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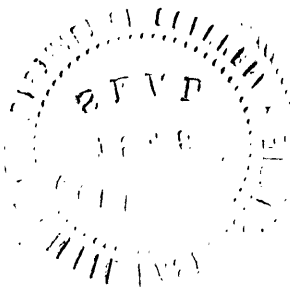
PERSONAL NARRATIVE
OF A
JOURNEY FROM
INDIA TO ENGLAND,

BY BUSSORAH, BAGDAD, THE RUINS OF BABYLON,
CURDISTAN, THE COURT OF PERSIA,
THE WESTERN SHORE OF THE CASPIAN SEA, ASTRAKHAN,
NISHNEY NOVOGOROD, MOSCOW, AND ST. PETERSBURGH:
IN THE YEAR 1824.

BY
CAPTAIN THE HON. GEORGE KEPPEL.

LONDON:
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1827.

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TO
THE EARL OF ALBEMARLE.

IN sending forth this, my first Work, to the Public, I am naturally anxious to obtain for it a protector. To whom, then, can I better apply than to you, my dear Father, for whose entertainment I was first induced to keep a Diary of my Travels?

Your affectionate Son,

GEORGE KEPPEL.

Dublin Castle.

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From an oriental Drawing

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NATIVE OF DURBUND

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NARRATIVE,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

My fellow-travellers—Futteh Ali Khan—Departure from Bombay—Persian Syud—His Compliment to the English, and opinion of our Devotion—Luminous Surface of the Sea—Dinner with the Prince—Persian Politeness—Arrival at Muscat—Barren Appearance of the Cove—Fortifications—Shipping—Ignorance of the Imaum and of his Officers in Navigation—Aneꝑdote—The Imaum and Futteh Ali Khan—Our introduction to the Imaum—His character—Wahhabbee Pirate—Town of Muscat—Bazaar—Inhabitants—Method of extracting Toll—Imaum's stud—Slave Auction.

IN the month of January, 1824, Mr. Ker Baillie Hamilton, Mr. Lamb, Captain Hart, and myself, met from different parts of India, at the Presidency of Bombay. We were all resolved upon an overland journey to England, but differed as to the precise route. By making a few mutual concessions on this point, we agreed to travel together.* We were assisted in this arrangement by Captain Alexander,

* The Author begs to return his best acknowledgments to Mr. Lamb for the use of his notes, and to Captain Hart for the drawings which accompany this Work.

who kindly granted us a passage to Bussorah in his Majesty's ship Alligator, of which he had the command.

January 26.—The night before we sailed, the officers of the frigate, and our travelling party, were invited to dine with His Highness Futteh Ali Khan, who, as well as ourselves, embarked on board the Alligator the following morning.

Futteh Ali Khan is an eunuch in the seraglio of his brother-in-law, Abbas Meerza, the Prince Royal of Persia, who married his sister. He is the son of the brave but unfortunate Lootf Ali Khan, the last Persian king of the Zund dynasty, who was murdered by Aga Mohummud, in 1794.

Lootf Ali has been aptly compared to Richard Cœur-de-Lion of England, and Charles XII. of Sweden, and he is still the subject of song and poetry in Persia. The usurper destroyed nearly all the members of the deposed family ; the remainder, he dispersed over Mazanderaun. At the period of his father's overthrow, our royal shipmate was seven years old ; his life was spared probably on account of his tender age ; but the condition to which he was reduced by the barbarous policy of the conqueror, made the boon of little value.

The year previous to our meeting at Bombay, I had seen His Highness at Calcutta, where, in my capacity of aide-de-camp to the Marquis of Hastings, the then Governor General of India, I had frequent opportunities of conversing with him. He had at that time just arrived from the court of the Prince Royal of Persia on a visit to India ; and our Government, with its usual liberality, had allowed him a hundred rupees a-day, and a splendid establishment ; attractions which proved so great to his Highness, that there is no knowing to what period

he might have prolonged his stay, had not ill health accelerated his departure.

His Highness is tall and emaciated ; his eyes are large and black, and his complexion is sallow. Though not more than thirty-eight years old, he appears double that age, and his voice and features so resemble those of a female, that when wrapped up in shawls, he might be easily mistaken for an old woman.

January 27.—We went on board the Alligator at ten o'clock this morning. Shortly after us, Futteh Ali Khan embarked, under a salute from the batteries. As His Highness was in a delicate state of health, he was hoisted, or in sea-phrase, “whipped on board.” The sailors, whose notions of princely appearance were probably formed by the pictures of our own royal family, seemed much surprised at the feminine look of the unfortunate Persian. Many a joke, incapable of repetition, did I hear made on this wreck of a fallen dynasty.

We got under weigh the moment the Prince was embarked. The weather was fine, and the wind favourable. Those of our friends who had come to take leave, were soon obliged to retreat to their boats, as we were rapidly getting out to sea.

Before sun-set the town of Bombay had disappeared from view, and the high ghauts, (mountains) which mark this coast, were all we could discern of Indian land.

The principal person of the Prince's establishment, was a Persian Syyud, a man of some information, and not deficient in humour. As I could speak Persian with tolerable fluency, I used frequently to amuse myself by asking his opinion respecting the improvement of our nation in different branches of science. Amongst other subjects, I tried

to explain to him the properties of a steam-boat lately established in Calcutta, which, from its power of stemming wind, tide, and current, had been called by the Indians “Sheitaun koo noo,” *the Devil’s Boat*.

Wishing to pay a compliment to our nation, the Syyud replied, “When arts were in their infancy, it was natural to give the Devil credit for any new invention; but now, so advanced are the English in every kind of improvement, that they are more than a match for the Devil himself.”

Mahometans are at all times ready to acknowledge our superiority in every thing connected with manufactures and arts. This concession, indeed, could not well be withheld, as most articles of a finer quality are imported from Europe into the East, and the greater portion of them from England. Nevertheless it is surprising that a people so bigoted to their own superiority in most respects, have allowed us a pre-eminence even in this. They reconcile it, however, to their vanity, by observing that we, as infidels, have our enjoyments in this life, while theirs, as true believers, will be in a world to come. In short, that we are as superior to them, as “the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light.”

January 29.—This morning, (Sunday,) divine service was performed. As soon as it was over, I went up to the Syyud, who had been watching our motions, and, to observe his reply, asked him why he had not said his prayers this morning? His answer was very laconic, *Huftee mun, Rooze Shuma*. “Daily I, weekly you.”

The Mahometans believe, not with the Syyud, that we pray once a week, but that we never pray at all; and, to say the truth, the general conduct of our countrymen in the East, rather favours the supposition.

February 1.—The sea was covered this morning with a vast quantity of luminous blubber, the molusca of the meduſa species. It is sometimes of a scarlet colour; that which we saw was blue, and resembled the flower of the convolvulus. At night it gave the sea the appearance of waves of liquid fire. This is a constant indication of an approach to the Persian shore.

Captain Alexander being confined to his bed by a severe fall from a horse while at Bombay, deputed me to do the honours of the table. The Prince would sometimes favour us with his company, though, except for the honour, we could willingly have dispensed with his visits. On some of these occasions, he would describe, with true Persian minuteness, those particulars of health which we generally reserve for our physician. At other times he would sop his long skeleton fingers in all the dishes most suitable to his palate, thrust them into his mouth, and then, while wet with saliva, into the plate of some wondering midshipman beside him. His Highness had one more habit which, though contrary to our opinions of good breeding, is reckoned in Persia the greatest proof of politeness, as it intimates a compliment to the host's good cheer. I mean eructation. In this sort of ventriloquism, His Highness was so well-bred, as to give us daily specimens of his powers to the disgust of our naval friends, who, not aware such a custom was fashionable in Persia, thought it "more honoured in the breach, than in the observance."

February 2.—At two, P. M., we saw the high land near Muscat, distinguished by a conspicuous break in the mountains called the Devil's Gap. At sun-set, the land was about thirty miles distant. We continued under easy sail, standing off and on during the night.

February 3.—At daybreak we were surprised to find ourselves to the

leeward of our port, having been carried a long way to the north-west by a current.

February 4.—We anchored in the Cove of Muscat, the seat of government of a sovereign Arab prince, whose title is that of Imaum. The Cove is formed by a deep circular indentation in the coast, and the land, or rather rock, for there is not the least appearance of soil, rises nearly perpendicular in crude rugged masses, presenting an aspect of the greatest sterility imaginable. The roadstead and town towards the sea, are defended by a great parade of fortifications, but they appear to be in so rickety a state, that the firing of their own guns would demolish them. Four large vessels belonging to the Imaum were at anchor in the harbour; one of these was the Liverpool frigate, lately of his Majesty's service, which the Imaum purchased two years ago. His Highness is very fond of ships, but knows very little about them. From the manner in which his fleet is managed, it may be considered rather as a plaything, than as applicable to any serviceable purpose. His officers know about as much of nautical affairs as the Imaum himself. A short time ago, one of the ships being in danger, it was recommended to the officer commanding, that a part of the standing rigging should be cut away. This he refused to do, on the plea that "it would spoil the look of the ship!"

On anchoring in the Cove, we gave His Highness a salute of eleven guns, which was immediately answered from the shore. Shortly after, Mr. Hunter, a lieutenant in the navy, and Gulaub, a native of India, agent to our Government, came on board to see if they could be of any service.

We asked the Prince if he intended to go ashore, but he declined because he was not on good terms with the Imaum. The cause of difference was this: Futteh Ali Khan touched at Muscat on his way to India.

The Imaum, agreeably to Oriental custom, supplied his table with whatever was requisite. Futteh Ali, who is somewhat avaricious, made an application for money equivalent to the food with which he had been supplied. To this, the Imaum replied by sending him a dollar a-day ! Hence the coolness between their Persian and Arab Highnesses !

Our party accompanied the first lieutenant ashore. The beach, up to high-water mark, was every where covered with oyster-shells. The sea literally swarmed with fish, and the air was almost darkened by the numerous water-fowls in pursuit of their finny prey.

We landed at the northern extremity of the town, close to the market-place, through which we passed in our way to the Imaum's palace. As His Highness was at prayers when we arrived, we waited at the house of Mr. Hunter till three o'clock, when we received a message by Gulaub that the Imaum was ready to receive us.

We were admitted through a narrow wicket into a square court. In the middle was a fountain ; round it were a few sickly shrubs. Arabs, variously armed, were collected into several groups, some sitting in a circle, others sleeping. In a corner of this court was a ladder like that used in a granary. We ascended to the top, and found there the Imaum, who shook hands with us separately, as we entered a long, narrow, unadorned apartment, where chairs were placed for himself and guests. Though His Highness understands Persian, and Hindoostany, and, as it is said, English, he spoke Arabic, and Gulaub officiated as interpreter. The conversation, as may be supposed, was not of much interest.* The Imaum made many inquiries about the ship, and her rate of sailing, and said (in allusion to Futteh Ali Khan), that if captain Alexander had been alone, he would have gone to visit him. He repeated several times, that the English and himself were as one, and that

his house, his ships, and all that he possessed, were ours. A boy about ten years of age, who always accompanies the Imaum, was the only person present during the interview, and Mr. Hunter informed us, that it was not his custom to allow his own people to be by, in his conversation with Europeans. Some sherbet, well flavoured with rose-water, was handed round by the eunuch in attendance. It may be worthy of remark, that pipes were not brought in, the Imaum, and other natives of Muscat, belonging to a sect called Bee-asis, whose strict tenets forbid the use of tobacco. In half an hour we took our leave, as much struck with the Imaum's handsome person, as we were pleased at his polite and unaffected address.

The patriarchal simplicity of the Arab character is strongly marked in every thing connected with this court. In the daily divan held by the Imaum, every one seats himself without any reference to priority. Even beggars can demand this audience, and may be sure of having a patient hearing given to their complaints.

The Imaum has on all occasions shown himself a sincere ally of the English. It is owing, indeed, to our having extirpated the Wahhabbee pirates, that he is now in possession of his sovereignty. When about sixteen years old, he succeeded his uncle, the late Imaum, in the following manner.

Being discontented with his conduct, he one day proposed a ride to him. They were scarcely outside the walls of the town, when the nephew, lurking a little behind, drew his scimitar, killed his uncle, and, returning to Muscat, seated himself without opposition on the vacant throne. He is, notwithstanding, much beloved by his subjects, who speak in high terms of his justice and moderation. As to the mere act of murdering his relative, it is held in the light of a "family

difference," and is no bar to his standing well in public estimation, as a prince of mild and peaceable demeanour.

In quitting the Imaum I must not forget to mention an anecdote of the man who admitted us into the court, his bold countenance having particularly attracted our attention. He was for many years one of the most formidable of the famous Wahhabbee pirates whose successful depredations struck terror throughout these seas, and threatened the total extinction of the Imaum's power. A reverse of fortune led him to offer his services to the Imaum: they were immediately accepted, and the pirate was not ungrateful. In the action of Benee-boo-Ali, His Highness was deserted by his troops, was wounded in the wrist, and would have been taken prisoner, but for the exertions of his former foe, who alone remained faithful to him. Ever since that time, he has held a confidential situation about his person.

From the palace we went to take a view of the town. The bazaar, or market, is covered in at the top to protect the wares, which are exposed for sale on open platforms in front of the shops. A large colony of Indians, principally from the banks of the Indus, carry on the wholesale and retail trade. Amongst other articles exposed for sale, we observed coarse cloths, different kinds of grain, sweetmeats, not very tempting in appearance, and fried locusts. Besides these, were vast quantities of salt and sulphur, which are all the remains of the boasted "wealth of Ormuz."

The houses are flat roofed, and built of unhewn stone. The streets are extremely filthy, and so narrow, that by extending the arms, I could touch the walls on both sides. The town is of small extent, comprising a circumference of two miles, and containing a population of two thousand souls.

The natives are very squalid in appearance, there are scarcely any who have not sore eyes, and one-tenth of the population is blind of an eye. The inflammation is probably produced by the light particles of sand blown from the sea-shore, by the powerful reflection of the sun's rays from the walls, and by poverty of diet, which consists almost entirely of fish.

The women, instead of the thick veil I have seen in other Mahometan countries, wear a kind of black domino, with large triangular holes for the eyes. They are, generally speaking, the offspring of Arab men and Abyssinian negresses. They are not handsome, as they partake too much of the flat noses and thick lips of their mothers.

I have said that the natives of Muscat are of a sect called Bee-asis. Before I notice them, it may be as well to mention, that the two principal sects of Mahometans are Sunnis and Shiahhs. The Turks are of the former, and the Persians of the latter persuasion. The Sunnis recognize Aboobeker, Omar, and Ottoman, the three first successors of Mahomet, as lawful Caliphs. The Shiahhs consider them as usurpers of the caliphate; which they affirm belonged of right to Ali. The Sunnis receive the Sunna, or book of oral traditions of Mahomet, as canonical authority. The Shiahhs reject it as unworthy of credit.

The Bee-asis differ, in some respect, from Sunnis and Shiahhs: both of which sects have a kind of veneration for the descendants of Mahomet. The Bee-asis, so far from granting them a pre-eminence, maintain that all who are Mahometans by birth, are eligible for any employment in church or state. For this reason, the Sovereign Prince of Muscat is called Imaum; which title, amongst other Ma-

hometans, is given only to Princes lineally descended from their prophet.

All Mahometans are forbidden the use of strong drinks. The Bee-asis are more rigid than the other sects, both in precept and practice. They not only abstain from all fermented liquors, but also from tobacco, and from every description of pomp or magnificence in their dress, their houses, or their mosques. They worship no saints; and have neither convents nor dervishes. They have a great regard for justice; and an universal toleration for other religions.

At the Custom-House we observed a curious mode of extracting toll. A negro slave, standing on a mat at the gate, had in his hand a long sharp grooved instrument, on the principle of a cooper's bung-tap. With this he perforated every bag of rice that was carried past him, and extracted a small portion from each.

The Imaum possesses a tolerably good stud of horses. We observed that the manes and tails of the colts were kept close clipped. I know not whether this custom is common throughout Arabia; but here, as well as at Bussorah and Bagdad, where this mode of clipping is practised, the horses are all remarkable for their flowing manes and long tails.

In visiting the slave auction, I felt almost angry with myself, for not experiencing more disgust at witnessing so disgraceful and unnatural a traffic.

The market was held in an open space near the landing-place. Some twenty or thirty fat little negresses, from twelve to fourteen years of age, having their woolly locks neatly plaited, and their bodies well oiled, to give them a sleek appearance, were ranged in two rows,

on some logs of timber. Too young to trouble themselves with their degraded state, they sat giggling and chattering with the utmost nonchalance. Our uniforms appeared to afford them much merriment. One dingy little coquette, by significantly pointing to us, set the rest in a roar of laughter. In the meantime the slave-merchant was leading by the hand one of the party, and calling out her price. As for herself, she seemed more intent to catch the joke of her companion, than to ascertain any thing respecting her future destiny.

CHAPTER II.

Suburbs of Muscat—Drunken Persian—Fish-fed Horses—Sterile appearance of the country—Village of Poorshur—Giaffer's conduct—Set sail for Bussorah—Cape Jask—The Quoins—Cape Musendom—Islands of the Tombs—Pulior—Cape Nabon—Cape Verdistan—Bushire—Karrack—Arab Pilot—Sick Native—Cape Baungk—Pilot's mode of navigating the ship—Runs her ashore—His apology—Appearance of the Coast—Behaviour of an Arab Sheikh.

February 5.—THE suburbs of Muscat appear more populous than the town. The inhabitants are principally Abyssinian slaves. There is also a large encampment of Nomade Arabs, who live in mat tents, which they transport from place to place. We visited many of these encampments in the course of the day, and found the inhabitants singing and dancing. Their tents are in the form of a Bengal routee, having an enclosure in front, in which the cattle are lodged at night.

Half a mile from the town, we observed several oxen employed in drawing water from wells, which supply all Muscat, by means of channels formed in the rock. Commanding each spring is a circular bastion—a most necessary defence against an enemy, who might, if they were unguarded, easily divert the course of these scanty reservoirs, and occasion a complete drought in the town. The scarcity of water in Arabia, has always made that element of a value, not so well understood in our country, where it is in such abundance. Nearly the

first contention of which we have an account in Scripture History is, when “the herdsmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac’s herdsmen,” for some wells which were called, on that account, “Esek and Sitnah,”—Contention and hatred.

Except in the immediate vicinity of the wells, no verdure was observable on this side the town, the whole country being a succession of black, rugged, and lofty rocks. On the other side we saw a few enclosures, containing date trees, wheat, and a few vegetables.

In the evening, our party dined with Mr. Hunter, at whose hospitable board we had an opportunity of ascertaining the excellent flavour of the beef, mutton, and kid of Muscat, which, in common with cattle of every description, are fed on dates, fish, and the seed of the cotton plant. Strange to say, these animals thrive under this peculiar diet, their flesh is not affected by any fishy savour, and the butter was the best I had tasted since leaving England.

The inhabitants of this, and the opposite coast, subsist almost entirely upon fish, not having altered in this respect since the time of Herodotus, who describes them as the *Ichthiophagi*, or Fish Eaters.

February 6.—In consequence of a strong N. W. wind, which caused a heavy surf, the ship’s company were prevented from getting in their water till the evening. This caused a day’s delay, of which Mr. Lamb and I availed ourselves to visit some hot-springs, twenty miles distant.

We took with us a drunken Persian of the name of Giaffer, the superintendent of the Imaum’s stud, who had acted as our cicerone the day before. We started at an early hour in a canoe, to a small town called Muttra, distant five miles. On our way, we observed one of the pearl-divers, who remained ninety-one seconds under water. Muscat

is famed for its pearl-fisheries: but we had no opportunity of visiting them.

At Muttra, we went to the house of a respectable Parsee merchant, who very kindly laid before us as comfortable a meal as his habitation afforded. We offered Giaffer some spirits, but his modesty got the better of his inclination, and he declined. There were two bottles of gin upon the table; from one of these we poured out a glass, which he drank off, pretending to mistake it for water; first, however, looking cautiously round, lest any Mussulman should observe him thus openly infringe the Prophet's laws.

From the windows of our host's house, we saw a sloop of war of twenty guns, building for the Imaum. She was standing with the broadside on to the beach, in which manner she was to be pushed into the sea.

By the kindness of the Imaum, all Englishmen visiting Muscat are furnished with horses from His Highness's stables. After breakfast, three were brought to the door for us. They were small cat-hampered fish-fed wretches; one of them was a mare, large with foal, and they were all apparently incapable of undergoing the labour of such an excursion. They, however, belied their appearance; for we were no sooner seated in our saddles, than off they scampered over stony beds of torrents, up rugged rocks, down frightful precipices, and not always with the consent of their riders.

The road led N. along the coast, the course of which we followed, ten miles distant from the sea. We passed heights rising abruptly immediately behind the town, and then went over a level plain two miles in extent, many parts bearing marks of cultivation, although not a blade of verdure was then visible; and the thin sprinkling of

soil with which it was partially covered, seemed little adapted for crops of any description. In the places where crops appear to have been raised, numerous pits are dug for irrigation, without which, nothing can be produced. We passed four small villages on our journey, saw a few date-trees, and some little cultivation. We reached the village of Poorshur, near which the springs are situate, in a couple of hours. About a mile from the village, we crossed a sandy ridge, on which were a few stunted plants of the *Mimosa Nilotica*, the only natural vegetation which we saw in this country.

The temperature of the hot-spring is 113 Farenheit. The water issues from a crevice in the mountain (which is a conglomerate sandstone) in a rapid stream of three inches diameter. No gas escapes from it, and from the taste, it has no mercurial properties. The villagers use it for culinary purposes, and it is supposed to be good for diseases of the skin. We filled a bottle with the water, for analysis, but rode so fast back again, that we were obliged to leave it behind. I was told by an Arab, that there was a spring of boiling water twenty miles beyond Poorshur. A small reservoir is built near the place whence it issues from the rock, for the convenience of bathing. Giaffer jumped in, and remained some time; we followed his example, but the heat made us as quickly jump out again.

The village of Poorshur is the most agreeably situated of any we passed. A considerable portion of ground is cultivated around it, and the scene is diversified by several large trees.

A mat was laid in front of a small hut; and on the contents of a basket provided by Mr. Hunter, we made a hearty dinner. While we were eating, a crowd of villagers formed a semi-circle in front of us. Giaffer distributed the fragments amongst them; which some

of them tasted, apparently from curiosity. All the time we remained, village females passed to and from the spring for water, and generally without being veiled. They were natives of Beloochstan, a province of Persia, opposite Muscat. Some of them had good figures, and regular features ; but the complexion of all was a dingy sallow.

Giaffer played the great man amongst the villagers ; and being an officer of the Imaum's, ordered them about, as if they had been his slaves. He had now overcome his morning scruples, and drank great quantities of wine and brandy. Amongst other jokes, he tried to intoxicate a female, who applied for relief from rheumatic pains, by giving her brandy, and calling it medicine. He then made her sit down beside him, and eat some ham, which forbidden food he told her was European mutton. He accounted to us for his particular kindness to her, by saying, that she had a very handsome sister ; who, if we wished, should be immediately forthcoming.

In returning, Giaffer gave us an account of his life : he was very anxious to come with us to Persia ; but we had seen too much of him, to desire a further acquaintance.

We found some difficulty in procuring a boat at Muttra, to take us on board, as it was near sunset, and the boats had not returned from their daily employment. We at last engaged a canoe ; but one of the slaves demurred about rowing us alongside, lest we should press him into the service. Two persons navigate these canoes, which are formed out of a single tree.

We were challenged several times in passing the batteries, and were informed that the port regulations did not admit our quitting the shore after dusk.

When on board, Giaffer intreated us to give him either more

money or more liquor; but we refused, as he had already had plenty of both. Finding us persist in our denials, he threw himself on his face, and repeatedly kissed the deck, to enforce his petition.

February 7.—We sailed this morning at break of day, with the wind as favourable as it could blow. Our numbers were increased by Lieutenant Taylor of the Madras cavalry, and his lady, and Mr. Harrison of the Bombay Marine. They had come from Bombay to Muscat in the Liverpool, and had been waiting for an opportunity to proceed up the Gulph, when Captain Alexander, with his usual kindness, granted them a passage. Lieutenant and Mrs. Taylor were going on a visit to their brother Captain Taylor, our political agent at Bussorah. Mr. Harrison was proceeding to join one of the Company's cruisers.

February 8, 9.—We passed Cape Jask on the 8th; and, on the evening of the 9th, arrived off the Quoins. These are five small rocky islands. Ships generally prefer going outside; but the wind was too scant to enable us to do so.

The wind continued favourable, and the weather delightful. The kindness and good humour of the officers and every one on board, made the voyage quite a party of pleasure. We had a beautiful view of Cape Musendom, of the islands of the Tombs, and of Pulior, in succession: this last, the Pulior of the Greeks, we passed within a mile. They are all rocky, and elevated three or four hundred feet. From the distance at which we were, they had a volcanic appearance; which is, I believe, their character.

February 10, 11.—We passed Cape Nabon on the 10th, and Cape Verdistan on the 11th.

February 12.—The S. E. wind which had blown gently hitherto,

now increased to a strong breeze. The next morning we arrived at Bushire, (or more properly, Abooshehr.) At this place travellers disembark, who intend taking the direct route through Persia. It was Captain Alexander's intention to have touched here, but the wind not serving to enter the harbour, and being favourable for pursuing our voyage, we took advantage of the opportunity of meeting the Honourable Company's cruiser *Discovery*; and sent letters and parcels by her to Bushire. After which, we proceeded on our voyage, and reached Karrack at three in the afternoon. The *Discovery* was engaged on a survey of the Arabian shore. Her officers informed us that they had discovered a large inlet, into which they proceeded to lat. 21. in the meridian of Muscat.

Karrack, the Icarus of Arrian, is a small rocky island, famous for its pearl fishery. It was formerly in possession of the Dutch, when the population amounted to three thousand; but it has now not more than three hundred inhabitants. They manufacture a coarse kind of cloth; and subsist upon the produce of their gardens, and fishing-nets. The ruins of warehouses, and a church, bespeak the former grandeur of the place.

Ships bound to Bussorah engage a pilot here. We sent on shore for one, who came off, accompanied by a sick townsman, whom he brought for medical advice.

The ship had been lying-to for a couple of hours for the pilot, and was only waiting for his directions to make sail. The sun was just setting, as he came upon deck; he, however, took no notice of our impatience to proceed, but went aft, and spreading his mat, was soon so engaged in prayer, as to be seemingly unconscious of all external objects.

The case of the sick man, who accompanied the pilot, is rather singular. About ten months ago, in digging for the foundation of a house, he found a quantity of ancient gold coins. The discovery soon came to the knowledge of the Sheikh, or Governor of Bushire, who immediately caused the whole treasure to be transferred to his own coffers. The Sheikh's officers, long after all had been given up, so alarmed the poor finder of the gold, by going to him daily, and saying they were come to lead him to instant execution, that they drove him to a state of derangement, under which he was labouring when we saw him. The apprehensions of losing his life, had so worked upon his imagination, that he continually fancied he heard voices, bidding him prepare for instant death.

In making sail, the mainyard gave way. During the consequent delay, our favourable wind forsook us. Being now within the influence of the tide we were obliged, when it changed against us, to anchor on the Persian shore, off Cape Baungk, the Bang of the charts.

The South-East wind, called Shurgee, had blown unusually long for the season. The North-West, or Shumaul, being the regular wind at this period.

We continued close along the Persian shore, beating to the West, while favoured by the tide, and anchoring when it changed.

The mode adopted by our pilot for ascertaining the proper channel, was by the state of the soundings. If hard, he would decide that we had reached the bank of the channel, and would put the ship about, till a similar indication proved we were on the other side, when he would order the ship on the opposite tack. His whole stock of English consisted in two inquiries; one relative to the ship's

course, and the other, to her soundings. The repeated queries of, "How is her head? Hard or soft?" produced a combination of words that afforded much merriment to the sailors.

