

to enrich his own private collection.) They saw portions of the skeletons of St. Andrew, St. Nicholas, St. Catharine, St. Louis of France, St. Li of Genoa, of the Innocents slain by the edict of Herod, and of three of the eleven hundred Virgins who were martyred in former days in the vicinity of Cologne. At one place, Don Clavijo and his companions were shown a stone of many colours, bearing upon it tears, dropped from the eyes of St John and the three Maries, still as fresh as if newly fallen. In the possession of such treasures, Constantinople, as we know, was not peculiar. Throughout the length and breadth of Europe, in innumerable localities, deposits of human remains, and other objects similar to those displayed before the eyes of the Spanish envoys, were preserved. The practice was probably derived from Asia, and doubtless began early among the primitive races of man. It was an easy way of keeping up the memory of departed heroes and heroines. It afforded ocular proof of their former existence, and so supplemented tradition conveniently. Among simple populations going on generation after generation, without acquaintance with written records, without the power, taken in the mass, of deciphering written records, when there were any, such a practice would be greatly applauded. (As to the abuses which would be likely to attend the practice, we need not stop to remark upon them: they are obvious enough.) Now, what I say is this: that there is in historic autograph relics a degree of that virtue which was felt originally to reside in the corporal relics of eminent men and women. They satisfy, in some degree, a certain human craving. We have not indeed the same needs in regard to the past that our forefathers had. The moral proofs of the allegations of history are among us so accessible and so strong, that the supplementary evidence of tangible, visible relics is not essential. Nevertheless, such relics are always acceptable. When it is beyond the bounds of possibility to behold the doer himself of great actions, it is ever pleasant, nay, it is oftentimes strengthening and refreshing, to see a particle of his handiwork on paper or otherwise. It is well, therefore, to have among us, here and there, depositories of such things, however limited. Remains of this kind, fragmentary and mutilated as we shall often find them, may be compared to those imperfect limbs—arms without hands, hands without the full tale of fingers—of which we were told just now. The study of a part will help to an idea of the whole. The chance-words preserved in the written relics will set the dead before us in a