

Mohammed the second besieged that city (*a*), the emperor could not suppress the theological animosities, and the council of Florence (*b*) engaged the general attention much more than the Turkish army.

As every person, in common disputes, is sensible he may be deceived, a tenacious and untractable spirit seldom prevails to any extreme, but in those controversies where religion is the subject; for there, as every person from the nature of the point in debate becomes persuaded that his own opinion is true, he grows exasperated against those, who, instead of concurring with his sentiments, endeavour to make him a convert to their own.

Those, who may happen to read the history written by Pachymerus, will be effectually convinced of the unalterable inability of divines to accommodate their own disagreements, and will see an emperor (*c*) who spent his days in assembling people of that class, listening to their disputations, and reproaching them for the inflexibility of their opinions: they will likewise behold another engaged with a hydra of controversies that were perpetually rising to new life, and will be sensible that the same pacific methods and persevering patience, the same inclination to finish their contentions; in a word, the same artless pliancy to their intrigues, joined with the same

(*a*) Hist. of the last Palaeologi by Ducas.

(*b*) The question in debate was, whether a congregation, who heard mass from a priest who had consented to pacific measures, ought not to have fled from him as if he had been a destructive flame: the great church was accounted a profane temple, and the monk Gennadius hurled his anathemas against all who were desirous of peace.

(*c*) Andronicus Palaeologus.