February 16.—In this manner, we continued to grope our way for the channel, till, on the morning of the 16th, I was standing at the gangway repeating, in Persian, to the pilot, the soundings as given by the man in the chains, when some one forward cried out, "Shoal a-head." I immediately informed the pilot of this; but as he would not alter the ship's course, in one moment we found ourselves aground. Every effort was made for relief. Our water was started, and a small anchor laid out, by which means, in two hours, she was hauled off, and very fortunately, without sustaining any damage. We anchored soon after, in three fathoms water at high tide; and as the tide fell nine feet, the ship lay aground for some time; but the bottom being soft she was quite safe.

While this was going on, the author of our calamity was pacing the deck, the picture of terror and indecision, calling aloud on Mahomet to assist us out of the danger. His fears were not much lessened by the threats thrown out by each passing tar. "I say, Jack," said one of them, "we'll string you up for this;" making his observation intelligible, by pointing with one hand to the yard-arm, and with the other, to the neck of his auditor, at the same time imitating the convulsive guggle of strangulation. When called to account for his obstinacy, the pilot gave us an answer in the true spirit of predestination: "If it is God's pleasure that the ship should go ashore, what business is it of mine?"

The place where we ran aground, was one of the banks, at the mouth of the united streams of Euphrates and Tigris, called Shut ul Arab, or Boundary of Arabia. Seven channels form the approach to

the river, but only one is navigable for large ships. On the morning of the 17th we came in sight of the once famed land of Mesopotamia, than which nothing can be more uninteresting in appearance. The country is so dead a flat, that the numerous pelicans, which darken the sands at the mouth of the river, are the first indications we obtained of our approach to shore. Shortly after, when the land was on both sides of us, the classical Euphrates was to be seen lazily pursuing its course between low banks of mud and rushes. In proceeding up the river the scene changed, offering a nearly uninterrupted succession of date-trees till we reached Bussorah.

A short time before we anchored, we passed the ship *Sultan*, and sent letters by her to our Indian friends. The sultan had on board a cargo of horses, from Bussorah, for the Calcutta market. Ships trading between the Indian Presidencies and the Gulph, find horses a profitable speculation.

February 18.—In working up the river this afternoon, we were visited by the Sheikh, or chieftain, of the adjacent country, who brought a present of fish for the Captain. He was a tall commanding-looking man, wore a dagger in his girdle, and was dressed in loose flowing robes of light green silk.

Shortly after he came on board a few minutes, he addressed himself to me as the interpreter, and said in a whisper, that he should like to pledge the officers in a glass of brandy and water; but, being a Mahometan, he felt a difficulty in drinking before the Prince. On this hint, he was invited into the gun-room, and a brandy bottle being placed before him, he made such copious libations, that he completely overcame his Mahometan notions of modesty, and when summoned to dinner, seated himself next the Prince, and so terrified him with his

drunken embraces, that His Highness begged I would sit between them. By this unenviable honour, I came in for the greater share of his kindness. It was not, however, confined to me. Seizing the dishes within his grasp, he severed, with his brawny fingers, the several meats contained in them, and threw a piece to every person at table. Then turning to the Prince, and flourishing his greasy arm, bared to the elbow, he abused His Highness for not pledging him, in no very measured terms.

If the Arab showed too much national dislike to the Persian, he was rather too cordial towards us, calling us brothers, and expressing his regard by gestures, as well as by words. His attentions were beginning to be rather annoying, when he was luckily obliged to make a speedy retreat from the table.

The scene, though distressing on account of the agony which the effeminate Persian endured, under the muscular grasp of this Arab barbarian, was nevertheless amusing,—the timid uneasiness of the one, being ludicrously contrasted with the satyr-like drunkenness of the other.

CHAPTER III.

The Sheikh's modest demeanour—His Residence—Repast—Spirited Reply of the Sheikh's Son—Captain Taylor—Land at Bussorah—New Governor—Ex-Governor—The New Governor's Public Entrance into Bussorah—First act of his Government—His Visits to the Political Agent—His Visit returned—Wearing Shoes in the Chamber of an Asiatic—Horse-racing in the Desert—The Governor's attempt at Oppression—An Armenian's Betrothment—Pas de deux between a Jew and a Turk.

February 19.—It was entertaining to observe the timid and downcast look, which the Sheikh put on his countenance this morning, differing so widely from the habitual ferocity of his aspect. To cheer up his spirits, and to make his mind easy, Mr. Hamilton and myself accepted his invitation to go to his house. Once out of the ship, he soon regained his spirits, and proved to be a very agreeable companion.

The Sheikh told us, that within a few miles of Mohumrah, there was a stone with an inscription in European characters. This may possibly be an ancient record, and worthy the notice of some future traveller. From the direction in which he pointed, it must be nearly south of Mohumrah.

The Sheikh's residence is in a quadrangular mud fort; the walls of which, in many places, have been battered down by the rain.

The mansion, like the fort, is built entirely of mud; round it are

the huts of the Sheikh's retainers. The interior of the dwelling is entirely destitute of ornament. A carpet was spread for us on the dusty floor, round which we seated ourselves very comfortably, to some excellent fish, fruits, and sweetmeats; and with this good cheer forgot the unfurnished state of the apartment, and the absence of knives and forks.

We were much amused with the Sheikh's son, a child three years old, whose spirited answers were strong indications of the manner in which his father was bringing him up. I asked him, among other questions, if he was an Arab or a Persian. Indignant that there should be a doubt upon the subject, his little hand grasped the dagger in his girdle, as he replied in an angry tone, "God be praised, I am an Arab!" an example how early a mutual hatred is instilled into the youth of these rival nations.

February 20.—We anchored within ten miles of Bussorah. Captain Taylor, the political agent, came on board, was received with the customary salute, and after dinner returned ashore.

The next morning, the ship anchored opposite the town. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, and our travelling party disembarked, and landed at the British factory, the residence of the political agent. With the exception of the palace, this is the best house in town. It is situate a mile up a narrow creek, which discharges itself into the Shut ul Arab.

A few days before our arrival, the brother of the Pacha of Bagdad, himself a Pacha of two tails, had been appointed governor of Bussorah. He was encamped in the Desert, outside the walls, and was shortly to make his public entrance into the town.

The late governor, having a short time before received secret intelligence that his successor was appointed, one night mounted his

horse, and traversed the Desert to Bagdad. He thought it expedient not to wait to deliver up his authority formally; because it is the usual custom of a new governor to seize upon the person of his predecessor, and to extract from him what money he can. By this means, the ex-governor has generally to refund some of his ill-gotten wealth here, and on arriving at Bagdad, to answer the additional demands made upon him by the Pasha of that city, whose delegate he is. In the present instance, he has only to satisfy the rapacity of the one, instead of both the brothers. He will then fall back into his original situation of janizary, with which he must be content, till his stars guide him to another government, or a bow-string.

February 22.—The Pasha made his public entrance this morning. We saw the whole procession from the windows of a Persian's house. They came in the following order:—

At nine o'clock, a body of armed men, forming an advance guard, announced their approach by a continual discharge of musquetry, and passed us at a jog trot; then another party, who occasionally halted, and danced in a circle; marking time by striking their swords against each others' shields. These were followed by large parties of Desert Arabs, of the Zobeir tribe, preceded by their immediate petty chiefs, on horseback. Each of them had carried before him, a large flag, red, green, and red. The Zobeir Arabs are mercenary troops, and acknowledge a kind of subjection to the Governor: they are small, mean-looking men, with an Indian cast of features. They carried either fire-arms, or swords and shields. Some had their robes bound at the waist with a girdle; others wore only a loose shirt. Several had on the handkerchief turban, peculiar to the Arabs; and a few were bareheaded, having their hair twisted into several long plaits.

This appears to have been the ancient custom of the people of the Persian Gulph. Diodorus Siculus describes the inhabitants of Gedrosia,* as keeping their hair thick and matted, το τριχώμα πεπιλωμένον εἴσι.

After these came the *toofungees*, personal troops of the Governor, distinguishable by fur caps, nearly a yard in diameter; then the Pasha's led horses richly caparisoned. Behind them, a troop of mounted Tchousses, (messengers,) beating small drums placed at the saddle-bow. These were followed by the native officers of the English factory, mounted on horses "trimly decked." Then the Capitan Pasha, (the Admiral,) who, with a watch in his hand, was timing the auspicious moment, as laid down by the astrologers, for the Pasha's entrance into his palace. This was decided to be twenty minutes past three, Turkish time; or twenty minutes past nine, according to European computation. Next came the Cadi and Mufti, whose offices are so often mentioned in the Arabian Nights; and then the Pasha, with his hand on his breast, returning the salutations of the populace. At the moment of his appearing, a group of women, covered from head to foot, set up a loud and shrill cry. A troop of mounted Janizaries brought up the rear, having with them a band, the music of whose instruments resembled that of so many penny trumpets.

During this procession, muskets were incessantly fired off; the report of which, combined with the squeaking of the music, the noise of the tamtams, the squalling of the women, and the rude singing of

* Gedrosia is now the province of Mekran. Alexander the Great passed through it, on his return from India. It was the country of the Ichthiophagi, and the present name, Mekran, has the same signification.

the soldiery, formed a din of discord more easily conceived than described.

Salutes from His Majesty's ship *Alligator*, and all the ships at anchor, announced the reading of the firman, or order, appointing the Pasha *Mooselim* Governor; and the first act of his government was to publish an edict, graciously informing the loyal citizens of Bussorah, that any one of them, found in the bazaar after nine in the evening, would certainly be hanged.

February 24.—After some diplomatic discussion, the Pasha consented to pay the political agent the first visit, provided the compliment was immediately returned. He came this morning, attended by the same retinue which accompanied him on his arrival into town. The interview was uninteresting; the Pasha being a man of mean abilities, and excelling in nothing, but that at which most despots are proficient—extortion.

February 26.—This morning, Captain Taylor returned the Pasha's visit. He was preceded by his Dragomans, Tchousses, and Janizaries, bearing banners; and accompanied by Captain Alexander, the officers of the *Alligator*, and our travelling party. Following us, were numerous Christians, Jews, and Mahometans, enjoying British protection. Our procession, though not quite so numerous as that of the Pasha, was more regular and orderly; and our pageant was considerably swelled by the addition of the *Alligator's* marines, whose steady march formed a strong contrast with the savage dance of the wild Arab soldiery we had seen a few days before. When we arrived at the Serai, (palace,) we dismounted from our horses, and ascended the stairs. We were no sooner in sight of the Pasha, than two of his officers, one on each side, put their arms under his shoulders, and

carried him into the hall of audience, as if he had been suddenly deprived of the use of his legs; a similar form was observed by the attendants of Captain Taylor. In this manner, both, according to established etiquette, entered the apartment together: for, as in Turkey the inferior rises to receive the superior, and as both here considered themselves equal: the one rising for the other, would have been a concession that neither would have made.

The ceremony of carrying the great man into the Divan is an ancient custom, and is mentioned in the Arabian Nights. Abon Hassan, (the Sleeper awakened), when acting the Caliph, was lifted up the steps of the throne by Mesrour the Chief of the Eunuchs, and another officer, whose business it was to assist in this ceremony.

The floor of the room in which we were received, was covered with Persian carpets, and Turkish pillows were placed round the walls. The Pasha, and his European guests, occupied chairs. Servants came in and threw over each of us an embroidered scarf, by way of a napkin; we were then presented with sweetmeats, coffee, Turkish and Persian pipes, and sherbet. The Pasha very civilly offered to give our travelling party letters to his brother, the Pasha of Bagdad; but this favour was declined for us by Captain Taylor, on the plea, that we felt assured of a kind reception. In half an hour, the attendants brought us rose-water, and some chafing dishes containing incense for perfuming the beard, a ceremony, which was performed by every downy cheeked midshipman of the Alligator.

During this visit, we wore our hats, in conformity to the Eastern custom of always keeping the head covered; and agreeably to an exclusive privilege granted to Englishmen, we did not take off our shoes. Without entering into the merits of that John Bull policy, which

exacts from the natives of the country in which we are residing a conformity to our customs, instead of our adopting theirs, the privilege we Englishmen claim, both at Bagdad and at this place, of keeping on our shoes in the presence of the Pasha, certainly does appear an useless acquisition of privilege on our parts, and one that cannot but be highly offensive to their Asiatic feelings.

It is scarcely necessary to mention, that throughout the East, the mere act of a native entering a room with shoes on, is the greatest possible insult, as it is on the floor that all meals are eaten. Let us put the question to ourselves. Would any of us be pleased, if a foreigner were to claim the right of coming from the streets, in his dirty boots, and of dancing up and down our dinner-table?

March 1.—We went this afternoon into the Desert to a horse-race; an amusement, of which the natives of Bussorah are as fond as our own countrymen; though I fear, if an English jockey had been here, he would have thought the profession disgraced by the exhibition. For our own parts, we were more amused, than if the business had been conducted according to the strictest rules of the turf. The spot selected was the Great Desert, which commences immediately outside the town; a circular furrow of two miles marked the course; and the stakes consisted of a small subscription raised from amongst our European party. The five candidates who started for the prize, were well suited to the general character of the scene. Instead of being decked in all the colours of the rainbow, a coarse loose shirt comprised all the clothing of the Arab jockey; and the powerful bit of the country was the only article of equipment of the horse he bestrode. Thus simply accoutred, at a signal given, these half-naked savages set off at full speed, each giving a shout to animate

his horse. They arrived like a team at the goal; the prize was adjudged to an Ethiopian slave. The scene was highly animated and interesting, though we had neither splendid equipages, nor fair ladies to grace our sports; but what we lost in splendour and beauty, we gained in novelty; and though, when occasionally gazing on some wearer of gaudy silks, the bright smile of woman did not repay our curiosity, we almost forgot the disappointment in beholding the animated countenance of a turbaned Turk, who, bearded to the eyes, would be seen scampering past us with jereed in hand, to challenge a comrade to the contest; and spurred on by his favourite amusement, would lay aside the gravity of the divan, in the all exhilarating air of the Desert.

Such an exhibition was amusingly set off by the performances of our shipmates. Every youngster of the Alligator had provided himself with a horse, and, as much at home here as if on Southampton Downs, was to be seen scampering across the Desert on Arabs, scarcely broke. One of these, zealous for the honour of his cloth, challenged me to ride a race with him: off we both set in gallant style, but in his anxiety to get to windward of "the soldier officer," he ran foul of a comrade, whom he capsized, as well as himself, at the same moment; the palm was consequently adjudged to me, though my rival competitor swore "he should certainly have won, if the lubber had not come athwart his hawse!"

March 2.—The Pasha hearing of the feat of the successful horse of yesterday, sent for it this morning to his own stable; and it was only on the representation of Captain Taylor that he was induced to forego his claim.

March 3.—Mr. Taylor, the officers of the Alligator, and our travel-

ling party, went this afternoon to the house of an Armenian, named Parsigh (the head dragoman to the British factory), for the purpose of being present at the ceremony of his betrothment to an Armenian lady, whom he had never seen, now resident at Bushire.

We were admitted into a long narrow apartment, fitted up in the Turkish style, where we found, seated with their backs to the wall, fifty Armenian ladies, who rose on our approach. At the top of the room was the *nishaun*, or betrothing present, consisting of a bottle of rose-water, sugar-candy, and oranges covered with gold-leaf; over the *nishaun* were thrown two or three embroidered scarfs. The Armenian bishop, accompanied by two priests, now entered the room, carrying wax-candles, ornamented with gold-leaf. Their dress was simple and uniform, being merely loose black robes, clasped in front with a small silver crucifix. Their heads were shaved, with the exception of the crown, thus completely reversing the mode of tonsure practised by the Roman Catholic clergy. An officiating priest brought in a glass of wine, over which the bishop waved the crucifix, and dropped in a diamond ring. Chapters from the Old and New Testament were then chanted by the bishop and priests.

This ceremony of betrothing only takes place when the parties are at a distance from each other. In this instance, the *nishaun* and ring are to be forwarded to the betrothed at Bashin. When the ceremony was over, we retired to another room to dine. Among a great variety of dishes, I recognized many of those mentioned in the Arabian Nights in the imaginary feast of Hindbad the Porter, with the merry Barmecide Lord.

After dinner one of our party proposed the health of the bride elect, which was drank with "three times three," to the astonishment

of our host, who did not know what to make of our noisy civilities ; but as we were rulers of the feast we had it all our own way, and amused ourselves with joking the future bridegroom on the fertile subject of matrimony. In this, we were joined by his relations, while the subject of our merriment sat blushing and smiling with all becoming modesty. In the course of the evening, one of the relations sang a song, with a loud nasal twang, to our national air of " God Save the King."

In the midst of this revelry, attracted by the sounds of music, we stole on to a terrace where we found all the ladies assembled. They were dancing in a circle with a slow measured step, with their little fingers linked together. This dance is the Romaic, which I have myself frequently danced in the Ionian Islands, and which is accurately described by Lord Byron :—

" A groupe of Grecian girls,
The first and tallest her white kerchief waving,
Were strung together like a row of pearls,
Linked hand in hand and dancing."

Two very pretty girls, with their hair neatly plaited down their backs, then danced a *pas de deux*. The step, though slow, was not deficient in grace. The females that we saw were handsome. Their hair, from the straggling specimens which escaped from out the handkerchief, appeared to be generally of a beautiful auburn. Of their figures no correct opinion could be formed, from the disadvantageous shape of a dress consisting of loose quilted robes, open in the front so as to leave the chest quite exposed, and a large scarf tied negligently about the hips.

As the evening advanced, we Europeans took share in the per-

formances in a merry reel, to the music of the drum and fife of the marines. After this, we witnessed the curious ceremony of a Turk and a Jew dancing together to celebrate the betrothment of a Christian—a circumstance remarkable in a country so distinguished for religious rancour to those of a different persuasion. The exhibition was truly pantomimic and highly entertaining, as it served to contrast the bustling activity of the European with the steady demeanour of the Asiatic. The dance was meant to represent a fight for a fair lady. It commenced with divers gliding movements, and at last ended in an open-handed sparring match, in which both turbans were discomposed: not so the gravity of the wearers, who during the dance, which lasted upwards of a quarter of an hour, moved not a muscle of their features. At a late hour we retired to rest, attended by a numerous host of servants carrying linen lanterns, which, reflecting on the mingled group of Europeans and Asiatics, had a very picturesque appearance; so, not having, like the inhabitants, the fear of a halter before our eyes for keeping late hours, we placed the drummer and fifer in the van, and returned to the Factory singing and dancing all the way, our sounds of merriment breaking in upon the dead silence of the streets.

CHAPTER IV.

Ancient Ruins—Tombs of Ali, the Barmecide, and of Zobeir, an Arab Chief—Town of Zobeir—Sheikh of Dirhemmia—City of Bussorah—Filth of the Streets—Old and New Bazaars—Coffee-houses—Trade—Population—Productions—Preparations for departure—Guard of Arabs—Abou Nasir—Entertainment on board the Alligator.

March 5.—Mr. Hamilton, two officers of the Alligator, and myself, went to Zobeir, a town eight miles distant, to examine some ruins in the neighbourhood, supposed, by some, to be those of the ancient city of Bussorah. Within two miles of Zobeir, the remains of a wall can be traced; and here commence the ruins, which are very extensive. Large fragments of stone pillars lie scattered in every direction; many of these remaining in the original position, show that the former buildings were spacious, and supported by colonnades. About a mile west of Zobeir, the remains of buildings are much more indicative of former splendour, than elsewhere. Our guides informed us, that this quarter was formerly inhabited by the wealthy Barmecides, of whom mention is made in the Arabian Nights. This noble family was of Persian extraction, but settling afterwards in the cities of Bagdad and Bussorah, its members enjoyed, under several successive Caliphs, the highest honours of the state. The portion of a handsome arch, containing a Cufic inscription, was pointed out to us, as the Jamee Ali Barmekee, the tomb of Ali the Barmecide. This

personage was the uncle of our old acquaintance, the Vizier Giaffer, of Arabian Nights' celebrity. Half a mile to the west of this tomb, is a small mosque, covered with glazed tiles, containing the tomb of Zobeir, an Arab chief, from whom the neighbouring town derives its name. This chieftain was one of the earliest followers of Mahomet, and was slain at the battle of the Camel,* which was fought near this place; an action memorable in the Mahometan annals, as the first in which the arms of the "faithful" were stained with civil blood.

It would be difficult to assign a correct date to these ruins. D'Anville supposes them to belong to the city of the Orchæni, a sect of Chaldean astronomers and mathematicians. Niebuhr, and other travellers, say they are those of ancient Bussorah; but then the time in which that city was founded, has never been correctly defined. By some, we are assured that Bussorah owed its existence to Omar, in the 14th year of the Hegira, and 635th of the Christian era; and by others it is attributed to the Roman Emperor Trajan, who reigned five hundred years previous to the former date.

We were met within a mile of Zobeir by Hajee Yusuf, one of the principal inhabitants, who, with two or three horsemen, paid us the compliment of preceding us into the town. On arriving at the Hajee's house, we alighted from our horses, and partook of a plentiful Arab breakfast.

Zobeir has regular streets, and an air of cleanliness that must strike every one coming from the stinking city of Bussorah. It was built a century ago, by some Arabs, who fortified themselves in it,

* A. D. 655.

against the attacks of that desperate gang of Mahometan dissenters—the Wahhabbees, so called from their leader Abdool Wahheb.

After breakfast, we received a visit from the Sheikh, or Chief of Dirhemmia, who begged us to pay him a visit. His residence was of the general appearance of an Arab chieftain's. It was inclosed within a mud fort, and considering its situation in a sandy desert, certainly did great credit to the projector. The name Dirhemmia is derived from Dirhem, a small coin, signifying the expense the building occasioned. In taking us round the premises, it was easy to see that our host expected unqualified approbation of every thing he showed us. That upon which he seemed most to pride himself, were his large reservoirs of water, a characteristic of the value the desert Arab attaches to this first necessary of life. He next took us round the fortifications, which, as he seemed to appeal to us for an opinion, we pronounced to be tajoob, (wonderful;) though we would scarcely have trusted our backs against the battlements.

The city of Bussorah is enclosed within a wall, eight miles in circumference. Of this space, the greatest portion is laid out in gardens and plantations of date trees. It is traversed throughout by numerous canals, supplied by the Euphrates, into which they empty themselves at every turn of tide. The abundance of water, besides irrigating the gardens, which it does effectually, might also be the means of keeping the town clean, were there not in the inhabitants an innate love of filth. Bussorah is the dirtiest town even in the Turkish dominions. The streets, which are narrow and irregular, are almost insupportable from the stench. Some houses are built of kiln-burnt bricks, but the greater number are of mud. From these,

project several long sprouts made of the body of the date tree, which convey filth of every description into the streets, so that a passenger is in frequent danger of an Edinburgh salutation, without the friendly caution of *Gardez loo*.

The old bazaar is extremely mean. Rafters are laid across the top, and covered with ragged mats, which prove but a poor protection against the heat of the sun. Throughout the bazaar we observed numerous coffee-houses; they are spacious, unfurnished apartments, with benches of masonry built round the walls, and raised about three feet from the ground. On these are placed mats; at the bar are ranged numerous coffee-pots, and pipes of different descriptions. It is customary for every smoker to bring his own tobacco. These houses were principally filled by Janizaries, who were puffing clouds from their pipes in true Turkish taciturnity.

The principal trade is with our Indian possessions, which, with the exception of a few English ships, is confined to Arabian vessels. The return for the articles with which we furnish them, are pearls, horses, copper, dates, and raw silk. The population is estimated at sixty thousand, principally Arabs, Turks and Armenians; but I have no doubt, that on a close inquiry, there would be found natives of every country in Asia. Dates are the principal production here; there are, besides, quantities of rice, wheat, barley, and abundance of fruits and vegetables.

March 6.—The ordinary mode of proceeding to Bagdad by water, is to secure a passage on board one of a fleet of boats, which start at this season of the year, whenever their numbers are sufficient to enable them to resist the attacks of the lawless tribes of wandering Arabs, which infest the banks of the river. On our arrival at

Bussorah, several of these vessels had taken in their cargo, and were only waiting for others to join them, to proceed on their voyage. We had originally intended to have availed ourselves of this opportunity; but our patience being quite exhausted by their departure being protracted from day to day, we adopted the more expeditious mode of procuring a boat for our entire use, and proceeding alone. This was a description of vessel called a *Bughalow*. It was sixty feet long, fourteen wide at the broadest part, and much peaked at the fore; the cabin was ten feet square, and four high. There was one mast with a lateen sail, which was used for crossing the river; for the wind blowing mostly from the northward, we could seldom use it for sailing. As the voyage was principally performed by tracking, to ensure expedition we engaged a double set of boatmen, whose business it was to track, or tow the boat, as horses do in canals in England. Our agreement was, that they should proceed night and day; and, as a defence against the attacks of the wandering banditti, we engaged a guard of twenty of the Zobeir Arabs. Besides the captain of the boat, and the commander of the guard, we had a superintendent of the whole establishment, by name Aboo Nasir, a good-natured, drunken vagabond, whose gratitude for a life, thrice spared by British influence from the sentence of three successive Pashas, we deemed a sufficient guarantee for his fidelity to us, and in no instance did we find our confidence misplaced. This man was a stout, tall, elderly Arab, on whose face, the sun and strong liquor seemed to have been contending for many a year which could give it the strongest tinge of scarlet, for Aboo Nasir was one who had long forsworn "thin potations."

The expense of our whole establishment, including fees to the

different powerful sheikhs, through whose countries we were to pass, amounted to sixteen hundred and ninety piastres.

When there was sufficient water in the canal, our boat was moored alongside of the British factory, where we embarked our baggage, and a fortnight's stock of provisions and necessities, consisting of tea, coffee, sugar, spices, dates, biscuits, rice, tobacco, and a plentiful supply of spirits. We had had some difficulty in procuring servants, but at last succeeded in engaging three: an Indian Syyud, who had officiated while on board the Alligator, as cook to Futteh Ali Khan, continued with us in the same capacity; the other two were, a Persian, who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and a half-starved Ethiopian. At three o'clock, the gates of the British factory were opened, and first discovered to us our guard of Arabs; who, armed with swords, shields, and muskets, scrambled on board, singing and dancing to the rude music of the fife and tamtam,—presenting as wild an appearance as any of those savages against whom they were engaged to protect us.

It had been our intention to have started the same evening, but we remained till the following night, to bid farewell to our kind friend Captain Alexander, who was to give an entertainment to Captain Taylor and some Armenian ladies. After seeing our boat safely moored at the mouth of the creek, we went on board the Alligator, and dined with the gun-room officers.

March 7.—The quarter-deck of the Alligator was tastefully fitted up with flags for the reception of the guests, who came on board at five in the afternoon. Captain Alexander, thinking it would gratify the curiosity of the Armenian ladies, showed them every part of the ship, which was in most admirable order; but we could not discover

whether they were pleased or otherwise, for they went through the business like victims, and looked at every thing that was shown them, with the most immoveable gravity. I handed to dinner a pretty looking girl, from whom I tried in vain to extract an answer to any of my questions. Amongst the party was a handsome girl, a native of Ispahan; whence her parents had fled with her a few months back. They had come to Bussorah for British protection, to save her from being immured in a Mussulman harem. From living among Mussulmen, the Armenians have in many respects adopted their customs, and amongst others, that of the seclusion of women in their own families, though they allow them to go abroad. The party who visited the Alligator, consisted entirely of females, unaccompanied by any male relation, and we were informed that the two sexes are never seen together in public.

CHAPTER V.

