

Venetians, whose vessels visited every port of the Mediterranean, and every coast of Europe, and whose maritime commerce was probably greater than that of all the rest of Europe taken together. In Venice the rich manufactures of silk, cloth of gold and silver, vessels of gold and silver, and glass, were carried to the highest degree of perfection. The Venetian navy was sufficiently powerful to repress the piracies of the Turkish and Barbary corsairs. The government was beneficent: the people were numerous, opulent, and happy. Such was the commercial splendour and prosperity now enjoyed by Venice, from which she was soon to decline, without a possibility of recovery, in consequence of events, which no errors in commercial policy produced, and no human prudence could possibly avert.