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LEAVES THEY HAVE TOUCHED;

BEING A REVIEW OF SOME HISTORICAL AUTOGRAPHS.

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II.—BRITISH AND EUROPEAN GENERALLY.

Historical autographs may in some sort be considered to answer, in these days, the purpose of the religious relics of early ages. In former times, we know, the shrines and sacristies of churches and monasteries were the museums of the period. Science had not yet come into being; and human curiosity was obliged to satisfy itself with the examination of fragmentary portions of the bodies of departed heroes and a variety of miscellaneous objects having relation to the same persons. Some envoys from Spain, we are told, visited Constantinople about fifty years before it fell into the hands of the Turks. There were three thousand churches and monasteries in the place, not reckoning those in ruins. All of them were more or less rich in human remains, exhibited to visitors. The Spaniards in intervals of business took a rapid survey of the principal of them. They beheld, perhaps with a full faith, fragments of the bodies of many of those whose histories or mythologies had become the chief furniture of the popular mind. They saw the right arm of St. John the Evangelist; the right arm of St. Stephen; the right arm of St. Mary Magdalene, of St. Anne. The hand of St. John, they noted, wanted the thumb. St. Stephen's arm wanted the hand. St. Anne's hand wanted a finger. (It had been broken off and carried away by one of the Greek emperors