We take leave of our Shipmates—And proceed on our Voyage—Our Boatmen and Guard—Abstinence from Wine—Koorna—The River Tigris—Il Jezeerah, the reputed site of Paradise—Appearance of the Country—Our first interview with the Desert Arabs—Arab Village—Conduct of our Guard—Goomru—Tribute—Extortion—Tomb of the Prophet Ezra—Abundance of Game—Kill a brace of Partridges in the Garden of Eden—Curious Scene—Behaviour and Appearance of the Female Arabs of the Desert.

AT ten o'clock we left the ship, and went on board our boat, after taking an affectionate leave of our shipmates; to many of whom, I grieve to say, we bade an eternal adieu. Since my arrival in England, I have received the afflicting intelligence that our excellent host, Captain Alexander, and five of his officers, have fallen victims to the Indian climate.

March 8.—We were nearly starved with cold last night, our cabin was shut in on two sides by mats only, which were imperfectly closed up, and a strong north-west wind blowing, we could not keep ourselves warm with all the bed-clothes we could procure. We halted three hours during the night, and proceeded again at daybreak. Flocks of cattle and sheep were every where grazing on the banks, and we saw some very fine horses loose, but all having clothing.

The natives of no two countries could form a stronger contrast

to each other in appearance, than our Arab guard and our Arab boatmen, the former (with the exception of two tall negroes) were small thin young men, about five feet five inches in height, with sallow complexions and Indian features; while the latter were as hardy and muscular-looking fellows as I ever saw. A loose brown shirt, of the coarseness of sackcloth, was the only covering of the latter. This, whenever labour required it, was thrown aside, and discovered forms most admirably adapted to their laborious avocations; indeed, any of the boatmen would have made an excellent model for a Hercules; and one in particular, with uncombed hair and shaggy beard, struck us all with the remarkable resemblance he bore to the statues of that deity.

In the evening we sate down cross-legged, to our first meal as fellow-travellers—a well greased pilau. Though amply provided with spirits, and all professing due allegiance to the bottle, we tried to content ourselves with water; an experiment which we found to answer so well that, while actually on the road, we entirely abstained from drinking any thing else. To this circumstance we alone attribute our health during our long and fatiguing journey, and we earnestly recommend the substitution of the pure element for fermented liquors to the serious consideration of all, but more particularly to Oriental travellers. It is, however, to be understood, that whenever the traveller halts for a few days, he will, as we always did, make up for the abstinence during the march.

March 9.—We passed this morning a Turkish three-decker at anchor, commanded by the Captain Pacha. It was a rotten hulk, seventy years old, with seven men on board, though the Government was charged with the expense of the full equipment.

At nine, we arrived off the town of Koorna, the ancient Apamea, a city built by Seleucus Nicator, in honour of his wife Apamea. Koorna is situate at the extremity of a narrow slip of land, formed by the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris. We saw here several boats, waiting to be joined by others from Bussorah, as the navigation beyond is unsafe for single boats, owing to the lawless tribes that infest the banks. We did not land at the town, as we wished, because our Arabs were at enmity with those on shore; we therefore kept the opposite bank, and our guards, with a view perhaps to demonstrate their force, assembled at the head of the boat, struck up their music, and forming themselves into a circle, began singing, dancing, and striking each others' shields with their drawn swords. Boats, in general, pay duty here, but we passed unmolested.

Leaving the Euphrates to the west, we proceeded up the Tigris, where we soon found ourselves in a current running between six and seven knots an hour, which fully proved to us the appropriate name of Teer (arrow), which the ancient Persians gave to this river on account of the rapidity of its course.

Two miles above Koorna, the plantations of date trees, which had hitherto covered the banks, ceased, and the country on both sides was overflowed. We landed in the afternoon on the west bank to shoot, and walked several miles; the ground was very wet, and the state of the vegetation indicated little fertility. This destitute place, which is called Il Jezeerah (The Island), is generally held to be the seat of Paradise. If such be the case, it certainly is not what the garden of our first parents is described to have been. Only a few shrubs have been visible since we left the vicinity of Koorna. The whole country is a dead flat; and so much flooded in many parts, that we

could hardly pass through it. The few dry patches of soil were covered with salt.

If the present barren appearance of this spot be the only reason for rejecting it as the site of Paradise, the same objection would apply to the surrounding district, which, though now a sandy desert, has been celebrated for the richness of its soil. Pliny calls it the most fertile of the East, (*solum Orientis fertilissimum*), and who does not remember the vivid descriptions, in the Arabian Nights, of the delightful gardens of Bagdad and Balsora?

Half an hour before sunset we arrived at a village of wandering Arabs. One of the men, a wild-looking savage, on seeing us approach, ran forwards in a frantic manner, and throwing down his turban at our feet, fiercely demanded Buxis (a present). He was made to replace his turban, but continued screaming as if distracted. This fellow's noise, and our appearance, soon collected a crowd of men, women, and children; the greater number had evidently never seen an European before. The men advanced close to us with aspects far from friendly. The commander of our guard expressed a wish that we should not enter the village; but so ardent was our curiosity in this our first interview with the Arabs of the Desert, that we disregarded his advice. Seeing us resolved, he let us have our own way; but would not allow any of the people to approach, being doubtful of their intentions towards us.

The village was a collection of about fifty mat huts, with pent roofs, from thirty to sixty feet long. The frame of the huts somewhat resembled the ribs of a ship inverted. It was formed of bundles of reeds tied together; the mat covering was of the leaves of the date tree. An old Mussulman tomb stands on a mound at the south end of

the village, and is the only building in which any other material than reed and date-leaves have been employed.

When we reached the banks of the river, we had to wait for our boat, which was tracking round a headland, and was still at some distance from us: so we stood with our backs to the water to prevent any attack from the rear. In the mean time, crowds of the inhabitants continued to press forward. As their numbers were greatly superior to ours, and their demeanour rather equivocal, we tried by our manners to show as little distrust of them as possible; not so, our guards, who, from being of the same profession as these marauders, treated them with less ceremony, and stood by us the whole time with their guns loaded and cocked, their fingers on the triggers, and the muzzles presented towards the crowd. Some of the Arabs occasionally came forward to look at our fire-arms, particularly our double-barrelled guns, but whenever they attempted to touch them, were always repulsed by our guard, who kept them at a distance. In the midst of this curious interview, the sheikh, or chief of the village, a venerable-looking old man with a long white beard, came, accompanied by two others, and brought us a present of a sheep; for which, according to custom, we gave double its value in money. The sheikh's arrival, and our pecuniary acknowledgment of his present, seemed to be an earnest of amity, as the crowd, by his directions, retired to a small distance, and formed themselves into a semicircle—himself and his two friends sitting about four yards in front.

The scene to us was of the most lively interest. Around us, as far as the eye could reach, was a trackless desert; to our left was the rude village of the wanderers, and immediately in the foreground were their primitive inhabitants, unchanged, probably, in dress, customs, or lan-

guage, since the time of the "wild man" Ishmael, their ancestor. There was little variety in the dress of the men—a large brown shirt with open sleeves, extending to the knee, and bound round the loins with a leathern girdle, formed their principal, and sometimes only habiliment; a few wore the handkerchief or turban. They were armed either with long spears or massive clubs. The dress of the females was also a loose shirt, but not being bound at the waist, it left the person considerably exposed. Some of the women had rings in their noses, others wore necklaces of silver coins, and the hair of several of the girls was divided into long plaits, and completely studded with coins: they were all more or less tattooed on the face, hands, and feet, and some were marked on the ancles with punctures resembling the clock of a stocking.

This village is called Goomruk, and its inhabitants are notorious robbers; they are subject to the sheikh of Montefeikh. It is customary to exact a stipulated tribute from every boat that passes; this, after some conversation, we paid, and (our people not wishing to stay) we proceeded on our voyage, having much better luck than a boat we left here, with horses for the Pasha of Basra, which, not being strong enough to resist the demand, was detained for an additional exaction. Five boats which had left Bussorah a week before us, had proceeded that morning on their voyage to Bagdad.

We continued our voyage while moonlight lasted, and then anchored till daybreak. At nine in the evening we passed an Arab encampment, pitched so close to the bank that our track-rope damaged several of the tents. This occasioned an uproar from a crowd of men, women, children, and dogs. They all rushed out together to discover the cause of the disturbance. On our guard's

calling out Abdillah, their chief's name, we were welcomed from the shore, as a friendly tribe, with an assurance that they would send off milk, butter, and whatever else their camp could furnish.

March 10.—We now came in sight of the Hamerine Mountains, to the north-east. At a little before daylight, we passed a building, called Il Azer, (Ezra), reported by tradition to be the tomb of that prophet. It is surmounted by a large dome covered with glazed tiles of a turquoise colour. The tomb is held in high veneration both by Jews and Mahometans, and is said to contain great riches—the offerings of pilgrims, particularly those of the former persuasion.

We saw numerous encampments of the wandering tribes, many of whom brought us milk, butter, and dates, and appeared to be most kindly disposed towards ourselves and crew.

Three of our party went out shooting in the Desert, and had excellent sport. Hares, black partridges, and snipes, were in the greatest abundance. For my own share of the game, I claim a brace of partridges, not a little proud, that nearly the first birds which ever fell by my gun, should have been killed in the garden of Eden. Another of our party killed a hare, but the boatmen objected to our having it dressed on board, as it had not undergone the ceremony of being made *hulaul*, (lawful). This is performed by repeating a prayer, and by cutting the throat of the animal, with the neck placed towards the tomb of Mahomet. Yet, according to the Jewish law, from which nearly all Mahometan prohibitions respecting food are taken, the hare is an unclean animal, “because he cheweth the cud, and divideth not the hoof.”*

* For the circumstance of the hare chewing the cud, vide Levit. chap. xi., and also the account given by Cowper, of his three hares.

At two, P. M., we passed the residence of Sheikh Abdillah Bin Ali, an Arab chief. As we continued our shooting excursion over a desert tract, unmarked by human habitation, we approached a boy tending cattle, who, immediately on perceiving us, set up a loud cry, and ran with all his might to a small mound, so gradually elevated as to be scarcely perceptible to us. In an instant, like the dragon's teeth which Cadmus sowed, a large body of men, armed with spears, appeared on the brow of the hill, and seemed to have grown out from the till then unpeopled spot. The men set up a loud shout, in which they were joined by the women and children, who now made their appearance. All, with one accord, rushed impetuously towards us, demanding the nature of our intentions; they were no sooner assured of our pacific disposition, than their clamour ceased, and in two minutes we were on the most friendly terms.

A little after this, several women, accompanied by a host of children, brought milk, butter, and curds, for sale, and followed the boat for some time. One of the women, from whom we received a vessel of milk, was offered a quantity of dates in return, by our servants. Not being satisfied with them, she desired to have her milk again. A piastre was thrown to her, which after taking up and examining, she ran off to a considerable distance, dancing and shouting with joy. Another very handsome young woman, with a child in her arms, asked for some cloth to cover her infant's head; we gave her a silk handkerchief, which so delighted her, that she approached the boat, and, with her right hand raised to Heaven, invoked every blessing on us in return. The handkerchief appeared to excite great curiosity, for a crowd collected round her, and it was held up and examined in every direction, seemingly with much delight.

The behaviour of these females formed a striking contrast with the manners of the Indian women, and still more with those of the veiled dames of Bussorah. They came to our boat with the frankness of innocence, and there was a freedom in their manners, bordering perhaps on the masculine; nevertheless, their fine features, and well-turned limbs, presented a *tout ensemble* of beauty, not often surpassed, perhaps, even in the brilliant assemblies of civilized life. True it is, their complexions were of a gipsey brown; but, even on this point, there may be some who see

“ A Helen’s beauty in a brow of Egypt.”

The woman who was so grateful for the handkerchief, as she stood on the edge of the bank, her beautiful eyes beaming with gratitude, would have been a fine illustration of some of the striking passages in Scott’s forcible delineations of female character.

CHAPTER VI.

Aboo Nasir—Village Jester—Akushee—English Gentlemen attacked by the Arabs—Munjummil—Thuyh Il Swyah—Mohumud Abool Hassan—We are challenged from the shore by the Arabs—Our Boatmen's answer—Manner in which the Arabs lie in ambush for Travellers—Cheshef—Illyauts—Black Tents illustrated by Scripture—Mr. Hamilton and I shoot at a Lioness—Curious flight of birds—Barter—Gubur Jumdeer—Ali Shurgee—Animals like Bats—Filifileh and Sooroot, an ancient ruin—Encampment of Arab Banditti—Aboo Nasir's answer to their inquiries—Mudduk-il-Hujauje—Koote—Horses procurable from hence to Bagdad—Description of the village—Jubul Afeez, a ruin—Arab Greyhounds—A Dandy of the Desert—Mr. Hamilton proceeds by land to Bagdad—Boats laden with firewood for Bagdad—Ummuttumim, a large Canal—Grotesque description of Boat—Shifeleh—Extensive Ruins—Observations on the general appearance of Ruins in this country—The ruins of Mumliheh—Coins—Want of instruments for digging.

AT four, P. M. we passed an encampment similar to that we had seen the night before; here our European costume and white faces so much attracted the attention and curiosity of the inhabitants, that they accompanied us along the bank for upwards of a mile, singing and dancing all the way. Aboo Nasir, who was a friend of their chief, had just drank sufficient to put on that solemn aspect a tipsy man so often assumes. Seating himself in midships, with his pipe in one hand, and his silver baton of authority in the other, he returned the salutations of the mob with the most amusing gravity, while our band squeaked a tune, and our guard figured away in the sword-dance.

In every village that we passed there was a merry noisy fellow, who seemed by general consent to be the common spokesman and buffoon. At this place, in particular, the representative of the people appeared to be highly agreeable to his constituents, as every sentence that he uttered brought down from them a roar of laughter, which was immediately re-echoed by our boat's crew.

Eight, P. M., off Akushee. At this place, some time ago, a Mr. Low and another Englishman were taken by the Arab hordes, and obliged to pay a stipulated sum for their release; but they had not proceeded far, when numbers came off in boats to attack them, for the purpose of extorting an additional sum. Incensed at this conduct, our countrymen fired on their treacherous opponents, and killed two of them; but knowing that their tribe, which occupied both banks, would soon be up in arms against them, and the current being too strong to contend with, they were obliged to return to Bussorah.

March 11.—At nine in the morning, we passed a station called Munjummil, from an Arab Sheikh of that name, which, from the time of Ishmael,* has been the general origin of names borne by different places in these countries.

We have not met with any habitations that could be considered permanent, nor any formed of more substantial materials than mats and reeds. The liability to inundations, and the habits of these wanderers, would prevent them from erecting buildings which could not be moved.

We passed in succession on the right bank, the usual station of Thuyn Il Swyah, and Mohumud Abool Hassan, Arab chiefs of note.

* "These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their *towns*, and by their *castles*." Gen. chap. xxv. ver. 16.

We saw numerous encampments of Arabs on both sides, all of whom, as our boat approached, loudly demanded who we were. We always answered them by mentioning the name of Mohumud, a powerful sheikh of the Montefeeekh tribe, whose protection our boatmen claim. This question was repeated night and day, and men frequently started up in the jungle, where neither habitations nor any appearance of population were observable.

We were given to understand, that a boat was in no danger of being attacked when any number of Arabs were collected on the banks, as there was then no premeditated intention of robbery, but when only one or two made their appearance, there was reason to suspect that the remainder of the gang were at no great distance ; and we frequently observed that Aboo Nasir and the boatmen were always more on the alert on these occasions. Indeed, the circumstance of our boat having to make its way against a rapid and tortuous stream, through a treeless desert, gave to robbers, who might be disposed to molest us, a great facility of observation, as well as ample time to make every necessary preparation for attack. Jeremiah alludes to this mode of lying in ambush, in his denunciation against the wickedness of Judah. " In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness." *

At two, P. M., off Cheshef. Here we fell in, for the first time, with the Illyauts, another description of wandering Arabs. Instead of the mat huts we had before seen, they occupied black tents, probably of the same description as those of their earliest ancestors. We have a

* Jer. chap. iii. ver. 2.

curious illustration of this in the Songs of Solomon, where his bride compares the blackness of her complexion to the tents of Kedar.*

We made frequent visits to these encampments, which were all extremely wretched. The tents were about six feet long and three high, and brought strongly to mind the habitations of the English gypsies. A large stud of blood horses were grazing near the tents, which being well cased in body cloths, formed a curious contrast with the miserable appearance of the Illyauts themselves.

At four o'clock, we stopped at a patch of brushwood jungle, where nearly all the boatmen and guard went to cut wood for fuel. In the midst of this employment, one of the party disturbed a lion that was sleeping under a bush. He was greatly frightened, and speedily communicated his terror to his comrades, who hastened on board. The lion stole away, and the trackers who had to walk through the same jungle, continued their work without making any objection. Game of every description is abundant throughout, which reminds us that we are in the ancient kingdom of Nimrod, that "mighty hunter before the Lord." The spot we were now passing, was quite living with the immense quantities of animals of all descriptions. At every step, our trackers put up pelicans, swans, geese, ducks, and snipes; numbers of hogs were seen galloping about in every direction; a lioness strolled towards our boat, and stood staring at us for two or three seconds; when within thirty yards, Mr. Hamilton and myself both fired at her, but as we were loaded with small shot, we did her no injury; the

* "I am *black* but comely, oh ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the *tents* of Kedar, the curtains of Solomon."—Solomon's Song, chap. i. verse 5.

Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Gen. xxv.): his tribe, under the name of Cedræni, are mentioned by Pliny, as descendants of Kedar. The Cedræan Arabs form a part of the Saracens.

noise of our guns made her turn quietly round, and she went away as leisurely as she came.

We saw, this afternoon, a numerous flock of small birds, which presented the appearance of a large whirlwind, and literally darkened the air in their flight. Both Mr. Lamb and Mr. Hart had seen the same in India, and told me that they were birds of the ortolan species.

March 12.—We remained on board this morning by desire of Aboo Nasir, who told us that the Arabs here were very uncivilized, and likely to molest us.

In the afternoon, we arrived off a small village, where we took in some milk and butter, and gave in exchange a handful of dried dates, which these primitive inhabitants liked equally as well as money. We saw here some small trading boats laden with dates, which they barter with the inhabitants for ghee and coarse cloths, manufactured from the wool of their sheep. We passed a small mound, called Gubur Jumdeer, erected in memory of a Sheikh of the Bence Lam tribe, who died there, but whose body was sent for interment to Mushed Ali, the holy land of the Shiah sect of Mahometans.

Ten, P. M.—On the left banks of the river, we passed a place marked by a large clump of trees, called Ali Shurgee, where the Mahometan prophet Ali is said to have left the print of his foot in his ascent to heaven. We saw here several animals, which might have been birds, flitting about the trees, but which appeared to us like the large Bengal bats, called the flying foxes.*

March 14.—We visited the remains of an ancient building on the right bank of the Tigris, composed of a large square mound of sun-

* The *Vestpertiglio ingens* of Linnæus.

burnt bricks, sixty paces long, forty-eight wide, and about twenty feet high. This place the Arabs called Filifileh, from a lady of rank and beauty, who, they said, flourished in the reign of King Kisra : a causeway extended to the east, interrupted by the river, to a similar mound, called Sooroot, so named from a handsome young husbandman who lived on the opposite bank, and with whom Filifileh is said to have fallen desperately in love. The tradition is, that Sooroot, like Leander, was in the habit of swimming across the river to his lady love, who, grieving that any time should be lost in such an exploit, erected this causeway to facilitate his visits.

The name of the monarch, Kisra,* which, as well as Khosro and Chosroes, are synonymous with Cyrus, is intended by the Arabs to designate Noosheervan, surnamed Adil (the Just), who is highly celebrated in Oriental history for his justice and piety. It was the boast of Mahomet that he was born in this monarch's reign ; and so proud are the modern natives of his memory, that they assign to him all doubtful remains of antiquity.

March 14.—We went on shore to an encampment of Illyauts, whom we found employed in making the carpets for which they are so celebrated. The inhabitants here were remarkably civil and respectful, and brought us several bowls of milk : our swords and pistols were as usual the great objects of their curiosity. We gave some money to a woman, which one of our guard attempted to appropriate to himself, but being discovered, was obliged to refund. When we returned on board we made a complaint to Aboo Nasir,

* “ Kisra or Cosra, Chosroes or Cyrus, an Emperor, the surname of several kings of Parthia, like Ptolemy amongst the Egyptians, or Cæsar *with* the Romans.”—*Richardson's Dictionary*.

who ordered him to be flogged; the culprit, on hearing his sentence, rushed into the cabin, threw himself on his knees, and kissed the cuff of Mr. Lamb's coat, and was pardoned at our intercession.

At ten at night, we reached an encampment of renowned robbers, and immediately received a caution from Aboo Nasir to be on the alert. They appeared either to have just arrived, or to have been on the point of departure, all their tents (with the exception of eight or ten) being struck. In a few minutes, three men appeared on the bank, and demanded why our boat travelled at night, and what we were laden with. Aboo Nasir answered, "We have troops on board, and are pursuing our journey; we are laden with *fire*, with which, if you don't leave the bank, we shall accommodate you." Our querists took the hint as we intended, disappeared on the instant, and we were troubled with no farther questions.

March 15.—The windings of the river were exceedingly tortuous to-day. At one, P. M. we observed an extensive mark on the right bank of the river, the remains of an encampment, where one of the great Mecca caravans was plundered a hundred and thirty years ago. The place has been deserted ever since. It is called Mudduk-Il-Hujauje, and appears to have been of great extent, for we came again upon its ruins, at another turn of the river, several hours afterwards.

Towards evening, we saw the apparent remains of ancient buildings, in a northerly direction, and at dusk reached the village of Kooté, which is considered half-way between Bussorah and Bagdad.

At this place, horses in any number are always ready for the traveller who may wish to perform the rest of the journey to Bagdad by land. The distance is one hundred and twenty miles, through a barren desert. In the dry season the journey is performed in thirty-

six hours, when it is necessary to carry provisions and water, both for riders and horses; but at this time of the year abundance of water is found in the Desert, as also numerous encampments of Arabs, so that the traveller may proceed at his leisure. Mr. Hamilton wished to avail himself of this opportunity, and horses were immediately put in requisition for his use, but we preferred remaining on board our boat, being anxious to visit the ruins of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, situate on the banks of the river.

March 16.—At daybreak, Mr. Lamb and myself went on shore to examine the neighbourhood. Koote is a small, square, and wretched mud-built village, surrounded by a wall, not more than six feet high; and is the first permanent establishment we have seen since we left Koorna. It is the residence of the powerful chieftain of the Benee Lam Arabs, whose influence extends as far as Goomruk to the south, and Bagdad to the north. Shut-ul-Hie, a navigable stream, runs opposite Koote, into the Euphrates. Two miles north of Koote, are the remains of a wall thrown across the neck of the peninsula, formed by the winding of the river.

To the north of the wall was a mound, covered with large sunburnt bricks, apparently the remains of a fortress; and, from the position of the whole, I should be inclined to think, it might have formed the field-work of a military camp. This place was called by the Arabs, Jubul Afeez. It is said to be coeval with the ruins at Filifileh and Sooroot. While we were examining these ruins, we put up great numbers of hares and partridges. We met also some men with greyhounds; these dogs are very beautiful animals, and are somewhat smaller than the English breed; the ears hang down, the tail is feathered, and both are covered with hair as fine as silk. The Arabs are very fond of this

species ; but the dog being an unclean animal according to the Mahometan law, the Faithful are not allowed to touch it, except on the crown of the head, that being the only part of the animal which he is unable to pollute with his tongue.

The owner of these dogs was rather an anomalous being for an inhabitant of the Desert—a young Arab dandy ; his turban and robes were adjusted with the greatest neatness, his eyelids were stained with antimony, two or three rings graced each finger, and he conversed with an air of the most amusing puppyism.

In our excursion, we met Mr. Hamilton and his party. All were armed from head to foot ; he was accompanied by our Ethiopian servant, Yacoot, a guide, and five of our Arab guard, all of whom were mounted at his expense ; the hire of each horse from Koote to Bagdad being ten piastres ; the horses of the party were very small, and apparently ill calculated to sustain the fatigues of the journey ; but of high blood, and accustomed to go through it with ease.

While waiting for our boat, I shot a crow, which our guard, after having roasted it by a fire they made in the jungle, ate ; though the crow is forbidden by the Mahometan as well as the Levitical law.*

We returned on board at eight in the morning, and tried to make way against a strong wind, which increased so much by ten o'clock, that our trackers, unable to proceed against it, were obliged to lay by till two in the afternoon, when the wind moderating, we continued our journey. This was the first time we were wind-bound.

During our detention, Arabs encamped in the vicinity brought cloaks, skins, and worsted yarn for sale ; we procured two fine milk

* Levit. chap. ix. verse 16.

goats and kids, for which we paid eleven piastres. We passed a boat cutting fire-wood from the brush-wood of the jungle, for sale at Bagdad; this must be a scarce article, since a journey of three hundred miles is made to obtain it.

At four, P. M. at a place called Ummuttumim, we came to a large canal, running in an easterly direction; the bed of which was filled up nearly to the level of the surrounding country, but the banks on both sides distinctly marked its course; the brick foundation of a wall was here visible. The canal appeared to fall into the Tigris, about two miles from the place where we approached it, and might have been made for the purpose of carrying off the superabundant waters of the river during the freshes, for which purpose, so many canals were said to have been formed in ancient Babylonia. We followed its course upwards of four miles to the north-west, but did not see its termination in that direction. The river, to-day, has not been so winding as yesterday, though we have had one or two very abrupt turns.

Owing to the strong N. W. wind which has prevailed the whole of the day, our progress has been very slow, more so, indeed, than on any day since leaving Bussorah; the water is rapidly decreasing, as appears by the banks, which have fallen nearly six feet.

March 17.—The windings of the river increased, and the water continued to fall very rapidly. We saw great quantities of brush-wood on both banks, and passed many boats laden with it. These vessels are of a very grotesque description, being nearly as broad as they are long, and deviate very little from the circular boat common to the Euphrates and Tigris: they are constructed of wicker, and coated with naphtha, and when laden with brushwood, piled twelve or fourteen feet high, appeared too unwieldy to be moved in any other

direction than the current. We stopped at noon to lay in a stock of firewood, having been informed we should not meet with any more jungle on our voyage.

At two, P. M., at an abrupt curve of the river, we passed Shifileh, a square brick fort, the residence of Sheikh Tyobeid, a powerful Arab chief, whose country extends from the right bank of the Shut-ul-Hie to Bagdad, while the left bank, from Koote to Bagdad, is under the influence of Sheikh Zummeir.

Shortly afterwards, we came upon some extensive ruins on the left bank of the river, which we landed to examine: indeed, from hence to Bagdad, this now desert tract bears the marks of having once been covered with large and populous cities. Previous to entering upon a description of this place, a few general observations are necessary respecting the appearance of all ruins of this once populous region.

The soil of ancient Assyria and Babylonia consists of a fine clay, mixed with sand, with which, as the waters of the river retire, the shores are covered. This compost, when dried by the heat of the sun, becomes a hard and solid mass, and forms the finest material for the beautiful bricks for which Babylon was so celebrated. We all put to the test the adaptation of this mud for pottery, by taking some of it while wet from the bank of the river, and then moulding it into any form we pleased. Having been exposed to the sun for half an hour, it became as hard as stone. These remarks are important, as the indication of buildings throughout this region are different from those of other countries, the universal substitution of brick for stone being observable in all the numerous ruins we visited, including those of the great cities of Seleucia, Ctesiphon, and of the mighty Babylon herself, for which we have the authority of Scrip-

ture, that her builders “had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.”*

In consequence of this circumstance, the ruins now before us, which our guides called Mumliheh, instead of showing fragments of pillars, or any marks by which we might conjecture the order of architecture, exhibit an accumulation of mounds, which, on a dead flat, soon attract the eye of a traveller, and have at first sight the appearance of sandy hillocks. On a nearer inspection they prove to be square masses of brick, facing the cardinal points, and, though sometimes much worn by the weather, built with much regularity; the neighbourhood of these large mounds are strewn with fragments of tile, broken pottery, and manufactured vitreous substances. Coins, the incontestable proofs of former population, are generally to be found. In this place, they are so abundant, that many persons come from Bagdad in the dry season to search for them. Aboo Nasir told us, that some time ago he found a pot full of coins, and Mr. Hart picked up two, with apparently Cufic inscriptions, but their characters were not very decypherable. Near the place where they were found, was the fragment of a vessel which had possibly contained them.

