

a curious example of a term, subsequently employed as one of the most comprehensive heads of classification, having its origin from the fewest possible premises. Among the captives taken by the Russians in one of their frequent inroads on the country lying between Mount Caucasus and the Euxine, was a Georgian woman, who was carried prisoner to Moscow, and died suddenly there. The body was made the subject of anatomical examination by Professor Hiltenbrandt, and the skull having been prepared, was subsequently presented to Dr. Asch, of St. Petersburg. From him it passed into the hands of Blumenbach, and its peculiar symmetry and beauty appear to have made a lively impression on his mind. That this was not without good reason appears from the following description of the Georgian cranium by Dr. Lawrence :

“The form of this head is of such distinguished elegance, that it attracts the attention of all who visit the collection in which it is contained. The vertical and frontal regions form a large and smooth convexity, which is a little flattened at the temples; the forehead is high and broad, and carried forward perpendicularly over the face. The cheek-bones are small, descending from the outer side of the orbit, and gently turned back. The superciliary ridges run together at the root of the nose, and are smoothly continued into the bridge of that organ, which forms an elegant and finely turned arch. The alveolar processes are softly rounded, and the chin is full and prominent. In the whole structure there is nothing rough or harsh, nothing disagreeably projecting. Hence it occupies a middle place between the two opposite extremes, of the Mongolian variety, in which the face is flattened, and expanded laterally; and the Ethiopian, in which the forehead is contracted, and the jaws also are narrow and elongated anteriorly.”

Little could the poor Georgian captive dream of the posthumous honours and admiration that were to atone to her for her living wrongs. She has avenged herself on her European captors, by introducing uncertainty and confusion into the science for illustrating which Blumenbach regarded her symmetrical cranium as a peculiarly valuable prize. It was in the Third Decade of his anatomical descriptions of skulls, published in 1795, that the skull of the fair Georgian was introduced, accompanied by a glowing description of its elegance and unequalled grace; and a reference to the beauty of the Georgian women, which, as his example proved, lives even in their fleshless