

receiving no answer we fired a Shot at them, and about two minutes afterwards a cannon charged with Grape. This, rattling about them, produced a reply that they were Hydriotes; and on telling them we suffered neither friend nor foe to come near us at night, they rowed away.

On Wednesday evening, July 22, Hunt reached Athens, and anchored in the outer harbour of the Piræus. 'About midnight a ship sailed past us on its way to Constantinople. I did not know till the following morning that all the French who had lately been arrested at Athens were on board this vessel, and were going to the Capital, in consequence of a Firman from the Porte.' The French residents at Athens, including Fauvel, who would have been a formidable opponent of Lusieri, had been arrested in the spring of this year by a firman from Constantinople.⁶³

Hunt and his party on landing were received by Logotheti, who made room for the visitors in his own house, since the only other available quarters in the town happened to be occupied by Dodwell and his companions. He found that Lusieri had begun work on the Acropolis about a month previously, but that the artists were paying for the permission, and exposed to continual insult and interruption. Dodwell's party were in the like case. 'Sixty Piastres had been demanded by the Disdar for admitting the English travellers to the Temple of Minerva, and they had suffered some other indignities which had irritated them extremely.' These circumstances moved Hunt to make immediate use of the powers with which he was provided. He had complete authority, granted by the Turkish Government, in gratitude for the military and political aid of Great Britain, but as Lord Elgin stated in his evidence (*Report*, p. 35) 'in point of fact, permission issuing from the Porte for any of the distant provinces, is little better than an authority to make the best bargain you can with the local authorities.' There was, therefore, nothing unusual in the fact that the bearer of a firman was obliged to put pressure of various kinds on the local official.

It must be noted also that the firman was addressed to the Voivode and the Cadi. The Disdar, whose treatment is described below, was their subordinate.

After instructing Raschid Aga, the Mubashir of the Porte (whom we have seen defined above as 'a kind of *ad hoc* man, to see that the contents of the firman are obeyed'), Hunt went with all his train to wait on the Voivode.

Raschid behaved on this occasion with uncommon energy and propriety; he entered completely into your Lordship's views, and the whole of his conduct entitles him to your warmest patronage. When the Voivode had read the letters, and perceived the determined tone with which we spoke, he became submissive in the extremest degree, and assured us he was highly mortified to find that the Disdar had presumed to treat any Englishman with disrespect, or demand money on any pretext. On wishing to see the Disdar's Son, difficulties were started about his being absent; but on declaring my resolution to know really where the blame attached, the poor miscreant came in bare-footed and trembling; attempted to deny the fact complained of by Mr. Dodwell's party; but on my repeating what had happened both to Mr. Nesbitt and myself, the

⁶³ *Revue Archéologique*, 3rd Ser. xxx. p. 196.

Vaivode and Mou Basheer told him he was exiled ; I then interceded for him on promise of his future good conduct, and he was pardoned. The Mou Basheer however hinted to him that as he was young and strong he might find employment in the Gallies of the Sultan on a second complaint. The Conference ended with repeated assurances that henceforward the gates of the Citadel are open to *all* Englishmen, from Sun-rise to Sun-Set, and to draw or measure any of the old buildings they please, and that your Lordship's Artists are to consider themselves at full liberty to model, dig, or carry away whatever does not interfere with the works. Hitherto all this has been most faithfully performed. The Citadel is now as open and free to us as the streets of Athens.

It may be supposed that this eventful interview with the Voivode took place on July 23. The next few days must have been days of feverish activity, judging from the reports sent to Lord Elgin by Hunt on July 31 in continuation of the letter already quoted, and by Lusieri in a letter of August 6. The inscriptions on the Acropolis were collected, including the treasure lists and other important Athenian documents now in the Elgin collection. The Caryatid porch of the Erechtheum was cleared of disfiguring accretions.⁶⁴ 'The Cariatids that support it, and the rich ornaments of its cornice and ceiling, are now open to the day.' 'If your Lordship,' Hunt continues, 'would come here in a large Man of War that beautiful little model of ancient art might be transported wholly to England. Nothing can exceed the exquisite beauty and delicacy of all its details.' A block of the Erechtheum cornice was taken down. On July 31 the Parthenon was first approached.

To-day the Ship-Carpenter and five of the Crew mounted the walls of the Temple of Minerva, and by the aid of Windlasses, Cordage and twenty Greeks, they succeeded in detaching and lowering down, without the slightest accident, one of the Statues or Groupes in the Metopes representing a combat between a youth (probably Theseus) and a Centaur ; it has long been the admiration of the world ; indeed nothing can equal it for beauty and grace. . . . A second which adjoins it, on the same subject, is to follow it to-morrow. . . . He [the son of the Disdar] tells me Choiseul gave his Father Eight Hundred Piastres for the Metope which adjoined these, but that it was taken down with so little skill, that the rope broke, and it was dashed into a thousand fragments.

On this latter point, tradition was already seriously at fault. The only broken metope connected with the name of Choiseul-Gouffier was one which was secured by Fauvel in 1788 on his behalf. It had been blown down by a storm, and been broken into three fragments. By a curious chain of circumstances it is now in the Elgin Collection (No. 309. See below, p. 357).

'The second Alto Relievo,' Hunt continues after a pause, presumably on the next day, 'is now lowered, and with equal success ; they are to be brought as soon as possible to the Consul's ; where the Calmuc is to design them, and then they are to be put on board. When I saw those beautiful statues hanging in the air, and depending on Ragusan Cordage, I was seized with a trembling and palpitation, which only ceased when they arrived safe to the Ground.'

⁶⁴ Dodwell, i. p. 354. 'During my first visit to Athens, the Caryatides were nearly concealed by a modern wall, the removal of which has very much improved the appearance of the monument, and was done by the

dilapidators, not with any intention of benefiting this singular edifice, but merely to examine which was the most entire of the statues, and to facilitate its removal.'