

foundation of a large palace in the centre, and when it was raised a few yards with solid stone, conferred it on the English, to finish it on the plan in which it was begun. The late Levant Company gave 10,000*l.* and the British Government contributed the remainder, so as to complete it in a style of correspondent magnificence. But the circumstance which rendered it particularly interesting was, the delicate compliment paid by the Turks to British feeling and opinion. When it was ready, they sent, on the day on which it was opened for the reception of the Embassy, a number of their slaves, who were emancipated on the spot, and given to understand they owed their freedom to English philanthropy ; and it was particularly affecting to see many of these poor people, who had been thirty years in chains, bending in gratitude to their benefactors. Never perhaps was a higher compliment paid by one nation to the sentiments of another, or the opening of an edifice hallowed by a more impressive ceremony.

The edifice stood nearly in the centre of a demesne, including a lawn and garden of about four acres, enclosed from the streets by a high and substantial wall. It was an oblong quadrangular building of three stories, surmounted on the roof by a lofty kiosk or square cupola, which commanded most extensive views of the Bosphorus, Sea of Marmora, Constantinople, and the surrounding countries—and lighted a large hall within, round which were the apartments. One of these was the grand hall or reception room ; at one end stood the throne, as the representative of Majesty, on the steps of which the unfortunate Caroline was often seen sitting and weeping when she made Constantinople her short sojourn. This room was lighted by very splendid lustres, and the floor was formed of inlaid mosaic of different woods, and, whether considering its size or its decoration, was certainly the finest in the Turkish empire. The others were in a style of corresponding grandeur : every Ambassador added something to the ornaments and decoration ; and Mr. Canning, it is said, expended 10,000*l.* in alterations and improvements while he remained at Pera. The garden, however, was the favourite object of care. Lady Liston caused exotics to be brought from every country ; the woods about the Black Sea were searched for the most beautiful shrubs and trees, to form walks and plantations ; and it became not only the most ornamental, but the most delightful retreat in the centre of a dense and crowded city.

Pera, in common with other Turkish towns, has been always subject to fires. The inflammable Moslem houses, the exceeding carelessness of the people, their impressions of predestination, an arid climate, and strong winds, produce more frequent and more extensive conflagrations at Constantinople, than in any other country in the world. Within ten years Pera has been ravaged by five dreadful fires, which have in succession burned down every house on the Peninsula. It frequently happens that the flame bursts out in places very remote from the burning houses. The