Travellers, in making this tour, ought to provide themselves with instruments for digging, which would both facilitate their researches, and in all probability amply repay their curiosity.

At midnight, we passed the western side of a considerable island, by which the river is divided into two navigable channels. The nights are beautifully clear, and well suited to the study of astronomy; which reminds us that we are in the land of the Chaldeans, the earliest professors of that science.

* Gen. chap. xi. verse 3.

CHAPTER VII.

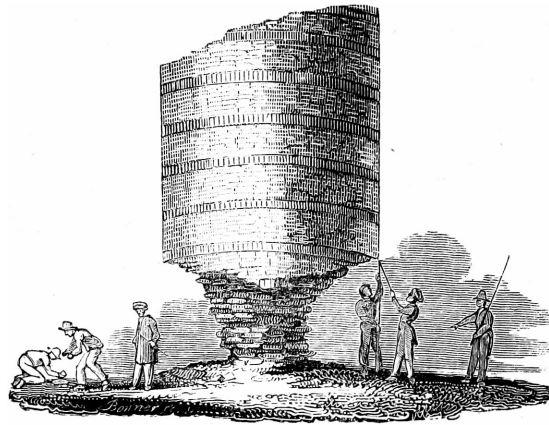
Tortuous course of the River—Extensive Ruins—Fire Temple—Devil's dance—Dawurree, a tribe of thieves and buffoons—Ruins of Seleucia—Camel-riding—Illustration of the Prophecy of Isaiah — Ancient Statue — Tradition—Powder Mill—Ctesiphon—Description of the Tauk, or Arch of Kisra—Suleiman Pauk—Historical notices of Seleucia and Ctesiphon—Arrival at Bagdad—Public Entrance—Mr. Hamilton's journey across the Desert—Anecdote of the Chief of the Artillery.

March 18.—THE river becomes more winding, as we ascend, forming a chain of peninsulas, which makes the distance by water fully three times longer than by land; the bed of the river is enlarged, and numerous banks are formed in it, rendering the navigation very difficult when the water is low. Our boat run a-ground several times after leaving Koote, but being light, we got off without difficulty, and this happening at a time when the river is so high, proves that it must be wholly unnavigable in the dry season.

At noon, we passed extensive mounds on the north bank, which they told us were called Shejer; considered half way between Koote and Bagdad. An Arab whom we met here, informed us of Mr. Hamilton's arrival at Bagdad, yesterday, at the hour of afternoon prayer (four o'clock).

We passed to-day, numbers of turtles on the banks and shoals, which the rapid fall of the river had recently left exposed.

At noon, we examined some extensive mounds of the same general description as those we saw yesterday. One of our party picked up a brick with an inscription, but of a very imperfect character. Half a mile from the banks of the river was the portion of a pillar, composed of sun-burnt bricks, twenty feet, two inches high, and sixty-three feet in circumference. It consisted of eight layers of bricks, several compartments of seven layers placed horizontally, and one vertically; between the layers was interspersed cement, one-half the thickness of the brick. The pillar stands at the eastern side of a large mass of ruins, apparently the remains of an extensive palace, or temple; that portion which is left, proves it to be detached, and there were evidently no means of ascending it: we were not provided with instruments with which we could open its base, or examine among the ruins for any part of its capital, or ornament, and we could gain no information respecting it. The annexed sketch will show the resemblance this pillar bears to those ancient columns so common in Ireland. Amongst the ruins we found some different kinds of glass, perfectly white and transparent, like flint-glass; the surface of which was cor-



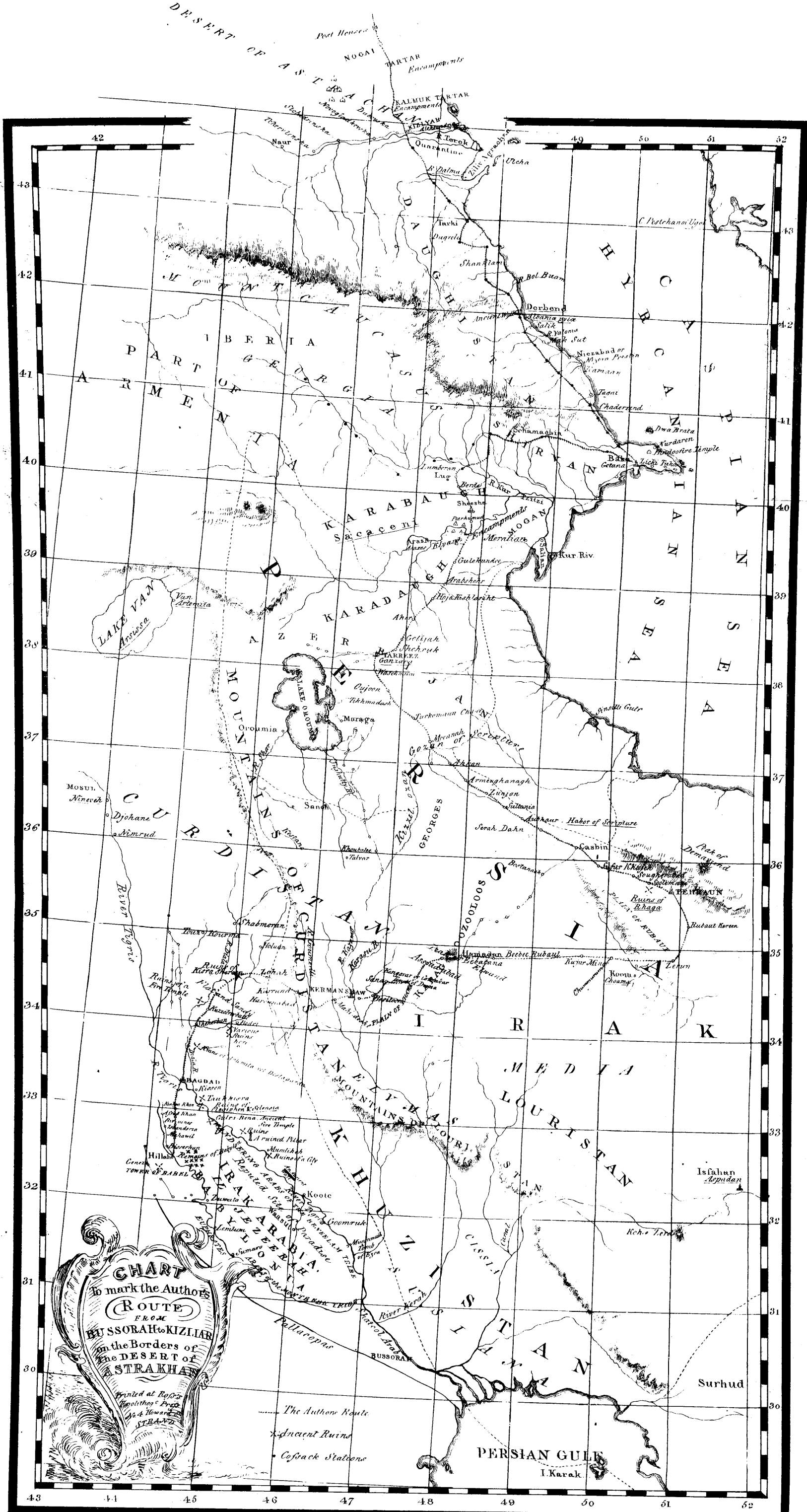


CHART
To mark the Author's
ROUTE
FROM
BUSSORAH TO KIZILJAR
on the Borders of
the DESERT OF
ASTRAKHAN
Printed at the
Geographical Dept.
No. 4 Howard
STRAAD

— The Author's Route
x Ancient Ruins
• Cossack Stations

PERSIAN GULF
I. Karak

roded, indicating a long exposure. A raised causeway extended due S. from these ruins, to some mounds apparently four or five miles distant. Half a mile to the W. N. W. on the banks of the river are some mounds, the remains of a burying-ground, on which the river has evidently encroached, and recently washed down a considerable portion. At this place, was an earthenware vessel of an oval shape; this Mr. Hart broke open with his dagger, and found to contain the skeleton of a child, which crumbled to pieces on being exposed to the air; the vessel was eighteen inches deep, three feet long, and twenty-two inches wide: higher up in the bank was another vessel, somewhat larger, but corresponding with the other in its general appearance, but as this had been broken, no bones were discoverable. In the course of our journey, we found vessels of a similar description, of which I shall make mention in another part of the journal.

Near sun-set, we saw at some distance, bearing south by west, an elevated mound, which Aboo Nasir called Gubri Bena, the temple of the Ghebers, or ancient fire-worshippers. As we looked upon Aboo Nasir to be less superstitious than his countrymen, we were not a little surprized to hear him gravely assert that a large troop of devils were in the habit of assembling at the temple every night, and dancing round it, amidst flames of fire: he added, that many Arabs had seen them at a distance, that none had ever dared to approach the spot by night, and that no Englishman had ever visited the haunt of these evil spirits.

March 19.—Our boat was accompanied this morning for a considerable distance by a party of fellows, who kept up a kind of running dance, of a most grotesque description; with them, was a man

playing a flute, made of bamboo, from which he managed to extract some kind of melody. They belonged to a tribe called Daurree, and are countenanced by the Pasha of Bagdad; are professed thieves and buffoons, and said to be very skilful in both callings. As far as we could judge, their appearance certainly did not belie their vocations.

The banks of the river were lined with camels and cattle, and numerous encampment of Illyauts.

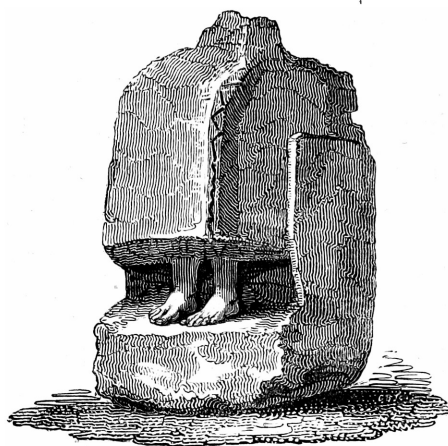
During the day, we passed an uninterrupted succession of mounds, the remains of the once magnificent cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. At night, we came in sight of Tauk Kisra, an ancient arch, which we visited the following day.

March 20.—We landed first on the W. bank of the river, on the site of the ancient Seleucia. Having to go some distance in search of a statue, and not being able to procure horses, we each hired a camel from amongst some which we found grazing on the banks; these animals had nothing on their backs but the common wooden frame, or pack-saddle for carrying burthens, and were totally unprovided with any convenience for riding; so we each seated ourselves on their rumps, and guided them with a long stick, by striking their cheek on the opposite side to that which we wished them to go. I do not answer for my companions, some of whom were fastidious respecting their conveyance, but for my own part, I thought the motion was not intolerable, nor so rough as to prevent me from writing legibly, while my beast was going his best walking-pace.

We reached the statue of which we were in search, after a ride of five miles, through a country strewed with fragments of

ruined buildings. As far as the eye could reach, the horizon presented a broken line of mounds; the whole of this place was a desert flat; the only vegetation was a small prickly shrub, thinly scattered over the plain, and some patches of grass, where the water had lodged in pools, occupied by immense flocks of bitterns: so literally has the prophecy of Isaiah been fulfilled, respecting devoted Babylon, that it should be "swept with the besom of destruction," that it should be made "a possession for the bittern and pools of water."

The statue was lying on the ground near the remains of some extensive buildings. It consisted of the lower portion of a figure in a sitting posture in long vestments, the form of which proves them to belong to a female. It is executed with considerable skill,



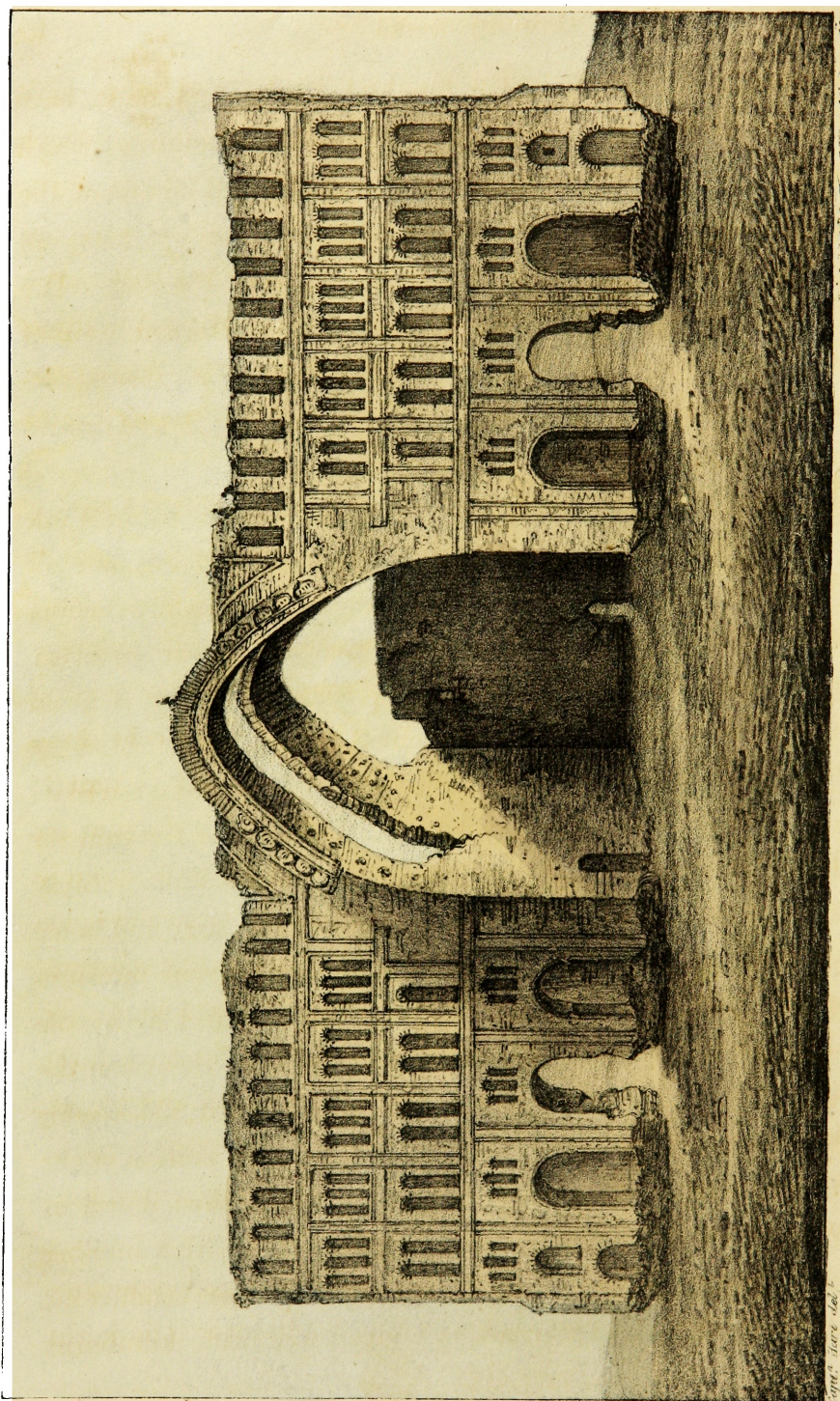
particularly the ornamental part of the robe, and the feet, which are exceedingly well delineated. The figure is seated on a square stool, standing on a base ten inches thick, apparently for the pur-

pose of fixing it in its place, as it is left rough ; the upper portion is broken off, as it would seem from having fallen down from a height. This is indicated by the manner of the fracture, which is obliquely downwards, while the stone is rent throughout. The entire figure appears to consist of a block of compact granite, of great tenacity, as we found on making an unsuccessful attempt to break off a small portion from the fractured part.

Our guides had, as usual, a tradition respecting the ruins and the statue. The city, they said, was destroyed by the Almighty, for the sins of the people. In former times, a brother and sister, both very beautiful, were so constantly together, that, as they grew up, an improper attachment was formed, and God, to punish them, turned them to stone.

We returned a different way from that which we came, but the same signs of building were apparent : the people who accompanied us on foot, picked up four copper coins, but they were so much corroded that they could not be made out. On our return, we passed what appears to have been the W. wall of the city, composed of sun-dried bricks, with layers of reeds. It is of great thickness, and in many places, notwithstanding its long exposure to the washing of the rains, upwards of twenty feet high. It stands about a mile from the present channel of the river ; the line of the southern wall can also be traced, and the remains of a mound running east. The water is encroaching in this direction, and has washed away the eastern wall, if such ever existed.

The Turks have established a gunpowder manufactory, at which we found some men at work : the ruins of a small square fort, evidently of a later erection, stand about the middle of the southern



TAQ KISRA A RUINED ARCH ON THE SITE OF CTESIPHON.

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wall, from which it is separated a hundred yards, and must have been commanded from it. The form of the interior building, which is of burnt bricks, can still be traced, and we saw a well on one of the bastions. Though a brisk wind was blowing, the heat was very oppressive, and we were glad to get to the protection of the boat. We found a servant of Aga Saikis, the British agent at Bagdad, waiting on board, with a letter from Mr. Hamilton, informing us, that apartments were preparing in the agent's house, and that horses would be sent to this place to take us on to Bagdad.

In the afternoon, we crossed over to the E. bank near to the Tauk (Arch), which we went to examine, after having rested a couple of hours. It stands about half a mile from the river, the intervening space being entirely covered with brick mounds, which, in every direction, appeared to extend as far as we could see. We rode on asses, which we obtained on hire. The annual fair, which is held at the tomb of Suleiman Pauk (a Mahometan saint), terminated yesterday, and a number of the visitors still remained. The view of the ruin far exceeded our expectations. From a scene of broken walls entirely devoid of ornament, we came suddenly in sight of this large and noble pile of building. The arch in the centre is, according to our measurement, eighty-five feet wide, and one hundred and one feet high; the curve of the arch forms a large parabola, springing from about half the height; this leads to a vaulted hall of the same breadth and height, one hundred and fifty-seven feet long; this is the only portion of the interior, of which the roof remains: the back is also broken down, as are fifteen feet towards the front: the ceiling is pierced with a number of holes at regular distances, which, according to our conductors, formerly held chandeliers. The whole is built of well-made kiln-burnt

bricks, one foot square and three inches thick; but they do not, as is generally asserted, belong to the Babylonian ruins. The massive structure of the whole building has saved it from a similar fate from the roof. It does not appear to have suffered much dilapidation since it was visited by Ives, in 1758; and, if left to the effect of time, may endure for many years. The walls that support the arch are fifteen feet thick; four tiers of arches remain, diminishing in succession. Tradition asserts that the palace, when entire, was double its present height.

While we were engaged in our measurements, a Turk attended by a large suite, dismounted and spread his mat near us. We sat down, smoked a pipe together, and drank some coffee, while he directed one of his attendants to ascend the top of the building, a work of some difficulty. The crowd seemed to admire our measuring line, and the facility with which we wrote with our pencils. One of our party, in opening his coat to look for a pencil, discovered to the bystanders a small pistol in each waistcoat pocket. Significant glances were exchanged by the crowd, who seemed impressed with a high opinion of our desperate courage, from having concealed arms about us. With the Asiatic traveller, his weapons of defence are the most conspicuous appendages of his dress, his object being more to intimidate the robber from attempting an assault than to resist when attacked.

From the ruins, we went to the tomb of Suleiman Pauk, whose name has superseded that of the builder of this magnificent pile, in giving a name to the district. The tomb is a small building with a dome; the interior (to which they allowed us access, on our pulling off our shoes,) was ornamented with arabesque arches, and the surrounding enclosure was used as a caravanseraï.

Suleiman Pauk, or Solomon the Clean, was the contemporary and zealous partisan of Mahomet, and is now the patron saint of the barbers, who come from Bagdad in annual procession to visit his tomb.

Seleucia stands prominent in the page of history, as having caused the final destruction of Babylon. On the death of Alexander the Great, which happened in the latter city as he was about to rebuild the Tower of Babel, his immediate successor in Asia, Seleucus Nicator, built Seleucia for the avowed purpose of ruining Babylon. The spot selected, though now a desert, was at that time the most fertile of the East. Seleucia, which became the metropolis of Assyria, was formed on a Greek model, and received from the founder a free constitution. Such attractions soon drew from the already exhausted Babylon its few remaining inhabitants, and the population of the new city increased so rapidly, that, according to Pliny, it soon amounted to six hundred thousand. Seleucia continued to flourish for several centuries; and that author who lived five hundred years after the foundation, says, that even in his time it still enjoyed the blessings of freedom—"Libera hodie ac sui juris."*

Meanwhile Ctesiphon appears to have been a small town on the opposite bank. As the Seleucians, who were a free people, would naturally view with jealousy the establishment of a military force within their walls, the monarchs were accustomed to quarter in Ctesiphon their Scythian soldiers, who performed the same military service at that period, which their descendants, the wandering tribes, do for the sovereigns of the present day.

Seleucia suffered at the hands of the Parthians the same fate which she had inflicted on Babylon. Ctesiphon, in her turn, became

* Plin. lib. 6. cap. xxvi.

a great and populous city, the capital of the kingdom. In the time of the Emperor Julian, she was in the zenith of her glory; and the recollection becomes more interesting, from being connected with the history of that singular character, the splendour of whose great and good qualities has been obscured by the forbidding though well-merited epithet of "The Apostate."

Ctesiphon is said by Ammianus Marcellinus, the historian and contemporary of Julian, to have been built by Vardanes, and afterwards beautified and walled by Pacorus, a Parthian king. This city is by some supposed to be the site of Calneh, in the land of Shinar, mentioned in Genesis*: and Pliny's placing Ctesiphon in Chalonitis,† favours the idea. Why not, too, the expression in the sixth chapter of Amos, applicable to this, "Pass ye into Calneh and see"?

Ctesiphon and Seleucia were subsequently united under the name of Il Medayn, the dual number of an Arabic word, signifying two cities which Nooshirvan, surnamed Kisra the Just, adorned with many beautiful palaces, the principal of which was the Tauk or Arch, which I have described. Gibbon gives a detailed account of the sacking of this palace by the Saracens, and of the immense wealth found within the walls. The barbarians seemed struck with the riches, and, as they entered, exclaimed, "This is the white palace of Chosroes!—this is the promise of the apostle of God!"

We returned on board at dusk, intending to resume our examination next day; but Aboo Nasir, as tipsy as usual, had weighed

* And the beginning of his (Nimrod's) kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and *Calneh*, in the land of Shinar.—Chap. x. ver. 10.

† Ctesiphontem juxta tertium lapidem in Chalonitide condidere Parthi,—Plin. lib. vi. cap. xxvi. p. 136.

and sailed without our knowledge. Luckily a strong breeze sprang up from the southward, which brought us in the morning off the renowned city of Bagdad.

March 21.—As we approached the suburbs, the novelty of our dress attracted numbers of people on the bank. There were several women in the crowd, who did not scruple to lift up their veils, the better to indulge their curiosity. Some of them set up the same kind of cry, as that with which the women welcomed the new governor into Bussorah. They have tolerably good features, but their pale pink complexions strongly mark their state of habitual seclusion. Their robes, being open as far as the chest, leave the person considerably exposed.

Our boat was moored near the gates of the town. An hour after, two of the agent's Tchousses (avant-couriers) came to tell us that the horses had been sent to Suleiman Pauk, but that they would soon return. Hearing this, we proposed walking; but the Tchousses stared with astonishment at the idea of an Englishman compromising his dignity so much, as to walk in the streets at noon-day. As this was impracticable, we remained for another hour, when the horses arrived at last, and with them came a host of attendants, who accompanied us into Bagdad. One of them, a mounted Tchouss, went before us with his bâton of office, a silver stick surmounted with a gilt ball of filigree work. Our horses' bridles were very handsomely ornamented, and the furniture of our saddles, which covered nearly the whole body of the horse, consisted of velvet studded with gilt and silver knobs. In short, we entered the city with a state that would have better befitted ambassadors than private travellers.

We were received with much attention by Aga Saikeis, the British

agent. Shortly after our arrival, the Pasha's secretary sent a message welcoming us to Bagdad, and apologizing for not visiting us in person.

On meeting with Mr. Hamilton, he gave us a lively description of his journey across the Desert, which we here repeat, to help the choice of a future traveller between the land and water journey.

“ On the 18th, Mr. Hamilton passed through several encampments of Arabs, from whom he experienced all those rites of hospitality for which those tribes are celebrated. He describes the plain as being in some parts quite alive with numerous encampments and their attendant herds of camels, oxen, and horses. At nine in the evening, he came to the bed of a very broad canal, the banks of which are thirty feet high.

He saw vast quantities of birds, called bitterns, of which the Scriptures tell us that Babylonia was to become the possession.

He met an Arab Bey, attended by four men well armed and mounted; these carried hawks on their wrists, and were followed by several greyhounds. Mr. Hamilton drank coffee with his new acquaintance out of cups with gold saucers. The B  y was very civil, and promised to show him some good hawking on a future occasion.

He slept the first part of the night in the tent of an Arab, the father of two beautiful girls. A sheep was brought to the tent door, and milked by one of his fair hostesses; a carpet was spread for him in the upper part of the tent, a fire was lighted, and he was regaled with pipes, coffee, milk, butter, and a sheep roasted whole. He bivouacked from one till three o'clock in the morning, to rest his cattle. On resuming the march, the cold was so intense, that his party were obliged to alight from their horses and make a fire with some brushwood they found in the jungle. The heat during the day

had been nearly insupportable, and the opposite extreme at this time brings to mind Jacob's spirited remonstrance with his father-in-law, Laban, when in a similar situation. 'In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night.'*

They were all huddled round the fire, when a soldier gave the alarm of robbers. They were up in arms in a moment; but the enemy, on seeing their numbers, made off.

On the 19th, he saw the ruins of a circular building, which, from its description, must have resembled that we saw on the banks of the Tigris.† It was forty feet in diameter, and built of red bricks fourteen inches square.

Every flock of sheep that he saw in the night was attended by three or four armed men. At midnight he reached another encampment, and met with treatment similar to that of the night before.

The Arab, in whose tent he was breakfasting, was told by a boy, that a party had carried off some of his sheep: he seized his sword and spear, snatched a musket from one of the soldiers, mounted his horse bare-backed, and in one moment was scouring across the Desert.

They resumed their march on the morning of the 20th, and reached Bagdad in the afternoon."

In the evening, we went to the Hummaum, (hot bath) not quietly as we wished, but with the same retinue as in the morning. A Turkish Hummaum has been so often described, that it will be sufficient to mention our having undergone the whole process of kneading, cracking joints, and champooing. After the bath, we were, by the civility of Aga Saikis, regaled with iced water, pipes,

* Gen xxi. verse 40.

† Vide page 64.

coffee, and sherbet; we were then sprinkled with rose-water; and frankincense was brought us to perfume our mustaches.

March 22.—We received a visit next morning from the chief of the artillery to the Pasha of Bagdad. He was a tall thin man, about sixty years of age; his weather-beaten face had been bronzed by a long exposure to an Eastern sun; formidable white mustaches graced his upper lip; and over his eyes were a pair of ferocious bushy eyebrows, the peculiar elevation of which infallibly stamped him a Frenchman.

The variety observable in his dress marked the true Soldado: the buttons of his coat were adorned with the imperial crown and initial of Napoleon; from the button-hole was suspended a croix of Louis the Desired; and a flaming pair of capacious Turkish trowsers bespoke his present service. The top of this gaunt figure was crowned with a small hat, which rested on his left ear.

