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Abstract of the Life of Count Cagliostro.

SINCE the death of Joseph Francis Borri, the celebrated chemist, heresiarch, physician, and prophet, who distinguished himself about the beginning of the seventeenth century, by his uncommon capacity and numerous impostures, Europe has not, perhaps, produced such an extraordinary character as Joseph Balsamo commonly known by the name of Count Cagliostro.

In a memoir published by himself while in England, being desirous to conceal the secret of his origin beneath an impenetrable veil of mystery, he pretended that he could not speak positively as to the place of his nativity, nor in regard to the parents from whom he derived his birth. This circumstance gave an ample scope to the imagination of his followers, some of whom pretended that he was the offspring of the grand-master of Malta, by a Turkish lady, taken captive by a galley belonging to that island; while others, with equal probability, asserted that he was the only surviving son of that Prince, who about thirty-five years ago swayed the precarious sceptre of Trebifond! To infuse into this story a greater portion of the marvellous, it was added, that a revolution taking place, in consequence of which, the reigning sovereign was sacrificed to the fury of his seditious subjects, his infant son was conveyed by a trusty friend to Medina, where the Mussulman Sheriff had the generosity to educate him in the faith of his Christian parents. He himself asserted, that at an age, when he first became conscious of his existence, he found himself in the city of Medina, was called Acharat, had a person of the name of Altotas, for his governor, was attended by two eunuchs, who treated him with the utmost deference and respect, and resided in the house of the Mufti Salaahym.

This account, which, it must be acknowledged, has all the air of a romance, could neither satisfy nor impose upon the inquisition. The holy fathers accordingly made the strictest search after the origin of Cagliostro, and at last discovered, that this pretended prince and heir apparent to the kingdom of Trebifond, was the son of Peter Balsamo and Felicia Braconieri,