which arose, he rushed to the scene of death; and, while he tore his hair and his beard, he is said to have thus exclaimed, "Hasten you, hasten you hither, you princes and lords of *Albany*; this day are the gates and rampiers of *Epire* and *Macedonia* broken open: this day are our fortresses and walls fallen to the ground: this is the day wherein our strength and forces begin to fail us: this is the day wherein our crowns and sceptres are overthrown: and from henceforth all our help, all our hope, with this good prince is quite gone and extinguished."

To use the language of Knolles, "His death was worthily lamented of all Christian princes, but especially of the *Venetians* and princes of *Albania*, who had now lost their most careful watchman and invincible champion; the sorrow of his subjects is not to be expressed, every man bewailing him as the only stay of the common-weal, and as if with him they had lost all their hope. His dead body was, with the general lamentation of all men, royally buried in the cathedral church of *St. Nicholas* at *Lyssa*; where it rested in peace, until that about nine years after, the Turks coming to the siege of *Scodra*, by the way took the city of *Lyssa*, and there with great devotion digged up his bones, reckoning it some part of their happiness, if they might but see or touch the same; and such as could get any part thereof, were it never so little, caused the same to be set, some in silver some in gold, to hang about their necks or wear upon their bodies; persuading themselves by the wearing thereof to be partakers of such good fortune and hap as had *Scanderbeg* himself whilst he lived."

Several particulars, not mentioned in the foregoing ac-

count of our hero, may serve still further to illustrate the qualities of his body and mind.

The beauty and dignity of his person have already been particularly described.

His whole life was an example of heroic daring and unflinching intrepidity; but in addition to his other deeds of valor, may worthily be singled out his conduct in presence of Amurath at the taking of the towns of Nicomedia, Prusia, and Ostrea; for he was the first man that scaled the walls and displayed the Turkish standard.

Whenever sent by Amurath against the Christians, he acted with such skill as to do them the least possible injury, without exciting on the part of the sultan any suspicion against himself. Although compelled to appear a Mahomedan outwardly, he was in his heart a sincere Christian.

His custom was to fight with his arm naked. As to cold or heat, he cared for neither.

It is reported of him that from the first day when he re-entered Epire, until he recovered possession of his kingdom, he was never known to sleep two whole hours in one night. Which reputed habit, after all allowances for exaggeration, shows that he must have had the reputation of possessing most extraordinary vigor of body and vigilance of mind.

He was, as some say, a great eater and drinker. And, indeed, without an abundant supply of nourishment, it seems hardly possible that the human frame could endure the fatigue to which he was constantly exposed, and perform the feats of strength and agility which he daily exhibited.

Among many examples of his amazing bodily strength, may be mentioned his encounter with a savage wild bull. This animal, from its size and fierceness, was the terror of

all the inhabitants of the country of Mamisa, sister to Scanderbeg, where the furious beast committed much damage and caused many deaths. Scanderbeg repaired on horseback to the haunt of the animal, and, setting upon it, he, with one blow of his cimeter, completely severed its head from its shoulders.

A similar feat he performed upon a monstrous wild boar, in Apulia, which had wounded many of the courtiers of King Ferdinand. Being one day engaged in hunting with the king, he encountered this beast in the open field, and attacking it as he had done the bull, he soon severed its head from its body.

It is also related that, after the death of Ballaban, and the departure of his army from the siege of Croia, *Ionima* and *Heder*, the brother and nephew of Ballaban, were brought to Scanderbeg, close bound together; and that the sight of these prisoners recalling to his mind the cruelty exercised upon Moses and his companions by the instigation of Ballaban, he flew into a rage, and with one blow of his cimeter cut them both in twain.

This weapon was made at Damascus in Syria. "It was of a most perfect goodness and excellent temper." The fame of it was so extensive that Mahomet having heard that it could divide helmets and other armor, he, during a truce, sent to Scanderbeg and asked to see it. His wish was gratified; and he caused some of his most powerful and expert men to make proof of it in his presence. But when none of its reputed wonders appeared, Mahomet sent it back, saying that he could for money procure one much better, and that he did not believe any of the wonderful qualities which it was said to possess. Thereupon, Scanderbeg, in presence of the messenger, performed some most extraordinary feats with that same sword, desiring him to tell his master what he had seen, and to tell him, at the

same time, that the great effects produced were not to be attributed to the perfection of the weapon, but to the strength of the arm by which it was wielded.

Such were the life, and death, and posthumous honors of this most extraordinary person ; whose single arm may be said to have rescued his country from the dominion of the Turks, and to have preserved its liberty and glory as long as his life was spared.

THE END.