With the volubility which so strongly characterizes his nation, he dilated on every subject. Hearing my name mentioned, he inquired of me if I was related to “the unfortunate Keppel.” Perceiving that he confounded the fate of the two admirals,* I attempted to convince him that it was Byng, and not Keppel, who had been unfortunate, but he interrupted me with a “*pardonnez*,” and assured the company that an English friend of his threw up his commission in consequence of Keppel’s execution.

* Admiral Byng was tried and executed in 1757. Admiral Keppel was tried and acquitted in 1779, and, in 1782, was made First Lord of the Admiralty.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Pasha's Garden—Armenian Church—Our Host's Policy—Monastery of Calendars—Tomb of Zobeide—Visit to the Catholic Bishop of Bagdad—Anecdote—Journey to Babylon—Our Establishment—Description of a Caravanserai—Our first Night's Lodging.

IN the afternoon we visited one of the Pasha's gardens—our heads full of the splendid descriptions in the Arabian Nights. Though not so sanguine as to expect a garden like that in which Ibrahim entertained the fair Persian, we hoped at least to see something like Eastern magnificence in the summer retreat of a three-tailed Basha. We were doomed to be disappointed. The garden, comprising eight or ten acres, and enclosed within a mud wall, contained a confused assemblage of shrubs and fruit-trees. A summer-house on the banks of the Tigris, well worthy of the garden, was a rickety little building, where dirt, damp, and neglect, had obliterated nearly every trace of the fresco daubings of flowers, with which the walls had once been decorated.

To compensate in some degree for this destruction of our air-built castles, we had, from the windows of the summer-house, a fine view of Bagdad and its neighbourhood.

In our way home, we stopped in a small by-street to visit the Armenian church, which looked, indeed, as if it belonged to a

despised and persecuted religion; and gave us an idea of what our churches might have been in the early times of Christianity. The door by which we entered was not above five feet high, and the exterior of the building had nothing to distinguish it from the humble dwellings in its neighbourhood. An old grey-bearded priest admitted us through an inner court into the church. It was a small narrow apartment; at the east end stood an altar, decorated with faded silk and silver tinsel; a few wax tapers on the tables were lighted by the priest, who seemed anxious that his church should be seen to the best advantage. A few paltry daubs hung upon the walls, executed with the true Eastern contempt for perspective. One represented Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, with the anachronism of the Crucifixion of our Saviour in the background.

In the course of conversation, we mentioned to Aga Saikis our wish to be acquainted with the Pasha of Bagdad. Perceiving his unwillingness to introduce us, we pressed him for his reasons; and were not a little surprised to find, that our omitting to call upon the Pasha was to form part of a plan he had in view to frighten that potentate, and, by so doing, to render him subservient to his own purposes.

To explain our host's policy, it may be mentioned, that some time before our arrival at Bussorah, Captain Taylor, the political agent, had, for some infraction of the treaty on the part of the Pasha, hauled down the British flag, and did not intend to hoist it again till he had received instructions from the Indian Government. Shortly after this, the Alligator had arrived at Bussorah, and the Pasha's brother had taken possession of his government.

A British man-of-war anchoring off Bussorah was an event so unusual, that it struck alarm into the mind of the new governor, who, soon after our visit, wrote to his brother at Bagdad, informing him that a king's ship had arrived for some especial purpose; that a large European force was on board (so he termed the marines); and that four Europeans (meaning our party) were about to proceed to Persia through Bagdad, as he surmised, on some political mission.

These concurring, though accidental circumstances, were such as would naturally alarm an Asiatic, ignorant of our customs. It was with a view of keeping alive these fears, that Aga Saikis wished to prevent our waiting upon the Pasha; by which he intended to make it appear, that we, the pseudo-diplomatists, had received instructions from our Government thus to express a negative disapprobation of the Pasha's conduct.

March 23.—Mr. Hamilton and I went this morning to the opposite bank, to visit a monastery of wandering dervishes, called Calendars, of which sect mention is made in the Arabian Nights. The bridge, which we crossed on horseback, had a somewhat alarming appearance. It was formed by a number of boats, irregularly fastened together, and surmounted by a narrow platform made of the trunks of date-trees. This, in many places, was full of holes; and, as there was no balustrade, and a crowd was constantly passing to and fro, the slightest start of our horses would have precipitated us into the river. When the wind sets in at the S. E., the bridge becomes impassable, and the communication between Bagdad and its suburbs is suspended for several days.

At a quarter of a mile from the bridge is the monastery, presenting the appearance of substantial neatness. On the walls, are

numerous inscriptions in the Arabic and Cufic characters, and one of considerable length over the gateway. In the court-yard are a number of fruit-trees, principally the orange and the vine.

On dismounting from our horses, we were conducted to the Sheikh Calendar (the Superior of the monastery). He was seated on a tiger's skin, in a room describing three sides of a square of twenty-eight feet, and about forty high. We saw fixed on the walls several rude iron instruments, which had been implements of war prior to the use of fire-arms, and had been presented to the monastery by various contributors. There were also some brass urns, a number of ostrich eggs, and some white stones, fixed in the walls. The Sheikh wore a low drab cloth turban, bound round with green, called the *tajee derveishaun* (dervish's cap); the other Calendars had caps of a similar shape, with red tassels. From the neck of each Calendar were suspended a circular onyx-stone, with indented edges, somewhat bigger than a crown-piece (this was called the *sung-i-tulsim*, or *talismanic stone*), and one somewhat larger, called the *sung-i-canaut* (the stone of repose), emblematic of the peaceful life of the wearer. Round the waist was worn a stone of an oval form, called the *Kumberia*, which accompanies the wearer to the grave.

The Sheikh was a clever talkative little man, and possessed that agreeable vivacity and store of anecdote which are occasionally found in men who have had much intercourse with the world. He had seen various countries, and spoke Persian with great fluency—in which language we conversed. On our approaching him, he vociferated a dozen doggrel rhymes in token of his self-abasement, calling himself a Jew, an infidel, a rogue, and a drunkard. As he

repeated these frequently, I caught the following lines, which may serve as a specimen of the metre :—

Hérkēh pōōshūm
Baūd-ĭ-nōōshūm
Mēēfērōōshūm.

He next began a long speech, thanking us for the honour we had conferred on a poor dervish who had quitted the world ; though, from his lively conversation, there was little of the anchorite perceptible in him. We were very anxious to learn some account of his Order ; but he was so fond of hearing himself talk, that we were obliged to let him have his own way. He dwelt much on the forbearing and pacific doctrine of the Calendars' code ; and told us that for a blow given no blow would be returned, but the simple ejaculation of "God's will be done!" We observed, however, that no Calendar was without a dagger in his girdle. He informed us the monastery was built by the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, nine hundred and twenty-five years ago : he also showed us a picture, which he said was intended to represent the circumstance of an European king coming to pay his respects to the King of the Calendars. In the adjoining room we were shown a small niche, in which the Calendars are supposed to sit. It was covered with Arabic inscriptions—most probably quotations from the Koraun.

On returning to the first room, the Sheikh gave us pipes and coffee, and an excellent breakfast of milk, dates, and sweetmeats ; after which we took our leave, much pleased with the eccentricity of our reception.

The Arabian Nights furnish but few details respecting this Order :

the only place in which they are mentioned, is the story in which three sons of kings, all blind of the right eye, assume the habits of Calendars, and sup with the three sisters, where they meet Haroun Alraschid, the Vizier Giaffer, and Mesrour, the chief of the Eunuchs. These Calendars were said to have shaved their beards and eyebrows; by which it would seem, that formerly such a custom formed a part of the duties of a Calendar, but I was not able to extract from our talkative host any elucidation of this custom. The Calendars, so called from Calendar, the name of their founder, are a sect of Mahometan dervishes, whose debauched morals and vagabond habits give great offence to their more orthodox brethren. They wander as mendicants over all parts of Asia. In India they wear a party-coloured dress, to denote, as I should suppose, their extreme poverty.

In returning home, we visited the tomb of Zobeide, the wife of Haroun Alraschid: even when new, it must have been very inferior to what we should naturally have expected in honour of the favourite of so renowned a caliph. The building under which Zobeide lies buried, is a column formed of a pyramid of polygons of thirty feet high, decreasing in number of sides towards the vertex. The interior of this building is seven paces and a half wide; in it are three tombs of brickwork, in a very dilapidated state, containing the bodies of the mother of one Pasha, and the son of another: in the third is all that now remains of the once beautiful Zobeide. There is no appearance of any inscription to perpetuate her memory: the only one visible in the building was to Ali Bey, the son of Mohumud Pasha; nor were there any traces of ornamental work, so common in the Arabic buildings.

We have been kept such close prisoners, ever since our arrival in Bagdad, that we have not been permitted to leave the house without a numerous train of attendants. Against this ridiculous and petty annoyance remonstrance has been tried without effect. We are answered by an appeal to our pride, that "the English name is great in Bagdad," and that it would be wrong in us to compromise it, by doing any thing so derogatory to the Turkish ideas of great men, as to go into the streets unattended. It is in vain that we tell Aga Saikis that such observations are inapplicable to private travellers like ourselves, who have no wish to be taken for great men: but no; he is deaf to our entreaties for liberty; and we are obliged to submit with the best grace we can. This evening we wished to see a mosque that had been built by Haroun Alraschid; and knowing that a large retinue would attract a crowd, we tried to escape from our guard, and to steal out unperceived, but without success; our persecutors soon overtook, and preceded us as usual. These men, thinking it impossible that we could go out except on a visit of ceremony, conducted us by mistake to the house of the Catholic Bishop of Bagdad. This gentleman had been sent out by the French Government, and, as it is supposed, will shortly be appointed Consul for that nation.

We found in the Bishop, all that politeness and vivacity which form the characteristics of the Frenchman. Although we were at first disappointed at not finding the object of our search, we soon forgot our chagrin, by listening to his agreeable conversation.

The Bishop detailed to us, with considerable humour, the account of his journey by the caravan, across the Desert, from Aleppo to this place. He told us that he had been robbed three times by the wan-

dering tribes. On one of these occasions, the robbers, seeing him with a very neat and clean pair of boots, were so polite and obliging as to take them off his feet, without giving him the trouble to dismount : at the same time one of the gang was about to seize a small chest containing all his valuables ; but this was saved, by one of the fellow's comrades desiring him to leave it alone, as it only contained medicines, or, according to the Bishop's version of the story, "*Bah ! c'est un Franc, il n'a que la medecine.*"

March 24.—At four this afternoon, our arrangements being complete for our visit to the ruins of Babylon, we left Bagdad with the buoyant spirit of schoolboys breaking up for the holidays, so pleased were we at leaving our state-prison, and exchanging it for the pure air of the Desert.

Our present establishment consisted of the Syyud, who continued to officiate as cook ; Yacoot the Ethiopian, who, upon our drawing lots for him, fell to Mr. Hart ; Yusuf, an Armenian, was Mr. Lamb's servant ; Mohumud Ali, Mr. Hamilton's ; and Hajee Ali, my own. As we had frequently to speak of our servants in their presence, and as some of them understood English, we deemed it necessary to designate each by some epithet which he could not understand : thus, we called the Syyud, "the Descendant of the Prophet ;" the Ethiopian, "the Raven," from his hoarse voice and black colour ; the Armenian, the "Dandy," from the care he paid to his toilet ; Mohumud Ali, the well deserved appellation of "the Poliçon ;" and Hajee Ali, "the Camel," from the resemblance his face and figure bore to that animal.

Some apology is necessary for introducing these vagabonds to notice ; but they occasionally afforded much amusement to us, and

often dissipated the ennui of a dull and oppressive march. In addition to these, who were well armed and mounted, we took with us our old friend and messmate, Aboo Nasir, the mounted Tchous of Aga Saikais, and six of our old Arab guard, who were also mounted and armed at all points; a precaution more than usually necessary, from the circumstance of a caravan having been plundered only two days previous to our march.

Each of our party rode his own horse, and mules were hired to carry our attendants; we also had a firman (order) from the Pasha, to be supplied with whatever we might require on the journey.

The traveller finds himself in the Desert the moment he is outside the walls of Bagdad. The first part of the road is a beaten track, formed by the constant journeying of pilgrims to the tomb of their patron Saint, Ali, the cousin of Mahomet, who is buried to the westward of Babylon, at Meshed Ali, to which place he has given the name. Fully to appreciate the pleasure of our mode of travelling—and while the novelty lasted, it was not without its charms—all ideas of European expedition or comfort must be set aside. We seldom went faster than a foot-pace, and the stoppages were so numerous, from the laziness and inattention of our muleteers, that our rate rarely exceeded two miles an hour.

Before dark, we saw Tauk Kisra, about six miles to the E. At two fursukhs* from Bagdad, we passed the caravanserai of Kiahya Khan, which, from its vicinity to the city, is seldom used. One of these caravanserais is to be found at the distance of two fursukhs from the other, the whole way between Bagdad and Meshed Ali: they

* The fursukh, by the Greeks spelt *παρασανγος* parasangus, comprised thirty stadia, about four English miles.

have been erected by the piety of some rich Persian pilgrims, for the benefit of their countrymen in general. From the earliest periods caravanserais have been established in Oriental countries, and at about the same distance from each other, as at present. Herodotus enumerates one hundred and eleven of these *stathmi*, or mansions, in the dominions of the King of Persia, all of which he describes as being beautiful and splendid.

At nine in the evening we arrived at Assad Khan, where we, or rather our servants, found the best accommodations occupied by other travellers, who, by virtue of the Pasha's firman, were uncereemoniously turned out to make way for us. This caravanserai, which differed but little from any that we afterwards saw, was a quadrangular building, with a court-yard. In the centre was a square, comprising about forty feet of solid masonry, raised three feet, called the Bauri Kesh, for travellers' baggage. The entire building occupied about two acres of ground: a range of cloisters, having a succession of recesses ten feet in breadth and height, served either as apartments for travellers, or as mangers for their cattle—to both of which purposes we applied them.

Having arrived some hours after dark, completely harassed by travelling by night, we had to wait for some time before we could procure a light. The fire that was boiling water for our tea, nearly suffocated us with its smoke; our mules, which were close to us, almost stunned us with the incessant jingling of their bells; our servants kept up a constant and angry chattering; our horses, a loud and continual neigh; while we, by our bitter lamentations, added to the general discord. Our beds, composed only of Persian carpets,

were but a poor defence, to our bruised bones, against the hardness and unevenness of the ill-paved floor. If to these grievances were added the attacks of myriads of fleas, which did not leave us till they had marked us like lepers, it will be allowed that we must have passed any thing but an agreeable night.

CHAPTER IX.

Bir-i-unus—Caravans of Persian Pilgrims—Mode of Travelling—Women—Corpses—Coffins—Iskanderia—Earthenware Coffins—Mohowel—An old Man and his Wives—Distant appearance of the Ruins of Babylon—Reasons for supposing the Ruins to be those of Babylon—Causes of Deterioration—Mujillebe Mound—Illustration of the Prophecy of Isaiah—Hilleh—Population—Musjid Eshams—Babylonian inscriptions—Bricks—Cylinders—Throwing the Jereed—Sham fight—Tower of Babel—Babylonian boats—Earthenware tombs—Statue of a Lion—Hanging Gardens—Palace.

AT daylight the following morning we left our comfortless lodging, and stopped to breakfast at Bir-i-unus, another caravanserai, eight miles distant. At these halting-places the traveller is always sure of being supplied, at a moderate price, with eggs, poultry, dates, sweet limes, and generally with mutton and kid.

We saw, in the course of the day, various caravans of Persians; some going to, and others returning from, their pilgrimage. We were much gratified by the picturesque appearance of these passing groups.

The higher class of Persians were generally mounted on good horses, unencumbered by any burthen except the apparatus of the kuleoon, or Persian pipe. Two or three servants, mounted on horses lightly laden with baggage, formed the *suite* of one person. The equipages are always very light—a Persian rejecting, as superfluous,

many travelling articles that would with us be deemed indispensable. The bed, for instance, is a small carpet of the size of a hearth-rug.

In each caravan, the women comprised about a third of the party. The wives of the rich rode astride on horses; those of the poorer class were either placed on the baggage-cattle, or seated in a pair of covered panniers slung across a mule—one woman in each pannier. The most remarkable, and not the least numerous part of this assemblage, was the crowd of defunct Shiah, whose corpses were going to be buried at the tomb of the patron Saint. These bodies were enclosed in common wooden coffins, in shape and size not unlike those used by the lower orders in England: two of them were slung across one mule. One man had generally the charge of six or eight bodies.

The men who convey these corpses to Meshed Ali are not the relations of the deceased parties, but persons who gain a livelihood by this peculiar occupation.

No order of march seemed to be observed in the caravans—the living and dead were indiscriminately jumbled together. Often, when halted for the night, the coffins were thrown down in the first vacant space in the caravanserai, and the bodies, though embalmed, were not so impervious to a burning sun as to be free from a most disagreeable smell. According to Niebuhr, two thousand dead and five thousand living annually go to Meshed Ali. Besides the corpses which come direct from Persia for interment, many are brought from India for the same purpose.

Three miles from Bir-i-unus, the road branches off in a south-west direction to Meshed Ali. At twelve o'clock we came to a caravanserai, which, in common with the district, is called Iskanderia. Iskanderia, or Roomia, are names given by Oriental nations to the remains of

towns supposed to have been built by Alexander the Great, who is well known in the East as Iskander Roomee (*Alexander of Greece*). Here we saw large and extensive mounds, exhibiting the same appearance as the ruins of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. A quarter of a mile to the northward of these mounds, and in a situation that would have constituted the exterior of the town, we saw some circular earthenware vessels, similar to those containing human bones, which we had seen on the banks of the Tigris on the 13th of March.

From the name of the place, and its vicinity to Babylon, it seems fair to infer that these mounds are the remains of some town built by Alexander the Great, although no mention is made in ancient authors of a city on this precise spot. The nearest town, of the name of Alexandria, is placed by D'Anville on the banks of the Pallacopa.

If we consider the ease and facility with which Alexander built such towns as Alexandria, on the banks of the Iaxartes, said to be in circumference three leagues, the ramparts and houses of which were, according to Rollin, completed in twenty days,—it is not unreasonable to suppose that he might have built a town in the neighbourhood of his capital, though no mention should be made of it by his *contemporaries*.

In the evening we arrived at a caravanserai, called Mohowel. A squinting old man came in shortly after, attended by four women, to one of whom he gave a good beating for turning back to look at our party. On dismounting from their horses, the four women retired to one of the small recesses, and were concealed from the rest of the company by a curtain placed before it.

Within a mile of the caravanserai is the bed of a large canal, and near it a considerable mound of bricks. Mr. Hart, and some of

our servants, picked up two or three copper coins, but they were so thickly incrustated with verdigrise, that the impressions were undecipherable. I found a brick, with an inscription in the arrow-headed characters: it was coated with a vitrified, or bituminous substance, of so hard a composition, that I broke the brick in attempting to chip a bit off.

From this place, the ruins of the once mighty Babylon are distinctly visible, presenting the appearance of a number of irregular and mis-shapen hills. Fourteen miles to the N. N. E. is the Tower of Babel, now known by the name of Nimrod's Tower.* Since my return to England, I have been occasionally asked, what grounds I had for supposing the ruins I visited were those of Babylon. Rennell has so completely established† their identity with that city, that I shall merely state the following reasons for my belief.

The place in question is still called Babel by the natives of the country. The traditions of Oriental writers, and those of the neighbouring Arabs, assign the highest antiquity to the ruins. The accounts given by ancient authors agree with the Oriental traditions. The appearance of the place answers the description given by those authors,‡ and the position agrees in the relative distance of Babylon from other great cities: the city of Seleucia,§ for instance, to the north-east, and that of Is|| to the north-west. The ruins seen by me

* Ber's Nimrod.

† Rennell's Geography of Herodotus.

‡ Herodotus, Quintus Curtius, Pliny, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo.

§ According to Strabo, and the Theodosian tables, Seleucia was forty-four Roman miles from Babylon.

|| "Within an eight days' journey from Babylon is a city called *Is*, near which flows a river of the same name, which empties itself into the Euphrates. With the current of this river, particles of bitumen descend towards Babylon, by the means of which the walls were constructed."—Herodotus, Clio. c. 178. Its modern name is *Hit*.

correspond with all ancient accounts, both in their geographical relation to Babylon, and to the peculiar description of building. The appearance of the fallen city is precisely that which the divine writings predict Babylon should exhibit after her downfall. The geographical accounts convince me, that Babylon could not have stood elsewhere than on the spot I visited ; and the prodigious remains are conclusive evidence, that they could have belonged to no other city.

The next point for consideration is, the reason why greater remains of Babylon are not to be found ? Remembering the circumstances under which this city was built, there will be no difficulty in accounting for the deficiency. It is the vast size of Babylon, and not the want of durability in its materials, that ought to excite our wonder. I have before stated, on the authority of Scripture, that the builders of Babylon substituted “bricks for stone, and slime for mortar ;” a peculiarity which is mentioned by Herodotus, and various ancient authors ; and I have also remarked on the ready adaptation of the wet mud on the banks of the river for the making of bricks. When we consider the sandy nature of the soil on which Babylon stood, the perishable materials of which the city was composed, and the many large cities that have been built of the ruins ; when it is remembered, that workmen have been constantly employed in removing the bricks ; that for two thousand years the ruins have been subject to the operations of the weather, and that in consequence of the Euphrates periodically overflowing its banks, they are for two months of every year in a state of inundation ;—we ought the rather to be surprised, that such vast masses should have withstood so many concurring causes for total extinction. From these circumstances, I take it for granted, that all the ordinary buildings are crumbled into dust, and that only the remains of the largest exist.

Whoever has seen the mud habitations of an eastern city, will readily accede to this suggestion. If any further argument were wanting, the fact mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, that the greater portion of the place within the walls was ploughed up in his time, would be, in my opinion, conclusive evidence.

After stating upon what grounds I rest my belief in the identity of these ruins, it is fair to add, that our party, in common with other travellers, have totally failed in discovering any traces of the city walls.

The divine predictions against Babylon have been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah, that "the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken."* We are told by Herodotus,† that Babylon was surrounded by a very wide and deep trench, with the earth of which the wall was constructed. This wall was 200 cubits or 300 feet high. When Darius took Babylon, being exasperated against the inhabitants for the resistance they had shown him, he reduced their wall from its original height to 50 cubits. As his object was evidently to incapacitate the proud citizens from again opposing him, it is highly probable that he refilled the trench with the earth which had been taken from it. The work of destruction did not stop here. Xerxes, on returning from his ill-fated Grecian expedition, is said to have levelled the remaining part of the wall. This statement, however, must not be taken too literally. St. Jerome, who lived in the fourth century of the Christian era, states, that the wall was still standing; nevertheless, the reduction by Xerxes must

* Jer. li, 58.

† Her. Clio. 178, 179.

have been very considerable. From the time of Jerome, no mention is made of Babylon for several centuries, in which interval it is most probable that what remained of the wall must have contributed to the building of the numerous cities which have been formed out of these ruins.

March 26.—At daylight we quitted Mohowel, from which place the ruins of Babel commence, though they are not of a nature to merit particular notice. At eight o'clock we arrived at the first ruin of any magnitude; it is called by the natives, the Mujillebè, or "overturned." In 1616 it was visited by Pietro della Valle, who, not having examined the vast ruin on the opposite bank of the river, supposed it to be the Tower of Babel. The form of the Mujillebè may have been originally square, but, owing, probably to the operation of time and the weather, it is now oblong. The sides face the cardinal points of the compass. Those to the north and south are upwards of two hundred paces* in extent; that to the east, one hundred and eighty; and that to the west, one hundred and thirty-six. The height is very irregular. To the south-east, it rises one hundred and forty feet. It is well worthy of observation, that in Pietro della Valle's time, the altitude of this ruin was two hundred feet, and the base measured about two thousand six hundred—a circumstance proving the remark I have before made, of the liability of the Babylonian ruins to gradual decrease; for, in the space of two hundred years, this mound has diminished sixty feet in height, and nearly five hundred in circumference. Let us suppose the decrease of the ruin, in each preceding century, to be only half of

* I have throughout adopted Rich's measurements, in his *Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon*, after personally ascertaining their correctness.

what I have stated, and the size of the original building would exceed the accounts of any ancient author.

The western side, by which we ascended, though the lowest, is the most remarkable, as it shows more distinctly the form of the structure. The mound appears to be a solid mass: it is composed of sun-dried bricks, cemented with clay-mortar: between each layer of bricks is one of reeds. The summit is traversed throughout by large channels formed by the rain. In walking, we stepped on several pieces of alabaster, and on a vitreous substance resembling glass. We saw great quantities of ornamental and other kinds of pottery. There were vast numbers of entire kiln-burnt bricks, which were all fourteen inches square, and three thick. On many were inscribed those unknown characters resembling arrow-heads, so remarkable in the ruins of Babylon and Persepolis. The freshness of the inscriptions was astonishing, appearing to have been recently stamped, instead of having stood the test of upwards of four thousand years. From the mode in which the bricks are disposed in this, and several other ruins, it is evident that, with some exceptions, the great buildings of Babylon were composed of sun-burnt bricks, and coated with bricks burnt in the furnace.

The mound was full of large holes: we entered some of them, and found them strewed with the carcasses and skeletons of animals recently killed. The ordure of wild beasts was so strong, that prudence got the better of curiosity, for we had no doubt as to the savage nature of the inhabitants. Our guides, indeed, told us, that all the ruins abounded in lions, and other wild beasts; so literally has the divine prediction been fulfilled, that "wild beasts of the Desert should lie there; that their houses should be full of doleful

creatures; that wild beasts of the islands should cry in their desolate houses.”*

After exploring the Mujillebè, we proceeded to Hilleh. With the exception of a few huts, the town is situate on the west bank of the Euphrates. We crossed the river by a bridge of boats, like that at Bagdad. The Euphrates, at this point, is four hundred and fifty feet broad.

On producing our firman, the house of Syyyud Murad, the governor of Kerbela, was given up for our accommodation, and a janizary was sent by the governor to attend us.

Hilleh was built in the twelfth century, out of the ruins of Babylon. It is enclosed within a mud wall, of mean appearance, but the bazaar is tolerably good. If we except the few Turks who are employed in the government, the population consists entirely of either Arabs or Jews: the number of inhabitants is estimated at ten thousand. Near one of the gates of the town, we were shown the Musjid Eshams, or Mosque of the Sun. The outside resembles the tomb of Zobeide. The interior is a fine specimen of arabesque architecture: it is said to contain the tomb of Joshua; but the Mahometans reverence it as the place where Ali offered up his early prayers to his cousin, the prophet. On the summit of this mosque is a small cone, which our guides told us moved with the sun, to commemorate the event of the sun's having stood still to enable Ali to fight the enemies of Mahomet. The account given in Scripture of a similar miracle having been performed in favour of Joshua has evidently given rise to this fable.

* Isaiah, chap. xiii. ver. 21, 22.

Hilleh is under the subjection of the Pasha of Bagdad, who lets it out to one of his own officers for the sum of 260,000 piastres. Besides this rent, the governor has to pay a stipulated sum to the Kia-hya, (lieutenant governor,) and to the principal officers of the Pashalick, all of which demands are wrung from the wretched inhabitants. The office of Cadi, a circumstance uncommon in a Turkish government, is here hereditary: the family of the present officer has held it for a long time. The town is surrounded by a number of gardens, which produce rice, dates, and grain. The soil is very productive; but, as is natural under such an extortionate government, it is but little cultivated. If any thing could identify the modern inhabitants of Hilleh as the descendants of the ancient Babylonians, it would be their extreme profligacy, for which they are notorious even amongst their immoral neighbours.

