

April 10<sup>th</sup> 1840

My Dear Sir

I hope the drawing  
sent to Mr Hamilton is  
satisfactory and wish you  
to present my compliments  
to him and that should it  
be otherwise, I shall feel  
happy to make <sup>it</sup> so. at any  
time Mr H. will give me  
an opportunity - indeed I wished  
to look over it again ~~very~~  
~~much~~ and thought Mr Hamilton  
would send it to the Royal  
Academy - believe me  
Yours most truly  
J. Alton

David Roberts Esq

- 172

FINE ARTS.

ALLOM'S PANORAMA OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

This panorama will be opened to-day to the public in the Theatre adjoining the Polytechnic Institution, where were recently exhibited Allen's Views on the South Western Railway.

It is one of very unequal merit, some parts being very good, others either indifferent or beneath mediocrity. This is clearly the result of starting with too scanty materials for a monster panorama, and often entrusting these to second-rate hands. For though this panorama has seemingly but one patronymic, it is easy to distinguish opposite styles. The architectural department, whether of interiors or the exteriors of buildings, is as decidedly superior as the other parts are faulty; in the first we recognise the practised design, the neat finish of style, and dexterous disposition of lights and shades, for which Mr. Allom has a well-deserved repute; in the latter, the limning but feebly sustains comparison. The landscape is untrue in tone; the skies are sultry, and laden with thundering clouds, which would at once swamp the ill-constructed fleets in the pictorial Dardanelles. By condensing the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, which form the first part of the panorama, an excellent volume might be made; as along the coast from Cape Greco to the sweet waters of Asia, there are few objects of earthly interest, the plains of Ilium even failing to raise enthusiasm. The "Sultan's Kiosk," however, may be excepted; its gardens, fountains, and pretty grouping of Turkish women produced the effect of an oriental Watteau, in its rich harmony of colouring, which was presently contrasted by a good shady landscape of the groves of Therapia; the passages from one subject to another being skilfully managed. In the second part, the light shifts to the opposite side and shows the whole of Constantinople, with little aim at strong contrasts of light and shade. Mr. Allom is great in mosques: he likes their swelling domes, and fine-spun minarets, and all the bizarre effects of Moorish architecture; his structures rival in animation the bits of humanity he peoples them with: witness the "Cemetery and Mosque of Eyoub, and its vanishing perspective of pillars." The remaining views consist of the "Golden Horn," the "Subterranean Palace," the interior of "Saint Sophia," which in its different orders is akin to the old Roman temples of the "Sublime Porte," and its quaint broad-brimmed fountain, and lastly the gardens of the seraglio, and the interior of the harem, provokingly like the *renaissance* style to which Mr. Allom is so partial. Not the least effective scenes are the humorous ablutions of the Turkish bathers. From the title of "Polyorama," which is conspicuously inscribed over the doorway, as well as from the last words of the describer, more panoramas may be expected from the same hand.