The veranda of the house we occupied, was paved with inscribed Babylonian bricks. We amused ourselves during the day in comparing them with others we had brought from the ruins.* At first sight, many appeared exactly alike; but, on a closer examination, some letters were found to be different: this would indicate, as I should suppose, that they were not stamped from a mould, but separately.

These characters have hitherto baffled the inquiries of the learned; of some, however, at Persepolis, a Dr. Grotfund,† of Frankfort, has given a translation. The Doctor has furnished tables for any one who may wish to attempt the task of decyphering them.

91.

* I have presented one of these bricks to the Calcutta Asiatic Society.

† Vide Rich's second Memoir on Babylon, p. 48.

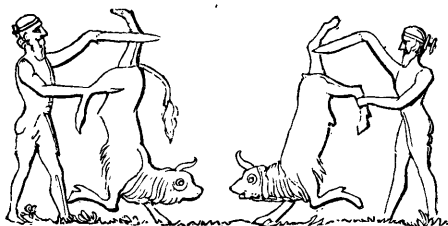
Maurice* is of opinion, that the inscriptions have reference to astronomy.

When Alexander came to Babylon, Callisthenes was informed by the Chaldæans, that their astronomical observations were recorded upon kiln-burnt bricks, "*coctilibus laterculis inscriptas*."† We brought with us from Babylon several curious cylinders, of which, numbers are found amongst the ruins. I have presented three to the British Museum, on which, as they are of such high antiquity, I hope to be excused offering a few remarks :

No. 1.



No. 2.



No. 3.



These cylinders differ from each other in size and material; the largest is an inch long, and the other two somewhat smaller: they

* Maurice on the Ruins of Babylon, p. 21.

† Simplicius on Aristotle de Cælo, p. 123.

are all perforated in the centre; and, from the numbers in which they are found, have probably been worn by the common people as amulets.

No. 1 is of agate: it describes two persons seated before an altar, each holding a small fish. One of them is a man with a beard; the other is a woman. Behind this last is another female, who is holding over her head what appears to be a palm branch—a most ancient mark of royalty.* In nearly all the Persepolitan sculptures, the king, or chief, is similarly attended. On the altar is a fish, and above it are a star and a crescent, which would favour the opinion, that the cylinders, as well as the bricks, have some reference to astronomy. The bearded personage in this amulet, I consider to be a priest, and the female a princess, who is offering sacrifice to the large fish on the altar, probably the earliest form of the idol Dagan.

Dagan,† the first syllable of which word signifies a fish, was the same as Oannes, respecting whom Eusebius‡ says, that his whole body was like that of a fish, and that a delineation of him was to be seen in Babylon. The stars and the half-moon may denote the precise period in which this sacrifice was performed.

* Numerous examples might be given of the high dignity which the palm branch was supposed to confer. The Egyptian god Hermes, and the goddess Isis, are both represented as holding palm-branches in their hands. The Jews hailed our Saviour as “King of Israel,” by taking branches of the palm and strewing them in his way.—John, chap. 12.

† 𐤠𐤃, Dag et 𐤠𐤃𐤃, Dagah piscis interpretatur.—Selden de Diis Syris, Syntag. II. p. 188. The idol Dagan, in his subsequent form, was half man and half fish. Berossus mentions that in his time there was a representation of him at Babylon, *τηνδε εἰχονα οὐτου ἐτι καὶ νυν διαφυλασσεσθαι (ἐν Βαβυλωνί)*. This idol has been thought to have been an emblem of Noah.

‡ Euseb. Chron. p. 6.

The length of hair worn by the figures on this amulet, proves that such was the custom of those days, and is singular as contrasted with the shaved heads of the present day. Herodotus* says that the Babylonians wore their hair long. In the Persepolitan sculptures, and in the coins of the Sassanidæ, the figures are always described with a profusion of hair. In the Song of Solomon† we are told, that “his locks are bushy;” and every one remembers the hair of Absalom, which weighed “two hundred shekels after the King’s weight.”‡

No. 2 is of a substance resembling glass. Two men, without clothing, appear to be contending with two beasts. Similar figures are observable in the Persepolitan bas reliefs. Those accustomed to the examination of Babylonian antiquities will easily trace several lines in the arrow-headed characters.

No. 3 is of argillaceous earth; it represents four persons dressed in loose robes, with broad ornamental borders.

The first and the last of these amulets are curious, as they illustrate the account of Herodotus respecting the dress of the Babylonians; that “they have two vests, one of linen which falls to the feet, another over this, which is made of wool; a white sash covers the whole.”§

March 27.—Early this morning we set out to visit the Tower of Babel, accompanied by our Tchouss, one of the governor of Hilleh’s janizaries, two servants, and five of our guard, all well armed and mounted. At a short distance from Hilleh, we took in a reinforcement of ten horsemen, furnished us by order of the governor. A just

* Herod. Clio, xciv.

† 2 Sam. xiv. 26.

‡ Solomon’s Song, v. 11.

§ Herod. Clio, xciv.

idea may be formed of the state of the country by our being obliged to have a party of twenty armed horsemen to go a distance of six miles, though we had nothing except our arms to attract the cupidity of robbers. On our road we met a large body of the Desert Arabs, who, though more numerous than our party, offered it no molestation, but gave us the usual salutation of "Salam Aleikum." They were probably of the same tribe as our guard, otherwise it is not likely we should have escaped so well. When we arrived in the Desert, our new detachment galloped before us and threw the blunt jereed. This instrument, which is made of any heavy wood, is about a yard long, and the thickness of a mop-stick. One horseman galloping forward with loud shouts and menacing attitudes, challenged his comrades; an opponent soon appeared;—as these retired, two new champions started forward in the same manner. It is astonishing to see the dexterity used in this game: the object is for one party to pursue and the other to fly and try to elude being struck by the jereed: this is managed by the person pursued throwing himself completely out of the saddle, and clinging to the cantle, either by the heel or the lower part of the leg, at the moment the jereed is darted. If the jereed strikes him, he is obliged to pick it up, which he generally does, not by dismounting, but by throwing himself out of the saddle as before, till his hand touches the ground; and if it misses him, the other picks up his own jereed, and in turn becomes the party pursued. Our guard was amusing itself in this manner, when we came within sight of a few miserable huts. From these a large body of Arab horsemen, armed with swords and long spears, rushed suddenly forth, and began shouting with all their might. Both parties halted for a minute: a herald from each met half way, and, after

a few moments' conference, gave a shout, which was immediately re-echoed on both sides. All was again in motion. The two companies struck their shovel stirrups into their horses' sides, rode at each other with equal speed, and, resuming their shout, commenced a sham fight.

Nothing could be more animated, or would have afforded a finer subject for the painter, than this group of wild men. It is difficult to conceive the effect of a large party of armed horsemen thus huddled together in the greatest apparent confusion, with drawn swords and couched lances. This was a gentle passage of arms, and not without its interest; but it not unfrequently happens that two hostile tribes meet, who then put into fierce execution the address which they acquire by this constant practice.

From Herodotus we learn that the Tower of Babel, or (what was doubtless the same) the Temple of Belus, was a stadium in length and breadth, *σταδίου καὶ τὸ μῆκος καὶ τὸ εὖρος*.^{*} This, according to Rich's computation, which allows five hundred feet to the stadium, would give a circumference of two thousand feet. The temple consisted of eight turrets rising in succession one above the other. Rennel supposes the height to be five hundred feet. The ascent was on the outside, and there was a convenient resting-place halfway up. This temple was destroyed by Xerxes. Alexander wished to rebuild it, but died before he commenced the undertaking. All that he did was to employ ten thousand soldiers for the space of two months to remove the rubbish.[†] The ruins of the Tower of Babel are six miles

^{*} I have given the quotation, because I am aware that it is a disputed passage. The translating the word *μῆκος* "height" instead of "length," has caused much abuse of Herodotus; but Wesseling's edition of that author's works has repaired his injured fame. —Vide Herod. Wess. p. 85. Note.

[†] Vide Strabo and Arrian.

S. W. of Hilleh. At first sight, they present the appearance of a hill with a castle on the top; the greater portion is covered with a light sandy soil, and it is only in ascending that the traveller discovers he is walking on a vast heap of bricks. This mound, like the Mujillebè, is oblong. The total circumference has been found to be two thousand two hundred and eighty-six feet, which gives to the ruins a much greater extent of base than to the original building. The surplus is very great, when one considers the quantity that must have been removed by the Macedonian soldiers, and how much, in the course of ages, must have been taken by the workmen employed in digging for bricks. The elevation of the mound is irregular: to the west it is one hundred and ninety-eight feet high. On the top is that which looked like a castle in the distance; it is a solid mass of kiln-burnt bricks, thirty-seven feet high, and twenty-eight broad. The bricks, which are of an excellent description, are laid in with a fine and scarcely perceptible cement. At regular intervals, some bricks are omitted so as to leave square apertures through the mass: these may possibly have been intended to procure a free current of air, that should prevent the admission of damp into the brickwork. The summit of the mass is much broken, and the fractures are so made as to carry conviction that violence has been used to reduce it to this state.

Distinct from the pile of bricks just described, and lower down on the north face of the large mound, is another mass exactly similar. Pieces of marble, stones, and broken bricks, lie scattered over the ruin. The most curious of the fragments are several mis-shapen masses of brickwork, quite black, except in a few places where regular layers of kiln-burnt bricks are discernible: these have certainly been subjected

to some fierce heat, as they are completely molten—a strong presumption that fire was used in the destruction of the Tower, which, in parts, resembles what the Scriptures prophesied it should become, “a burnt mountain.”*

Travellers who have visited this spot, have been struck with the curious appearance of these fragments, and, having only seen the black surface, have altogether rejected the idea of their being bricks. In the denunciation respecting Babylon, fire is particularly mentioned as an agent against it. To this Jeremiah evidently alludes, when he says that it should be “as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,” on which cities, it is said, the “Lord rained brimstone and fire.”† Again, “I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him;” and in another place, “Her high gates shall be burned with fire, and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.”

Taking into calculation the brick mass on the top of the large mound, the ruins are two hundred and thirty-five feet high, which gives nearly half the height of the Tower in its perfect state. Rich thought he could trace four stages, or stories of this building; and the united observations of our party induce the same conviction.

Wild beasts appeared to be as numerous here as at the Mujillebè. Mr. Lamb gave up his examination, from seeing an animal crouched in one of the square apertures. I saw another in a similar situation, and the large foot-print of a lion was so fresh that the beast must have stolen away on our approach. From the summit we had a distinct

* Jeremiah, chap. li. ver. 25.

† Some of the Jewish Doctors say, “that God overturned the tower (Babel) by a terrible tempest, or burnt it by fire from heaven.”—Hewlett’s Annotations on Scripture, vol. i. p. 194.

view of the vast heaps which constitute all that now remains of ancient Babylon; a more complete picture of desolation could not well be imagined. The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited. It was impossible to behold this scene and not to be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present: that she should “never be inhabited;” that “the Arabian should not pitch his tent there;” that she should “become heaps;” that her cities should be “a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness!”*

In Rich’s memoir on Babylon is an account of some earthenware vessels containing human bones, similar to those seen by us on two occasions. With a view to compare them with what we had observed, we went up the river this afternoon.

Our boat was of a peculiar construction. It was in shape like a large circular basket, the sides were of willow, covered over with bitumen, the bottom was laid with reeds. It had two men with paddles, one of whom pulled towards him, as the other pushed from him. This sort of boat is common to the Euphrates and Tigris, and is, probably, best adapted to the strong currents common to these rivers. May not these boats be of the same kind as the “vessels of bulrushes upon the waters,” alluded to by Isaiah?†

By comparing my description with that given by Herodotus of the boats used in his time, it will be seen how little their structure has altered since that remote period. The passage referred to is not long, and may be worthy attention.

* Jer. li. ver. 37. 43.

† Isaiah, chap. xviii, ver. 2.

“Of all that I saw in this country, next to Babylon itself, what to me appeared the greatest curiosity, were the boats. These, which are used by persons who come to the city, are of a circular form, and made of skins. They are constructed in Armenia, in the ports above Assyria, where the sides being formed of willow, are covered externally with skins, and having no distinction of head or stern, are modelled in the shape of a shield. Lining the bottoms of these boats with reeds, they take on board their merchandize, and thus commit themselves to the stream. The principal article of their commerce is palm wine, which they carry in casks. The boats have two oars, one man to each; one pulls to him, the other pushes from him. These boats are of very different dimensions; some of them so large as to bear freight to the value of five thousand talents: the smaller of them has one ass on board, the larger several. On their arrival at Babylon they dispose of all their cargo, selling the ribs of their boats, the matting, and every thing but the skins which cover them: these they lay upon their asses, and with them return to Armenia. The rapidity of the stream is too great to render their return by water practicable. This is, perhaps, the reason which induces them to make their boats of skin rather than of wood. On their return with their asses to Armenia, they make other vessels in the manner I have before described.”*

We continued our trip up the river for about a mile, but the current was so strong against us, that we abandoned our intention of going to the place proposed. Our excursion, however, proved most satisfactory, though we did not see the vessels mentioned by Rich;

* Herod. Clio. cxciv.

for, in returning to Hilleh, we found a number of the same description we had seen, and containing human bones: thus fully confirming our own observations and those of Mr. Rich.

These vessels were three quarters of a mile from the bridge, on the west bank of the river. The place appeared to have been an ancient burying-ground, encroached upon by the Euphrates.

As this mode of disposing of the dead is so much at variance with the customs of the Babylonians and ancient Persians, it appears probable that the tombs may contain the bodies of some of the Greeks who accompanied Alexander on his Eastern expedition. In marching through a country where the scarcity of wood first suggested the idea of the hanging garden, the substitution of the famous Babylonian clay for coffins seems natural and obvious.

In support of this opinion, the physician who attended General Gardane, the French ambassador to the court of Persia, told a friend of mine, that he had seen vessels of a similar description, used for the same purpose, in several parts of Greece: and the Asiatic Collections contain an account of some earthenware vessels having in them human bones, which were found in the neighbourhood of Bushire, near which place Alexander must have met his fleet under Nearchus, after his return from India.

March 28.—We left Hilleh this morning to resume our examination, and took with us a party of workmen to dig for us. The ruins on the west bank of the river commence two miles north of the town. Including the Mujillebè, they extend three miles north and south, and upwards of two miles east and west. The first heap of ruins, though of considerable extent, has a very indeterminate form, and presents only the general appearance observable

throughout,—mounds channelled by the weather, and strewed with fragments of buildings. I shall, therefore, pass them without further mention, and proceed to describe those which I consider to be the site of the Hanging Gardens, and of the palace.

Diodorus says the palace was near the bridge. Strabo and Quintus Curtius state the gardens to have been near the Euphrates, whence they were supplied with water, by means of engines. All these three authors are agreed as to their having been situated within the walls of the palace.

The entire mound comprises a square of two thousand eight hundred feet. In addition to the usual vestiges, are several broken alabaster vessels; we remarked also great quantities of varnished tiles, the colours of which were remarkably fine. According to Diodorus, the walls and towers of the palace were covered with tiles of different colours, representing a grand hunting-piece, more than four cubits in size. In this were described a great variety of wild beasts: here was to be seen Semiramis on horseback, brandishing a spear; and near her Ninus, in the act of killing a lion. The colours are said to have been laid in before the bricks were baked, *ἐνωμαῖς ἔτι ταῖς πλινθοῖς*.*

We have a singular confirmation of this account of Diodorus in the prophet Ezekiel, who, speaking of the defection of Judah, under the character of Aholibah, says, “She saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldæans pourtrayed with vermillion, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldæa.”†

* Diod. Sicu. Wess. Ed. vol. i. p. 121.

† Ezek. xxiii. ver. 14, 15.

This mode of exterior decoration is still common throughout the East. Numerous specimens came within my own observation, in the course of the journey, particularly in the cities of Bussorah, Bagdad, and Teheraun.

Captain Hart brought me the portion of a highly varnished blue vase, to which were sticking some fragments of human bones that had undergone the action of fire. I attempted to separate them from the vessel, but they pulverized on being touched. The bricks are finer here than in any other part of the ruins; their superiority is attested by the number of men we found employed in digging for them. The ruins are so perforated in consequence, that the original design is entirely lost: all that could favour any conjecture of gardens built on terraces, are two subterranean passages, which we saw at some distance from each other. The people digging for bricks say that they are of great extent, and very high in many places. We made our workmen dig at each entrance, hoping to trace a communication; but we were unsuccessful, as they were nearly closed up with bricks and rubbish, and our men were afraid to continue their work, many people having been accidentally buried in the ruins. To judge from what we saw, there can be no doubt that both passages are of vast extent: they are lined with bricks laid in with bitumen, and covered over with large masses of stone. This is nearly the only place where stone is observable.

While we were exploring the cave, an enormous wild boar of a reddish colour started up from amongst the ruins. Our party immediately gave chase, but he eluded us. In the eagerness of pursuit, I snatched a gun from a servant and fired; luckily I missed the animal, for the shot was too small to kill him; and his instinc-

tive revenge, it is well known, might have made me pay dearly for my temerity.

The prophecy of Isaiah, that Babylon should be inhabited by wild beasts, was fulfilled after the extinction of the Seleucidæ; for their successors, the Parthians, turned the city into a park, and stocked it with wild beasts for the purpose of hunting. Amongst these the wild boar is enumerated.*

It has been supposed that many curious trees are to be found on the site of the Hanging Gardens. This is not the case; there is but one, and that is in the most elevated spot. It is a kind of cedar, possibly one of the *κεδρίναι* of Diodorus. One half of the trunk is standing, and is about five feet in circumference. Though the body

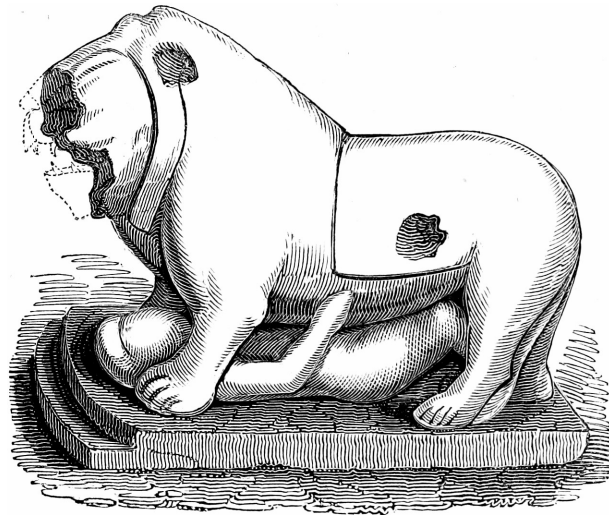


is decayed, the branches are still green and healthy, and droop like those of the willow. With the exception of one at Bussorah,

* St. Jerome.

there is no tree like it throughout Irak Arabia. The Arabs call it Athelè. Our guides said, that this tree was left in the Hanging Gardens for the purpose of enabling Ali to tie his horse to it after the battle of Hilleh.

Not far from this tree, we saw indications of a statue, which had been imperfectly seen by Beauchamp and Rich. We set our men to work, and in two hours found a colossal piece of sculpture, in black marble, representing a lion standing over a man. When Rich



was here, the figure was entire; but when we saw it, the head was gone. The length of the pedestal, the height of the shoulders, and the length of the statue, measured, in each of their respective parts, nine feet.

I would venture to suggest that this statue might have reference to Daniel in the lion's den, and that it formerly stood over one of the gates, either of the palace, or of the Hanging Gardens. It is natural to suppose that so extraordinary a miracle would have

been celebrated by the Babylonians, particularly as Daniel was afterwards governor of their city.

The prophet was also governor of Susa (the Shushan of Scripture), where he frequently went in the discharge of his official duties, and at which place he died. A short time ago, Susa was visited by some French officers in the service of the Prince of Kermanshah: amongst other antiquities, they found a block of white marble covered with Babylonian characters, having sculptured on it the figures of two men and two lions. This may also allude to the same event.

The finest specimen of Babylonian structure is a large building, called by the workmen the Kasr, or Palace. Its form is quadrangular, and it faces the cardinal points. It is composed entirely of kiln-burnt bricks of the finest description, which are laid in with a cement of the utmost tenacity. The workmen have long left this untouched, from the impossibility of detaching the bricks from the cement. As the palace is in the midst of other elevated ruins, the precise height cannot be ascertained, though it is possible that the foundation may be on a level with the plain. The walls are eight feet thick; they are rent throughout, but evidently not by the hand of man, as nothing but some violent convulsion of nature could produce the vast chasms observable in this ruin. The freshness of the brickwork is such, that we should have had difficulty in identifying it with the ruins of Babylon, had we not found it situated in the midst of other buildings, instead of being detached from them. The solid appearance of the original structure impressed the mind the more strongly with the image of devastation that it now presents.

CHAPTER X.

Triumph of Travelling over Prejudice—Grotesque Dance—Fire Temple—Presentation to the Pasha of Bagdad—Feast of St. Gregory—Visit from the Officers of the Pashalick—Instance of the Pasha's despotic Power—We return the Visit of the Officers—The Pasha's Garden—Musruf Effendy and his Screw-pump—First impressions on visiting Bagdad—Description of the Streets and Bazaars—Interior of a House—Dress of the Women—Liberty enjoyed by Turkish Females.

HAVING concluded our examination of the ruins, we retraced our steps towards Bagdad, and reached Mohowel, the nearest caravan-serai to Babylon, in the evening. After we had dined, our servants and the chief muleteer sat down together, and made a meal on the provisions that were left,—an incident showing how far travelling had been able to overcome national and religious prejudices. The persons composing the party were, two Sunnis and four Shiahs, betwixt which sects exists the most violent hatred; and, to complete the party, two Christian "Infidels" were on the present occasion welcome partakers of the same meal with the "True Believers:" of all the party, the Indian Syyud was perhaps the person who had made the greatest sacrifice of his religious scruples; for the Indian Mahometans, following the prejudices of the Gentoos, deem it a profanation to eat with others not professing exactly the same tenets as themselves, and to eat "the leavings" of another has become in India

a proverbial expression of abuse. What then must have been the situation of this descendant of the Prophet, who scrupled not to eat the leavings of those who deny the divine mission of his great ancestor, in company with two individuals of that hated race?

March 29.—We resumed our march this morning, and passed as many pilgrims as before. We arrived at Khana Zund in the evening, where we halted for the night. A few miles from the caravanserai we observed a mound, which we thought might be the Fire Temple described by Aboo Nasir, where he told us the devils were in the habit of dancing amidst flames. Notwithstanding his denial of it now, we were convinced it was the same place; because it corresponded with the bearings we had taken on board our boat, and more particularly because he showed so fixed a determination not to go with us to the spot, begging to be excused on account of sickness,—a plea which but ill accorded with his ruddy features. Aware of his superstitious fears, we amused ourselves by pressing him to accompany us after dark; but he was obstinate, and we were ultimately obliged to give up the point.

As the night came on, we went frequently out to try if we could not observe any fire produced by naphtha, for which Babylonia was so famous, thinking it possible that some such production might have given rise to the tradition; but we could see nothing to justify this conjecture.

Before we went to sleep, two of our Arab guards entertained us with a dance of the most grotesque description: one, who represented a lover, evincing his attachment by hallooing with all his might and jumping round the other, who personated a female, and continued dancing within the circle, preserving as much diffidence of

demeanour as might have been expected from a fair Arab of the Desert. If strength of lungs and activity of limbs would have been claims to the hand of a fair lady, this athletic Stentor would have proved a formidable rival.

Besides our own attendants, all the chance inmates of the caravanserai assembled to witness this dance, and, with loud expressions of applause, animated the performers to continue their exertions. The whole, indeed, formed a very interesting group; for the unsteady glare of a dying fire reflecting on the swarthy countenances of the dancers, was no bad illustration of Aboö Nasir's account of the devil's dance.

March 30.—We visited the Guebri Bena (the Temple of the Guebres) at day-light, but could not persuade Aboö Nasir to make one of the party. It is constructed of mud cemented with rushes, like the Mujillebè at Babylon. Each side faces a cardinal point; that towards the west gradually inclines to the plain. It measures thirty feet from the summit to the visible base, and is two hundred and thirty-three feet in circumference. We saw the usual fragments in the neighbourhood. The whole ruin exhibits considerable marks of the ravages of time. It bears W. of Ctesiphon, and N. by W. of Khana Zund caravanserai. Notwithstanding the dilapidated state of this mound, I feel no difficulty in conjecturing the form of the original structure.

I suppose that, like the Babylonian ruins, it was a quadrangular building; the interior of which was composed of regular layers of mud and reeds, and, as may be deduced from the fragments around, coated with kiln-burnt bricks. From the gradual slope towards the plain to the west, on that side was the ascent to the temple; the

east being the place where stood the altar on which was placed the sacred fire.

To put this supposition in a clearer light, let us remember in what the temples of the Guebres differed from those of other worshippers. The doctrine of Zoroaster was, that there was an infinite and all-powerful Being, to whom the early Persians were taught to pay their devotions. As so simple a doctrine could not long satisfy the corrupt nature of man, the sun, as the brightest emblem, and subsequently fire, were allowed to be worshipped as symbols of the Deity. It was not, however, till the appearance of a second Zoroaster, that temples were adopted; but even then they were of the simplest structure, probably of the form I have just described. Roofs, walls, or pillars, were expressly forbidden in these edifices. To illustrate this circumstance, Xerxes destroyed the temples of the Greeks when he overran their country, because they presumed to enclose within walls Him who was the universe itself.

At eight miles from Bagdad we met a caravan of Persians, which appeared to form the suite of some woman of rank. Nine veiled females, all mounted astride on horses, were riding in a line. She who by the superiority of dress appeared to be the principal lady, had her horse led by an eunuch.

We arrived in Bagdad at half-past three in the afternoon, having suffered so much from the intense heat of the sun that our hands and faces were completely blistered. On our return, we found Aga Saikeis in considerable alarm for our safety, as we had returned a day later than we proposed, and during our absence a battle had been fought between the Turks and Arabs, in which the latter were victorious.

March 31.—We employed the morning in returning the visits of the European gentlemen who had called upon us: they all received us in the Turkish style, with pipes and coffee. The Chief of the Artillery introduced us to his wife, an Armenian, and his family, consisting of three daughters and one son. They were all dressed in the costume of their country. He gave us an account of the action, which had taken place on the Moussoul road, between the Arabs and the Pasha's troops: the latter, it appeared, had lost forty men and three pieces of cannon. He appeared to be much annoyed at the result of the engagement: not so much on account of the men killed, "for they," as he said, "could easily be replaced; nor of the guns, for there were enough of them;" the object of his great grief was the loss of the carriages on which they stood. Observing us smile at this peculiar cause of grievance, he told us that the Pasha was so extremely parsimonious, that when the gun-carriages were worn out, he would not go to the expense of new ones; consequently, half the guns on the ramparts were dismounted and unserviceable. As an example of the niggardly disposition of the Pasha in this particular, he told us that the British agent some time ago presented him with a handsome English chariot, which was placed in the Palace yard, and where it has remained unemployed ever since. The only observation made by the Pasha on receiving the present was, whether the wheels could not be taken off and turned into gun-carriages.

April 2.—We went this morning to pay our respects to the Pasha of Bagdad, dressed in full uniform, and riding horses gaily caparisoned, and accompanied by a numerous mounted retinue. The Pasha's secretary sent some of his servants to attend us, and we were met at some distance from the palace by a deputation of janizaries. On

entering the gates of the palace, we came into a spacious court, where the Pasha's troops were drawn up under the command of our friend the Chief of Artillery, who presented arms to us as we passed. On arriving at the gates of the second court, we dismounted: here the principal officers of the Pasha received us, and ushered us into his presence, to which we passed through two lines of janizaries, who, standing with their arms folded, preserved an immoveable gravity. The hall of audience was fitted up in the Oriental style, and decorated with numerous small looking-glasses of a triangular form, which had a curious dazzling effect. In one corner was seated the Pasha, supported by cushions: chairs were placed for us; and, as had been previously stipulated, we seated ourselves without taking off either our hats or shoes. The Pasha was remarkably affable and polite, and begged we would fix an early day for visiting one of his gardens, distant a few miles from Bagdad. We took our leave, after going through the usual routine of coffee, sweetmeats, &c.

Davoud (David) Pasha is a Georgian by birth, and was formerly a slave to Syyud Pasha; but, having at an early age abjured Christianity, he assumed the character of a Mahometan devotee, and seating himself at the palace gate, acquired so large a sum by begging, that he was sufficiently rich to become a candidate for the purchase of the Pashalick, and sent in his proposals to the Grand Signior. His application was answered in the usual way, by forwarding an order for the execution of the ruling Pasha; which being put into immediate effect, the mendicant slave stepped quietly into the place of his old master. He had no sooner possessed himself of the Pashalick, than he threw off the mask of ascetic, and appeared in his true colours. Convinced that a situation which was gained by blood,

“by blood must be maintained,” he has been as reckless of life as any of his predecessors; and I have been informed, that no less than fifteen hundred persons have fallen victims to his ambition or rapacity. He is a good-humoured looking man, apparently between forty and fifty years of age, and of very prepossessing manners. During the interview, I tried to discover in his fine countenance any lines of remorse for such a load of crime; but I looked in vain;—and, remembering Byron’s descriptive lines on Ali Pasha, found it not less difficult

——— “to trace
The deeds which lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace.”

Previous to leaving the palace, we called upon the Kia-hya, (lieutenant-governor,) whom we found seated in his divan, and surrounded by Georgian slaves.

April 3.—This being the feast of St. Gregory, the patron Saint of Armenia, we went with the agent to the Armenian church, attended by the usual state retinue. The place was very crowded: the women were in a separate apartment from the men, having been kept out of sight in compliment to us. We occupied seats close to the altar. During the service frankincense was frequently presented to us. The service was chaunted by priests, and a choir of boys; the ceremonies were similar to those in use amongst the Greeks, but more numerous. In one of them the principal priest held up his hands, and, after a variety of ceremonies, placed them, with the palms closed together, before the second, who, having kissed them, in like manner offered his hands to be kissed by a third; and in this manner the sanctified kiss went through the whole congregation. The service was indolently and unimpressively performed. One of the boys assisting in the choir

got a sound box on the ear for inattention, which immediately set the rest of them laughing. Aga Saikis remained for a short time, and then left the church in the middle of the ceremony.

April 4.—Some of the principal officers of the government, amongst whom were the Chief of the Janizaries, the secretary, and the Musruf Effendy, the treasurer, paid us a visit this morning, to acknowledge the Pasha's sense of our civility in waiting upon him: at least, that was the ostensible, though not the actual reason of their visit; for, after sitting with us for some time, they spoke privately to Mr. Lamb, who had formerly practised medicine, and laid before him a proposal from the Pasha to make him his physician. I forget the terms of the offer; but, of a definite sum, part was to be paid by the Pasha himself, and the remainder was to be made up by each of his officers being forced to employ Mr. Lamb in his professional capacity. My fellow-traveller replied, that though he could not, under any circumstances, avail himself of the Pasha's flattering offer, he had no objection to give advice gratuitously during our stay in Bagdad. The high estimation in which European doctors are held in the East, is a proof how deficient the Asiatics are in this most important science; but, in spite of their present ignorance, I doubt whether they are worse informed now than in the earlier periods of their history. We are told by Herodotus, that even at Babylon, in its most prosperous times, the custom was to carry a sick person into a public square, for the purpose of being questioned by the passers-by; and if any one happened to have been once suffering from a similar complaint, he would detail to the invalid by what means his own cure had been effected.

We had a practical illustration, this afternoon, of the Pasha's despotic will and power. Having occasion to make some purchases in the

bazaar, we were informed that the Pasha had depreciated the coin one-half the current price !

April 5.—The following morning (5th) we returned the calls of our Turkish acquaintances. Our first visit was to the Yunitchery Assy (chief of the janizaries), whose dress was remarkable from its resemblance to an English judge's gown, being a loose scarlet robe with a broad collar of ermine.

This officer enjoys a high reputation in Bagdad, and has always proved himself friendly to the British interests, in gratitude (as he told us) for his life having once been saved by the intercession of our agent, Mr. Rich, after he had been condemned to death by Syyyud Pasha.

On leaving the chief of the janizaries, we went to the secretary, who was in his haram when we arrived. Amongst the servants in attendance, a woman was pointed out to me, who, dressed as an eunuch, formed one of the *suite*; this being a privilege occasionally granted to women, when (as in the present instance) age and appearance are a sufficient guarantee for their good behaviour. The secretary soon made his appearance, bringing with him a tolerably correct Arab map of the Grand Signior's dominions, of which he seemed to have no very indistinct idea. While we were looking at this specimen of Arab science, Meerza* Nasir, a Persian of rank, came in, having just arrived on a mission from the prince governor of Kermanshah relative to the safe conduct of the body of His Highness's father, the late governor of that province,† to Meshed Ali, the proposed place of its

* The word Meerza *before* a name signifies secretary ; *after* it, prince.

† Mohummud Ali Meerza, eldest son of the King of Persia, whom I shall hereafter have occasion to mention, died two years previous to the date of this notice.

interment. As soon as we were introduced to this gentleman, he overwhelmed us with protestations of kindness. Understanding we were about to proceed to Kermanshah, he promised to write to all his friends there, to insure us a good reception.

From having the map before us, the conversation naturally turned on the subject of our travels. It was amusing to observe the surprise our auditors expressed on hearing that we travelled for our own gratification only. Meerza Nasir, in particular, asked how we, as officers of the King, could find funds to defray our expenses; and if any of us should die on the journey, what would become of any property we might leave. We told him that the King paid us just the same as if we were actually on his duty; and that on the death of either of us, the next of kin would succeed to the property, even if his Majesty wished it otherwise. This was so contrary to the custom of Persia, where every casualty goes in favour of the existing power, that he interrupted us with an incredulous expression of *ajieeb!* (*wonderful!*) evidently thinking we were indulging in a traveller's privilege, notwithstanding the Persian proverb, that "an Englishman never tells a lie."

April 6.—We went this morning, according to our appointment, to a garden of the Pasha, distant about four miles from the city, and reached it after an hour's pleasant ride along the banks of the Tigris.

The Pasha in this, as in every other instance, seemed desirous to show us every attention; for we found assembled at the appointed place the Lieutenant-Governor and the principal persons of the Pashalick—an honour, which we were given to understand, was seldom, if ever, shown to private individuals. We entered a small oblong room, where all these personages were seated, smoking their pipes with true Turkish solemnity.

Through the centre of this room ran a stream of water, of which I was first made aware by stepping my foot into it, in my anxiety to do the honours correctly. We sate cross-legged; and remained so long in this painful position, that we were completely tired of our honours, when luckily the Musruf Effendy (treasurer) called us out to look at an awkward kind of pump, worked by one horse, on the principle of the Archimedes' screw, for letting the water of the Tigris into the Pasha's garden.

The Musruf looked with peculiar complacency on this machine, and claimed the honour of the invention; although one of his detractors whispered in my ear that he was indebted for it to a Persian. Be this as it may, the Musruf is unquestionably a man deservedly celebrated for every species of expediency; in proof of which may be mentioned an admirable plan he has lately invented, in his own department of treasurer, for settling with the troops, whose pay is four piastres, or two shillings English, a month. In lieu of this, he has given them a certain quantity of tobacco, worth about half the sum. So valuable a servant could not but be highly acceptable to his master; accordingly, there are few persons in such high favour, as is the Musruf Effendy with the Pasha of Bagdad.

Attracted by an arbour formed of vine-trees, we bent our steps towards it for the advantage of its shade, as we were now suffering from the meridian rays of an Eastern sun; but, alas! the approach to it was completely inundated, owing to the active mechanism of the Musruf's screw-pump.

This mode of watering a garden, however inconsistent with our ideas of English neatness, has probably been found to be most efficient, as it is the common mode in use both on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and has been so from the most ancient period of

history. Herodotus mentions that the Assyrians used hydraulic machines for irrigating their lands. With the knowledge of this circumstance, it is somewhat difficult to reconcile the accounts given in the Arabian Nights of the delightful walks taken by various heroes and heroines in these same gardens of Bagdad; for this irrigation, having been a daily process, must have rendered the paths somewhat too muddy, one might think, for the luxurious promenade of Eastern beauty.

Being now about to take our departure from this city, a few general remarks may not be unacceptable.

A traveller coming by water from Bussorah is likely to be much struck with Bagdad on his first arrival. Having been for some time past accustomed to see nothing but a desert—there being no cultivation on that side of the city by which he arrives—he does not observe any change that would warn him of his approach to a populous city. He continues winding up the Tigris through all its numerous headlands, when this once renowned city of gardens bursts suddenly on his sight. Its first view justifies the idea that he is approaching the residence of the renowned Caliph, Haroun Alraschid, in the height of its splendour; a crowd of early associations rushes across his mind, and seems to reduce to reality scenes which, from boyish recollections, are so blended with magic and fairy lore, that he may for a moment imagine himself arrived at the City of the Enchanters.

Bagdad is surrounded by a battlemented wall; the part towards the palace, as was the case in ancient Babylon, is ornamented with glazed tiles of various colours. The graceful minarets, and the beautifully shaped domes of the mosques, are sure to attract his eye. One or

two of these are gaudily decorated with glazed tiles of blue, white, and yellow, which, formed into a mosaic of flowers, reflect the rays of the sun; the variegated foliage of the trees of these numerous gardens,* which most probably have given the name to the city, serve as a beautiful back-ground to the picture. Thus far the traveller is allowed to indulge his reverie; but on entering the walls, his vision is dispelled.

The walls are of mud: the streets, which are scarcely wide enough to allow two persons to pass, are so empty, that he could almost fancy the inhabitants had died of the plague: he looks upwards—two dead walls meet his eyes; he now enters the bazaar, and finds that he has no reason to complain of want of population; a mass of dirty wretches render his road almost impassable; with some difficulty he jostles through a succession of narrow cloistered passages, traversing each other at right angles; the light, which is admitted by holes a foot in diameter from the top, gives to the sallow features of the crowd below a truly consumptive appearance, agreeing well with the close, hot, fulsome smell of bad ventilation. The traveller, by this time, has seen sufficient to cure him of the dreams of earlier life; and, on arriving at his destination, he makes a woful comparison between the reality of the scenes and the picture imagination had drawn. Such, or nearly such, was the impression first made by my arrival in Bagdad

The interior of a house is much more comfortable than its outward appearance would lead you to expect. The residence of Aga Saikis is not a bad specimen of this; it consists of a succession of square courts surrounded by galleries, each forming a distinct ha-

* Bag, or more properly *Baugh*, (the first syllable of the word Baughdad), signifies *garden*.

bitation. In the outer court is a room, or rather a recess, forming three sides of a square, and open towards the front; this, in Persian, is called the *Dufter Khoneh* (office), where the ordinary business of the day is transacted: the second court is somewhat larger, but of a similar structure, in which is also a recess; this is the (*Dewan Khoneh*) audience-room.* From the galleries are partitioned off several rooms, some of which we occupied, having windows opening to the court, formed of small diamond-shaped panes of glass of every colour, and disposed in various fantastic shapes; the interior of these chambers is decorated in the same style; the ceiling is composed of a kind of trellice-work describing flowers of different colours. The walls are formed into small arched recesses, of the Arabesque order, and are gilded in a gaudy manner. The number of these courts is increased according to the size of the house; the innermost always comprising the haram, or women's apartments. The few windows that look towards the street, are covered with a frame of lattice-work. During the warm weather, the inhabitants sleep on bedsteads placed on the roofs, which are flat, and surrounded by parapet walls. As some of the roofs are more elevated than others, those occupying the highest can observe the women who dwell in the lower apartments; but a stranger will think well before he indulges his curiosity, as a Turk would feel himself justified in sending a ball through the head of his prying neighbour.

There is every reason to believe that Eastern houses are of the same form, and applied to the same purposes as formerly.

* *Dewan*, pronounced in England *Divan*.

From a variety of texts of Scripture, the roof appears to have been always inhabited. The expression of Isaiah, that "thou art wholly gone up to the house tops,"* evidently refers to this circumstance. It was from "the roof of the king's house" that David first saw Bathsheba.† This he could easily do, as, of course, the royal palace was more elevated than the surrounding habitations. Samuel communed with Saul on the top of the house, and the next morning called him up to the same place, to send him away.‡

In my note upon Bussorah, I have mentioned, that at an Armenian feast, a large party were assembled on the terrace to celebrate the betrothment of our host. In the same manner, three thousand Philistines met on the roof of the house, on the day of a "great sacrifice unto Dagon, their god," and to rejoice "that Samson had been delivered into their hands."

The parapet wall round these terraces, was ordained by the Jewish law to prevent any one from falling off: "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence." §

The lattice on the windows, is also mentioned in Holy Writ. In Solomon's Song, the bride says "he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice." ||

There is hardly any variety in the dress of the Bagdad females. A blue check robe, enveloping the whole person, has been selected by the Turks, probably from the homeliness of its colour, as least likely to attract attention; a thick horse-hair veil, through which

* Isaiah xxii. ver. 1. † 2 Sam. xi. 2. ‡ 1 Sam ix. ver. 25 and 26.

§ Deut. xxii. 8.

|| Sol. Song. ii. 9.

it is impossible to discern the features of the wearer, extends to the chest: a lady thus habited is allowed to go abroad, attended by a female servant, whose dress differs from that of her mistress only in the coarser texture of the materials. Numbers of these females may be seen in an evening outside the walls of the city: some of them are mounted on mules, when a pair of long yellow boots are added to the dress; others on foot, proceeding towards the garden to fulfil an assignation with their lovers. In our evening rides we frequently passed some of these females, who, if they were alone, and a Mussulman not in sight, would lift up their veils, and show such a disposition to become better acquainted, that if we had been inclined for this species of adventure, our addresses would doubtless have met with a favourable reception.

The gardens commence within half a mile of the walls of the city, and extend four or five miles along the water's edge. They are separated from each other by walls; a small door opens from each garden towards the river, which often serves to admit some female, who, gliding softly in a small boat, enters the garden by this means, while her lover comes in from the opposite side: here the precautionary measures of dress, that were intended to ensure fidelity, prove useful only in preventing discovery. A woman thus disguised can escape without much fear of detection; the uniformity of the dress prevents any one from identifying her figure, and no man, whatever his suspicions may be, will dare to lift the veil of a woman in public. In Constantinople, Englishmen who have engaged in this description of adventure, have disappeared, and never been heard of afterwards. In Bagdad there does not appear to be so much danger; we heard of some of our own countrymen having escaped, even after

detection, though, in some instances, the female, and some of the principal abettors of the intrigue have fallen victims to their imprudence.

From these circumstances it will appear that Turkish women have more liberty than is usually supposed, and though by the customs of the East they are deprived of that respect and admiration of the men, which are the birthright of Englishwomen, they have, perhaps, more power of indulging their licentious inclinations, and with less fear of detection than our ladies, who like our monarchs, have a legitimate though limited sway.

CHAPTER XI.

Buildings in the time of Haroun Alraschid—A House—Mosque—Disregard of the Turks for Antiquities—Preparations for departure—Advice to Travellers—Roguary of the British Agent—Mr. Wolff, a Missionary—Extortion of the Servants of Aga Saikis—We leave Bagdad—Gold-stick bearer—Benec-Sad—Ruined state of the Town—Aboo Nasir throwing the Jereed—Bacoubah—Devastation of the Army of Mohumud Ali Meerza—Alarm of Robbers—Aboo Nasir's Request—The Silver-stick Bearer and Aboo Nasir take leave.

DURING our stay in Bagdad, we were very anxious to observe any customs in use amongst the modern inhabitants, with which we might associate our recollections of their ancestors, as recorded in the Arabian Nights; but Bagdad is no longer the Court of the Caliphs. The former capital of the Eastern empire, has dwindled into the seat of government of a remote province. The deputy of the Caliph's successor occupies the seat once filled by commanders of the faithful; and, although in the decline of a great city there must be a smaller field for the delineation of character, than in the days of its prosperity, the customs of the present inhabitants have such an affinity to the accounts handed down to us of the days of splendour, as to bear ample testimony to the fidelity of that admirable picture of Oriental life.

In our search for illustrations of the Arabian Nights, we were not unmindful of buildings in the time of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, the detail of whose midnight pranks have so amused our earlier life. Though there are few remains of this merry monarch, these few, unsatisfactory as they were to our craving curiosity, were visited by us with a grateful respect for his memory, proportionate to the pleasure we had derived from the perusal of his exploits. A house situate on the banks of the Tigris was shown to us as having once been the residence of Haroun. There is nothing in its actual appearance to attract notice, though it is remarkable for the judicious situation in which it is built. The far-famed Tigris washes its walls, and from its lattices is a fine view of the surrounding scenery.

Another memento of the Caliph is a mosque in a dilapidated state, which bears marks of having once been beautiful and elegant; it is nearly the highest building in the city. Captain Hart attempted to make a sketch of it, but was prevented by the importunate curiosity of the Turks, who had gathered round us to discover the objects of our attention.

Here it may not be irrelevant to offer a few remarks on that disposition so observable in Eastern nations to allow the works of antiquity to decay. The people who do not look backward to their ancestors, will never look forward to posterity. The Turk, careless and indolent, dozes through his existence, unmindful of the past, regardless of the future. With us, the actions of our forefathers are associated with our own. The motives which stimulate us to present exertion are the recollection of our predecessors, and the hope of benefiting our posterity. The Turk, from the frail hold by which he clings to life, merely regards the moment of present enjoyment.

To-morrow he may be dead, or he may be a beggar. To-day, is his existence. He knows that like the mighty Davoud, the slave may become the three-tailed bashaw, but he also knows that the same sum which purchased the head of his predecessor, may be given for his own. He exercises power while he may, in extortion and oppression. Prodigal of the life of others, equally careless of his own, he yields when his turn comes, with the indifference of a predestinarian, and respectfully submits his neck to the bowstring, whenever "the vicar of the holy Prophet" dooms him to destruction.

April 8.—For some reasons, that we were unable to divine, Aga Saikis threw every obstacle in the way of our departure. Whenever we made inquiries respecting any opportunity of joining a party proceeding to Kermanshah, our next halting-place, he always evaded giving us an answer, till the caravan in question had proceeded on its journey.

Impatient at this protracted delay, and being suspicious that we were again to become the innocent instruments of some deceitful project, we determined to follow the plan we had adopted at Bus-sorah, of forming our own caravan, and travelling independent of others. For this purpose, we purchased tents; Mr. Hart and Mr. Lamb had a small one a-piece, and Mr. Hamilton and myself a larger one between us. We were assisted in our arrangements by Gaspar Khan, a wealthy merchant, who engaged for us twenty-four mules, to carry our servants and baggage. The chief muleteer gave us a written agreement, by which he was bound to go to Kermanshah within a given time, or to remain on the road as many days as we required. We had each two servants, and two saddle horses; we hired two tent-pitchers for the whole party, and the descendant

of Mahomet still continued to act as cook. The Pasha hearing of our projected departure, sent a janizary to escort us to the Persian frontier, with a firman, exempting us from all tolls and exactions whatever. Aboo Nasir begged us to allow him to accompany us the two first stages, for the sake of old acquaintance, a proposal to which we willingly acceded.

From the moment that Aga Saikeis saw these preparations, his spirits entirely forsook him. He frequently tried to rally, but in vain ; and there can be little doubt that by our departure, we defeated some favourite plan he had formed for his aggrandizement ; as from the time we commenced our preparations for the journey, we observed him in close conference with his confidential secretary, an Armenian of the establishment, whose sympathetic features reflected the woe-begone countenance of his principal.

Should any traveller follow our route, he need not employ so large an equipage as that imposed upon us by Aga Saikeis. If he travel alone, he will only have occasion for a saddle horse for his own riding, and two mules, one of which, more lightly laden than the other, will also carry his servant. With so small an equipage, however, it will be advisable for him to join a caravan ; indeed, at all events, he had better do so, as there is considerable danger in passing the frontier, on account of the numerous predatory hordes that infest the mountains ; and, though we did not come in actual contact with these robbers, we have good cause to remember them. The traveller is recommended not to put himself to any expense in the purchase of portmanteaus, as the articles of the country are infinitely cheaper and better adapted to the mule loads. A small breakfast-canteen is indispensable. With regard to equipment, and an estimate of expenses, Lieutenant Colo-

nel Johnson's journey through Persia, to London, gives very excellent advice to travellers. It is the best itinerary that has been published of a Persian tour, and affords a fair valuation of expenses, though, perhaps, occasionally underrated: at least, we were unable to make such good bargains. Our route was not the same as Colonel Johnson's, but his remarks are equally applicable to both lines of march.

I cannot close these observations without strongly recommending any future traveller visiting Bagdad, to avoid the house of Aga Saikeis: if his objects be curiosity, economy, or expedition, he will in all probability enjoy as little liberty to pursue his observation as ourselves; the good cheer of which he may partake, though not charged in a bill, will draw from his pocket, by indirect means, an ample remuneration. If it should suit the views of the agent, so many obstacles will be thrown in the way of his departure, that nothing but the most decisive conduct will prevent his detention. It was not till some time after our departure from Bagdad, that we were fully convinced of this Armenian's rogueries; each succeeding day brought to light some fresh instance of his extortion, in proof of which, candour obliges me to relate a circumstance, which, for the reputation of our party, ought to be kept secret, the misfortunes being of that description which would obtain us no commiseration from our sporting countrymen. In short, Aga Saikeis, with some very few exceptions, took in the whole of our party in the sale of horses.

As I could not presume to impeach the judgment of my fellow travellers, in a point on which all Englishmen are so punctilious, the names of the sufferers must not be mentioned; but out of our stud, one horse wanted an eye; a second, a pair of hind legs; a third,

recommended as likely to suit a timid gentleman, ran away with him every day to the amusement of the rest of the party ; and of the two horses I bought, one died at Teheran, and the other was very well sold at Tabriz for a sum equivalent to two pounds sterling.

Having thus pointed out the shoals of which the traveller is to steer clear, it is but fair to give a few directions for the course he ought to pursue. He is recommended to hire apartments for himself, and to employ no servant but his own. If he should require information connected either with arrangements for his journey, or with objects worthy of his curiosity, he is recommended to the Chief of the Artillery, who will be proud to afford him every assistance in his power, and to whose good offices our party feel themselves much indebted.

While we were at breakfast this morning, Mr. Wolff, a Missionary, came in, having just arrived from Aleppo after a long and arduous journey across the Desert. Of this, his appearance bore ample testimony, as his complexion, naturally fair, had turned to a copper colour from the scorching influence of the sun. He appeared to have encountered various difficulties and dangers, and seemed so overjoyed at again meeting with European faces, that he could scarce restrain his satisfaction within bounds. He gave us an interesting account of his journey through Mesopotamia, and of the various perils he had encountered on his road.

At a short distance from Merdan he met with the Yezedees, an extraordinary sect, who entertain a sort of pious regard for the Devil. On one occasion being seated between two men, he asked one of them, who was a Christian, of what persuasion the other was? the person alluded to, replied, that he belonged to a particular

tribe, who neither bowed the head, nor bent the knee in prayer. Mr. Wolff then asked him if he was not one of the worshippers of the Devil? He replied, "We worship nothing, but we never pronounce that name which you have just uttered." We staid so short a time with Mr. Wolff, that we were unable to gain much information respecting this extraordinary people, who, he told us, believed that the Devil was a fallen angel, but that in the course of time he would again be received into divine favour.

We were much interested in our new acquaintance, who, in the course of conversation, evinced an inexhaustible fund of anecdote, and showed such enthusiasm in the laborious and perilous office in which he is employed, that, though we may not agree with him in the efficacy of his mission, few can help admiring his unaffected piety, and the sincerity of his religious zeal.

Mr. Wolff is a native of Germany, and was in early life of the Jewish persuasion, from which he was converted to Catholicism, and became a member of the "propaganda fide." Living at Rome, he observed so many practices which he deemed inconsistent with his notions of Christianity, that he abjured popery, and published such an anathema against his Holiness himself, that his friends, in regard for his safety, hurried him out of the Holy City. His mission, when we saw him, was from the London Bible Society, to inquire into the religious state of the Jews in the East; and the result of his observations have since appeared in a periodical work entitled the "Jewish Expositor."

It was his intention to have sent his journal home by us; but as our arrangements were made for departing in the course of the day, and we found that his baggage might be detained for some time, we were reluctantly compelled to forego the pleasure of its perusal.

We had various visitors this morning, who came either on business with the agent, on a visit to Mr. Wolff, or to take leave of us. During the day, the conversation was carried on in no less than ten languages. Aga Saikeis had occasion at different times to speak Turkish, Arabic, Armenian, and Persian; Mr. Wolff spoke Italian, German, and Dutch; and our party spoke French to the Chief of Artillery, Hindostan to our servants, and English among ourselves.

The rest of the day was less pleasantly occupied. No sooner had we retired to our rooms, than we were besieged by the whole household of Aga Saikeis, who collectively and individually put in their claims to be remunerated for some alleged services. In this emergency, we sought their master to protect us from imposition. As usual, when our interests required his presence, he had some convenient occupation that called him out of the way; finding our condition hopeless, we acted as our countrymen always do in like cases—we paid the money, not failing, when we found Aga Saikeis, to make a statement of our grievances. Instead of assisting us, he replied with his favourite theory, that we were charged more than usually high for every thing, because “the English name was so great in Bagdad.”

After satisfying the demands of these cormorants, we sent forward our servants and baggage, and at five in the evening, had the satisfaction of finding ourselves outside the walls of Bagdad. On our road to Kermanshah, we were accompanied by Aga Saikeis, and a large party of native gentlemen for some distance out of the city, and submitted to their presence with patience, knowing that it was the last time we should have the honour of their society, of which, to say the truth, we began to be a little tired.

We had not proceeded more than two miles on our journey, when we were overtaken by the silver-stick bearer, who, seeming to think his presence necessary, said, he was ordered to accompany us to Bacoubah, two stages distant; we told him we had no farther occasion for his services, but the hopes of more fees induced him to disregard our hint, and to take his usual station in our retinue.

We pursued our course in a N. N. E. direction. At eight, we passed some mounds. The road for a considerable distance was strewn with broken bricks; we saw a number of old water-courses. We traversed for three miles what appeared to be the old bed of a river. These remains indicate a former state of culture, of which they are the only vestiges.

With the exception of a few patches of verdure in some hollow places, where the rain has lodged, the whole extent from the foot of the wall of Bagdad is a barren waste, without a blade of vegetation of any description. At ten P. M. we were at Benee Sad; our tents were pitched at the north side of the caravanserai, on the edge of a swamp, over which the wind blew piercingly cold. Adjoining the caravanserai is a small village, from which we procured sheep and fowls. We arrived, very hungry, on our ground but had nothing ready to eat. In our journey to Babylon, our Bagdad host laid in an ample store of cold provisions, and bread sufficient for us till our return. On the present occasion of our final departure, he had not thought any attention of this kind necessary, the ends of his policy, regarding us, having been accomplished.

The advanced guard of the army under Mohummud Ali Meerza, the late Prince of Kermanshah, marched as far as this place, on their

road to Bagdad. They have left striking proofs of their visit in the ruinous and desolate state of the town, which they destroyed.

April 9.—We left Benee Sad at seven A. M. After three hours march we crossed the bed of the river Nar, which tradition states to have been the ancient bed of the Tigris, one branch of which falls into the sea.

Our day's march was not without its amusement. Aboo Nasir having indulged in a stirrup cup, was more than usually merry; riding before us, with jereed in hand, he dared us to the contest. We each of us grasped a jereed, and in turns pursued him, but his legs, which were the only sober members of his body, stuck so close to the saddle, that we could neither upset him, nor touch him with the jereed, as he always managed to elude the blow, at the moment we expected to see him prostrate on the ground.

At eleven we arrived at the river Diala, the Delas or Pasitrigis of ancient history: we crossed it on a large platform ferry, that carried over the cattle with the load on their backs.

Near the ferry was a garden, in which we remained till our party was ready to proceed; here we drank coffee, smoked our pipes, and ate sweet limes, which we found truly refreshing, as the heat was very oppressive. That curious optical delusion, called by the Persians the Saharaub,* was so strong that we were deceived into a belief that we were close to the Diala long before we reached it.

From the ferry we rode about two miles along the banks of the river, and arrived at Bacoubah, our second day's march. This appears to have been a very considerable place, but has been laid almost

* Literally, "water of the desert."

entirely in ruins by the army of Coords, under the command of Mohummud Ali Mээрza, late Prince Governor of Kermanshah, whose head quarters had been established here for some time. The cholera morbus breaking out among them caused their speedy return to Kermanshah, where the Prince soon after died.

The time he wasted at this station saved the Pashalick ; had he marched immediately to Bagdad, it is the general opinion that he would have obtained possession of it, so great was the terror his former successes had occasioned.

Two or three attempts were made to-day to frighten us into a belief of robbers, and to urge the necessity of a guard of twelve men. In the evening we were informed that three fine horses had been carried off the night before, from the very spot where we were encamped. Aboo Nasir upon hearing this volunteered to keep watch, and sent to us for a bottle of brandy to keep him awake ; whether owing to his vigilance, or not, certainly no robbers came.

April 10.—As Aboo Nasir was to leave us this stage, he came to us in the morning and asked us to give him a written character, which he might show to any of our countrymen pursuing the same route. As soon as he had obtained the document, he said to us, “ I can't think of asking you for any liquor, I therefore, positively, shall not accept more than five bottles of spirits.” Such an appeal it was impossible to resist ; so we gave him the five bottles, and he left the tent, his drunken eyes gleaming with anticipated enjoyment.

We were setting off on the journey, when, as we had premised, it was intimated that a present would be very acceptable to the silver stick bearer ; but we were so disgusted at this additional attempt at extortion, by one we had treated so well, that we unanimously

resisted his demand, advising him to go for payment to him who had sent him on so fruitless an errand. As we were about to depart, Aboo Nasir, drunk as usual, came rolling in his saddle to bid us good-bye; his jolly scarlet face being humorously contrasted with the serious disappointed demeanour of his companion of the silver stick.

CHAPTER XII.

Ruins of Artemita—Historical Notice of Shehreban—Ruins of Apollonia—Crossing the Diala—Ancient Tradition—The Hamerine or Carduchian Mountains.

WE started at three P. M. that we might have time, before dark, to examine ruins which lay on one side of the road, two hours' journey from hence. Our road was N. E., over grass plains highly capable of cultivation, with numerous encampments of Illyauts, through two of which we passed, and were treated by the wanderers with the greatest attention and respect.

Seven miles E. of Bacoubah we came upon ruins, which I consider to be those of the ancient city of Artemita, the favourite residence of Chosroes, King of Persia, the rival of the Emperor Heraclius. The first was a square mound of bricks facing the cardinal points, resembling in form the Gabri Bina on the road to Babylon. It was called by our guides *Hud Mootsir*, and is probably the site of some temple in the suburbs of the city. A mile beyond this temple commence the ruins themselves, which, from the regularity of the mounds, appear to have been built with much taste and judgment: a succession of longitudinal mounds, bearing N. and S., and traversed by others E. and W., show the regu-

larity with which the streets must have been formed. In the western extremity of these ruins, in a situation that would have constituted the principal street, is a mound higher than the rest, which we suppose to have formed the royal residence. Before it is a grass plain, about as large as Lincoln's Inn Square, which I shall call the park or garden of the sovereign: of this, the circumstance that the grass grows in every place but where it is impeded by the foundation of buildings, is a sufficient indication. Immediately before the supposed palace, there are several other square spaces covered with grass, and may probably have once been the gardens of the city. The whole is surrounded by mounds, which mark the foundations of the outer walls; and circular bastions may be traced at regular distances: even the vacant spaces, occasioned by the entrance gates, are very apparent; many of the bricks are fourteen inches square, of the same appearance and dimensions as those at Babylon. We saw here great quantities of broken pottery: Mr. Hamilton found part of an enamelled vessel, on which was the figure of a head encircled with a wreath. We were informed, that after a shower of rain, the Arabs were in the habit of finding amulets, and numerous coins of gold, silver, and copper. In the short space of half an hour, Mr. Hart picked up twenty-one copper coins: on one of these we could distinctly trace the head of a male figure on one side, and that of a female on the other. This would favour the conjecture of a residence of Chosroes, many of whose coins were stamped on one side with his own head, and on the reverse with that of his queen, the fair Sira or Shereen. The Arabs called this place Kurustur, but could give us no farther information respecting it. We regretted not having been previously informed

that these ruins were so well worthy attention, that we might have encamped in the vicinity, and devoted a day to their examination.

D'Anville* places Artemita near a town called Descara; and Kinnier† considers it the same as Kisra Shereen, a ruined city in the Hamerine Mountains, five days' journey hence.

As some explanation is necessary for differing from two such respectable authorities, it may be mentioned, that our party, after carefully examining the place mentioned by D'Anville, could find no traces of buildings whatever. As the learned antiquary never visited this country, and formed his opinion from geographical deduction, I shall consider the absence of ruins a sufficient reason for rejecting his opinion; and state my objections against that of Mr. Kinnier.

Gibbon‡ says, "In the space of twenty-four years, he (Chosroes) was deterred by superstition or resentment from approaching the gates of Ctesiphon; and his favourite residence, Artemita, or Destagerd, was situate beyond the Tigris, about sixty miles to the north of the capital."

It is well known that the Persian monarchs were accustomed to pass their summer months in the mountains, for the benefit of the cool air, and during the winter to reside in the plains.§

Strabo|| informs us, that on account of the mildness of the climate, Ctesiphon was the winter residence of the Parthian kings: it is, therefore, highly improbable that Destagerda should have been in so elevated a situation as Kisra Shereen; besides, that city, instead of sixty, is nearly a hundred miles north of Ctesiphon. Isidorus

* D'Anville *Mém. de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, tom. xxxii, pp. 268, 571.

† Kinnier's *Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire*.

‡ Gibbon, vol. viii. chap. xlv.

§ Strabo, lib. xi. p. 522.

|| Lib. xvi. p. 743.

of Charax, and Strabo,* both speak of Artemita as a great and populous city. D'Herbelot gives an account of its former splendour, and Theophanes of its subsequent ruin.

In the year 627 the Greek Emperor Heraclius took Artemita, and in revenge for the numerous calamities that had been inflicted by Chosroes on the Greek provinces, destroyed with fire all the valuables that the army could not carry away. The renowned Chosroes escaped through a hole in the wall, and sought refuge in the hut of a neighbouring peasant.

From the destruction of Artemita may be dated, not only the overthrow of Chosroes, but the extinction of the whole race of Guebres. A very few years after, the mighty Mahomet appeared, and involved Greeks and Persians in one common ruin.

On leaving the ruins of Artemita, we followed the course of a canal for about three miles. We met with several oval earthen vessels on its banks, and many remains of buildings. We then passed over a rich plain, with numerous water-courses for irrigation; the country was well cultivated. The road was mostly flooded, and in many parts very difficult to pass.

We saw the fires of Illyaut camps in every direction, but met with none of the plunderers, which we had been taught to expect.

We reached Shehrebán at eleven o'clock p. m., and found it almost entirely deserted. It is a place of considerable extent. We wandered through the desolate streets some time, without finding any house with inhabitants, till we came to a caravanserai, where we met a man who

* Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 714

told us that all the inhabitants had left the place, which had been sacked and ruined by the Coords.

We pitched our tents a quarter of a mile from the town; and remained the following day at Shehreban, to enable us to examine some ruins in the neighbourhood.

April 11.—In the morning, Mr. Hart and myself mounted our horses, and took with us a guide. About three miles to the N. of Shehreban, we came to a spot bearing the usual indications of ruined cities in the East. The most remarkable of these was a square space of half a mile, enclosed in a wall: the sides to the N. and E. are to be traced; towards the S. and W. the wall is in many places thirty feet high. Three hundred yards to the E. side, is a high abrupt mound of sun-burnt bricks, strewed as usual with broken tiles, fragments of ornamented pottery, &c. We could gain nothing satisfactory from our guide, of the traditions respecting this place: he called it Uske Bagdad (Ancient Bagdad), and said that it was the ruin of a city built by Chosroes, to whom all doubtful remains of ancient buildings are attributed in this country.

According to D'Anville, this spot is the site of the ancient Apollonia, a town which gave the name of Apolloniatis to the surrounding district. It was probably coeval with Seleucia on the banks of the Tigris, and built by Seleucus, who doubtless gave it the name, to commemorate his pretended descent from Apollo.* In the early part of the reign of Antiochus the Great, Molo, the Satrap of Media,

* Respecting the divine origin of Seleucus we have these words in Justin:—"Laudice cū nupta esset Antiocho, claro inter Philippi duces viro, visa est sibi per quietem ex concubitu Apollinis concepisse."

This place is mentioned in Ptolemy, lib. vi., cap. 1. Polybius, lib. 5.

presuming on the youth of the king, led an army against him, and rendered himself master of Apolloniatis; and after various successes, retired with his army into the city of Apollonia, to which place he was pursued by Antiochus, and being betrayed by his followers, killed himself in despair.

From these ruins, we proceeded to an extraordinary-looking building, which formed a long and solid mass. The bricks, which are fourteen inches square, are connected together by a hard and beautiful cement, composed of lime-stone and alabaster. This building, generally speaking, is in high preservation. To the eastward, at regular distances from each other, protrude sixteen well-formed bastions; twelve of them are entire, two in rather a ruined state, and two with the bases only visible. The W. side is a flat wall, the brickwork of which is in most places very perfect: corresponding with each bastion, is a regular ascent from the opposite side, and a kind of arch across. In the wall, between each bastion, are three loop-holes, which one would suppose were for the admittance of air to a subterranean passage, but its appearance impressed us with the idea that the whole is a solid substance. The building measures from the summit of the bastion to its visible base, twenty-eight feet, the semicircumference is one hundred feet, and the space between each bastion fifty-eight feet. The Arabs call this place the Zindan, or prison, and, with their usual love for the marvellous, tell you that in it are a number of cells, inhabited by *genii*, who take off the heads of every one who may be unfortunate enough to enter this enchanted habitation. If, as its name implies, it was formerly a prison, the loss of head might occur to the luckless inmate without the aid of supernatural agency, and some such circumstance has probably given rise to the tradition.

In the evening, we visited Shehreban, or rather its ruins, as there was scarcely one entire house remaining. A winding stream of water, occasioned by a cut from the Diala, traverses nearly every house. This stream has been occasionally embanked with masonry, of which many portions remain that appear ancient, and may have been built during the time of the former city. There are also numerous bridges of bricks, forming communications with the different streets, but, apparently, not older than the modern town.

No remains of ancient buildings exist, and the present town bids fair to add its heap of ashes to its predecessor. It was for some time in the hands of the Persians. The works they have left here, and at the other places we have passed, give abundant proofs of their expertness in spoliation. The spectacle it presents is truly wretched. The roofs of most of the houses are fallen in; the wood having been probably used for fuel.

This town was not many months back one of the most populous and thriving in the Pashalick of Bagdad; now the whole population consists of about three families.

The mosque, which is very large, has been spared by these marauders, probably from a religious feeling. The same inducement has made them leave the caravanserai untouched, for the use of their countrymen on a pilgrimage to the tomb of their saint. Whatever may be their motives, the effect of these three buildings in preservation, only serves to complete the picture of desolation, by the contrast they bear with the rest of the city.

Before we returned to our tents, we examined the fortifications and outer works. Some of these are almost level with the ground. Those that remain standing, every where pierced with cannon shot,

have left ample traces of its destructive powers ; here the action must have been desperate ; the point of attack being on the E. side of the city, it must have been necessary for the besiegers to have escaladed the garden-walls, after having carried the outworks. We could distinctly trace the several breaches that had been made.

April 12.—We left Shehreban early in the morning. We sent forward our baggage and servants to Khizil Rubaut, distant eighteen miles. After an hour's ride, we diverged from our road two miles to the N. W. to see a place where the enamoured Khosro is reported to have built a palace for the fair Shereen, situate on the right bank of the Diala. The country was covered with verdure, chiefly wild barley and oats, and watered with numerous rills. From a distance, we thought we could distinctly trace the outline of an extensive building. On our nearer approach, we perceived that a piece of rock of peculiar form had caused this delusion ; an hour and a half brought us to the Diala, at its embouchure from the hills. The whole of this spot showed marks rather of the commencement of some undertaking, than the remains of a finished building. It is possible that Khosro might have here been engaged in constructing an edifice, when the approach of the Emperor Heraclius, obliged him to make so precipitate a retreat.

On the left bank of the Diala, we observed what had the appearance of a large unfinished flight of steps, composed of masses of stone four feet in length, and one and a half in depth and thickness ; this extended nearly to the water's edge, and is all we met with to indicate the site of a palace.

We were ferried across this classical Diala, on a small raft, called a *kelluck*, composed of inflated sheep skins, supporting a platform

of reeds, which had been prepared on purpose for us. The raft was managed by two men, and though one of them had lost his right arm from the elbow, he appeared to be equally expert with his companion. The stream is about a hundred yards wide, and very rapid: they conducted the raft with paddles of the most primitive description, formed also of reeds: notwithstanding the fragile texture of the platform, which one of our party fell through, on entering upon it, we went and returned without accident; we landed at the place they call the palace of Shereen, close to the river side.

Instead of the large building which appeared at a distance, we found a perpendicular rock, with some excavations, apparently the stations of ascetics. In one of them is the figure of a man rudely traced on the rock, with some marks like hieroglyphics near it. The largest cave is about fourteen feet square, and vaulted in the roof; the rock is a mass of soft reddish sandstone, resting on a stratum of large oyster shells, and bedded in clay. On the top of this rock, are many parts scarped for the foundation of buildings, and a small portion of a wall remaining. To the N. E. of this scarped part, and considerably higher, are two large heaps of rounded pebbles of limestone, apparently an original deposit.

The view from this eminence was very fine, contrasted with the scenery we had just left. The Diala could be traced some distance, winding among the hills, and to a considerable extent over the plain we had traversed, which it fertilizes. The numerous water-courses we have passed in our journey from Bagdad, have been supplied from its stream, which at one time they must have almost absorbed.—We were rather astonished to hear our Arabs relate the well known tradition of Herodotus, that in consequence of one of the horses dedicated to the sun having been lost in this river, Cyrus vowed he would

make it so contemptible a stream, that a lady should be able to pass over it without wetting her tunick.

On regaining the road, we arrived at the lowest range of the Hamerine Mountains: having so long been accustomed to traverse a dead flat, we were much gratified at being relieved from the usual monotony of our march, though the change was only from desert plains to barren hills.

This chain of mountains, which formerly separated the empires of Assyria and Media, was called Mount Zagros, and distinctly marking the limits of these once splendid rivals, seemed to form a kind of neutral barrier between them. The chain, commencing in Armenia, and extending to the Persian Gulf, may still be considered as fixing the boundaries of the same countries, distinguished in modern language as Arabian and Persian Irak.

It will doubtless be remembered, that the mountains of Kurdistan have, from time immemorial, been inhabited by wandering tribes, who, though formerly in the immediate vicinity of Media and Assyria, led, unawed by their civilized neighbours, a lawless, predatory life. This people, who, beyond a doubt, formed one of the tribes of Ishmael, are mentioned as the Carduchi by Xenophon, who had good reason to remember them, from the reception they gave him, and the ten thousand Greeks, after the memorable battle of Canaxa. In the more modern appellation of Coords, they have, during a lapse of ages, been always observed to adhere to the predatory habits of their progenitors, whenever their turbulent spirit brought them forward in the page of history. The Emperor Saladin, himself a Coord, from his contest with our forefathers in the chivalrous days of the Crusades, has left behind him a name that must be familiar to every one.

CHAPTER XIII.

Ruin at Baradan—Gaur the City of Magicians—Khanaki—Our Janizary—Calor, a Tribe of Banditti—Annoyances of the Journey—The Shurgee or Siroc Wind—Ruins of Kisra Shereen—We are visited by Robbers—Dangerous Adventure.

WE continued our march for about five miles over a succession of eminences, with rounded flattened tops, composed of limestone shingles. The road was very rugged, and mostly over a succession of deep narrow ruts formed by the passage of cattle. On arriving at the summit of this mountain, we came in sight of an extensive plain; and, at what appeared the distance of two miles, we saw the caravanserai of Khizil Rubaut. The weather being intensely hot, we comforted ourselves with the hope of soon reaching our destination; but we were wofully disappointed in finding, that instead of two, we had to traverse a tract of nine miles. The plain which we now entered, was rich, and for the most part well cultivated. After a march of three hours we arrived at Khizil Rubaut, completely worn out with the heat and closeness of the atmosphere.

Our tents were pitched to the north of the town. Khizil Rubaut, in common with its neighbours, has suffered from the vindictive

spirits of its Coordish enemies. A body of the Pasha's troops were stationed here, and gave to it a less desolate appearance than the other town through which we passed.

The valley abounds in remains of ancient buildings, and proves how populous this country must have been in times of old. To the south-west of Khizil Rubaut are some extensive ruins, possibly the site of the ancient Celonæ, a town said to be situated near Mount Zagros, through which the army of Xerxes marched on its road from Susa to Critalis in Cappadocia, the general rendezvous of that monarch preparatory to his intended invasion of Greece.

At two hours' journey, near a small village called Baradan, is a large mound. Three quarters of a mile to the east-north-east, were the ruins of the ancient City of Gaur, called, in the Arabian Nights, the City of Enchanters. Three miles to the north-west are the ruins of another ancient town, said to be of very great extent.

We were so much fatigued with the heat of our march, and our visit to the excavations, that we felt no inclination to undertake any distant excursion; we therefore confined our examination to some old water-mills about a mile from our tents, to which we walked in the evening. The channel supplying water was broken down and dry. Respecting the machinery, we could only judge by the disposition of the masonry, that the water had been supplied from a height in the manner of vertical wheels with buckets. A small Martello-shaped tower is attached to each, with a spiral staircase to the top, which has probably been constructed to defend the works. I am the more inclined to this opinion from having seen the same sort of towers near Bussorah, to protect travellers from the Wahhabbees, and at Muscat, where a number were regu-

larly fortified for the purpose of defending the stream which supplied the whole town with water.

April 13.—We halted to-day, to examine some of the ruins in the neighbourhood. Mr. Lamb and I visited Baradan, two hours distance from Khizil Rubaut. We took with us our Janizary, and a guide, and proceeded in a S. W. direction. Two miles from our tents we crossed the Diala on a *kelluck*. The stream is as broad and as rapid here as at the place where we went over yesterday : we were obliged to make our horses swim over. From the Diala, we followed the course of a canal which served to irrigate the plain. In an hour and a half we found ourselves at Baradan, which, in common with other villages, has suffered from the inroads of the Coordish army. A mile and a half before we reached Baradan, we found the road strewn with broken bricks and small mounds, the remains of buildings.

To the S. W. of the village, is a mound little inferior to the Tower of Babel. It consists of a raised platform two hundred yards square, and thirty feet high. From this mass rises a quadrangular tower, ninety yards long, fifty yards wide, and eighty feet high.

The whole consists of earth mixed with rounded pebbles ; a portion to the N. E. which has recently fallen down, exhibits its structure of successive layers. From the quantity of broken bricks, it has evidently, like the Babylonian ruins, been coated with them. The centre of the mound is much injured ; huge ravines being formed on three sides of it by the rain. We found numerous fragments of broken pottery, &c. Near the top of the upper mass, we saw a vessel containing the bones of animals.

The appearance of this mound corresponds with the accounts given

by Strabo and Pausanias of some Fire-temples, which, on account of their being situated on large mounds of earth, they called *λοφοι μαροειδεις* from their resemblance to a woman's breast. Diodorus states that Semiramis erected a number of them in Assyria. From the reverence in which these places of worship were held, and from their capability of defence, they became repositories of treasure. Strabo mentions that in this country* (Assyria) there was one called Azara, (a name signifying treasure) which was plundered by the Parthians of ten thousand talents.

During the time that we were occupied in these ruins, a crowd of villagers collected about us, and smoked their pipes with us; and though our appearance attracted their curiosity, they behaved to us with great respect. This was not a little heightened by our worthy janizary, who we overheard telling them that Mr. Lamb was the King of England's principal physician, and that I was a general in the royal army. From the manner in which this officer has conducted himself towards us, he doubtless believes us to be the high personages he has represented; and we strongly suspect, that we are indebted to Aga Saikais for these unsolicited titles, which always occasioned us much inconvenience, the usual companion of greatness; and, as is often the case with high honours, were attended with some danger.

We returned by the same road that we came, and reached our tents at five in the evening. Messrs. Hart and Hamilton had been, in the mean time, to the ruins of Gaur, the city of Magicians of the Arabian Nights, which lies to the N. E. of Khizil Rubaut, at the distance of about a mile.

* Strabo, lib. 16. p. 1080.

April 14.—We left Khizil Rubaut at four in the morning. Our road lying nearly N. E. was chiefly over a succession of sand-stone hills, similar to those we had already passed. As we were now approaching the frontier, our chief muleteer was so well acquainted with the customs of the road, as to know that more than usual caution was necessary. Whenever he found us either straggling to the rear, or going too much in advance, he rode up to us and requested that we would keep close to the baggage, telling us much danger was to be apprehended from robbers. By his good generalship we marched in a more disciplined manner than ordinary, and reached Khanaki at nine in the morning. We crossed the Diala, which washes the northern walls of the town, over a handsome bridge, built by the Persians to facilitate their pilgrimage to Meshed Ali. About a mile to the N. we pitched our tents in the neighbourhood of some gardens.

Khanaki, which is of reputed antiquity, defines the frontier of the Pashalick of Bagdad, and has met with a fate natural to its unfortunate position between two rival powers. About two years ago it was taken by Mohummud Ali Meerza, and must at that time have had its share of the calamities of war. Upon the retreat of the Prince into Kermanshah, he left behind him a garrison of three hundred Coords, who were surprised by the Pasha of Bagdad, and, without exception, put to the sword. This catastrophe occurred only six months back.

The works of devastation here are even more marked than at any place we have yet seen. The fruit-trees in the gardens appeared to have been recently cut down; the village is one entire scene of desolation. The caravanserai, which is large and in good repair, stands

to the W. side, and when we arrived was crowded with travellers. The few inhabitants, who have come after the general slaughter which so recently took place, occupy some huts adjoining; but we could procure nothing from them, and were supplied with some bread and eggs by the wandering tribes.

As the power of the Pasha could now no longer avail us, we took leave of our janizary. He was well satisfied with the gratuity we made him, and prayed earnestly for our safety and prosperity.

The conduct of this officer has been unobtrusive, respectful, and attentive; three extraordinary qualities in a Turk. He has executed with much diligence the duties of his situation, and we have never heard that he has been guilty of any acts of oppression while with us, although the firman of the Pasha would have afforded him ample opportunities, had he been so disposed. In taking leave of him, we cannot help feeling regret, that as a janizary he will be obliged to recur to violence, so necessary for the support of his existence, which is at the same time so inconsistent with the apparent mildness of his character.

April 15.—At half past four in the morning we left Khanaki. In the preceding marches, we had been in the habit of going forward without waiting for the lading of the mules; but the chief muleteer so strongly urged the necessity of our keeping close together, that we all started at the same time in the morning. This order of march was so tedious, from the slow rate at which we journeyed, that we did not attend so strictly to his instructions as we ought.

As the day broke, we found ourselves ascending a range of hills, similar to those of yesterday, but considerably improved in appearance. Our present ascent was rather more rugged: the mountains, instead

of having their usual aspect of bleak rock, were covered with a bright verdure, which afforded some relief to the wearied eye.

This rocky region, divided into a variety of ravines, through which the road traverses with many windings, is in every respect well calculated for the haunts of robbers; its numerous ambushed covers afford so many points from which the plunderers can mark, unobserved, the traveller's progress, while the ravines secure an easy retreat to those acquainted with the intricacy of their recesses.

Soon after day-break, as Mr. Lamb and I were riding together, some hundred yards in advance of our party, three men on horseback came suddenly into the road from among the rocks, at one of the narrow passes of the mountain, fifty paces in advance of us, and seemed to regard us with no small degree of attention. He who appeared to be the Chief of the party, was mounted on a black horse. These continued to march a short distance before us for several miles, frequently slackening their pace till we got near them, and then moving on more briskly.

When we arrived near the end of our stage, they turned back, and allowed us to pass, giving the usual traveller's salutation of "Peace!" a phrase little in consonance with their hostile intentions. After we had passed them some distance, they struck into the mountains, and were soon out of sight.

Our conjectures respecting them, as it afterwards appeared, were not without foundation. On our arrival at Kermanshah, a young Arab chieftain informed us that twenty Coords of the Calor tribe (one of the most numerous and powerful of Coordistan) had followed us from Khanaki, for the express purpose of plundering our party, and of murdering us if we made any resistance; of this party, twelve were on horseback, and eight on foot, armed with matchlocks. The

chief, who he told us rode a black horse, exactly coincided, in description, with the person we had seen. The Arab said they had been watching night and day for a favourable opportunity to put their plan in execution : but always finding us so much on our guard, had never thought fit to make the attempt, and had been ultimately obliged to abandon their purpose, on arriving at the mountain pass of Pac-Takht, where a military force was stationed.

Their chief inducement to attack us, was the intelligence they had received from Bagdad, that our party consisted of an ambassador and his suite, travelling with a large treasure—the danger we were led into by this honour, is another of the obligations we owe to, Aga Sakeis.

They were deterred from attempting their purpose, by the dread of the European officers at Kermanshah revenging our deaths ; and their extravagant notions of European prowess and skill in arms ; which (notwithstanding their numbers) made them consider the result of an attack too doubtful to hazard, even for the abundant harvest they expected to reap.

We were disposed to doubt the accuracy of our informant's intelligence, but he fully satisfied us, by entering into so minute a detail of the circumstances of our march, from the time this party had waylaid us, that had we not been assured he himself was at Kermanshah during this time, we should have believed him to have been present with the party.

Our curiosity being strongly excited, to learn the sources of his intelligence, he at last told us, that his authority was the leader of the band himself, his most intimate friend, but that he could not reveal his name, as a betrayal of confidence would cost him his life.

From several circumstances that escaped him, it was proved be-

yond doubt, that his informant was our morning visitor on the black horse. It appeared, also, that this band was under the protection of one of the principal courtiers of Kermanshah, who shared in its booty, and shielded it, through his influence, in that corrupt government.

We owe this information to a feeling of gratitude on the part of the young chieftain, for some important services rendered to his family by the late Mr. Rich. He should not, he said, have revealed the circumstances confided to him, if the party had not intended to make another attempt on our leaving Kermanshah; and it was to put us on our guard, that he had made the friendly communication. It was near this place that Sir Robert Ker Porter was attacked on his journey to Bagdad.

The scenery, on approaching Kisra Shereen, is very picturesque. The road leads along the banks of a branch of the Diala, which runs through a narrow valley at the foot of a steep hill. A background of mountains rises in gradual succession one above the other, the highest of which are covered with snow, but the absence of wood detracts from the beauty of the landscape in this country.

We suffered more in this march than in any of the preceding. The heat was intolerable: myriads of small gnats hovered around, and either got into our eyes, or feasted on our fevered blood.

We turned abruptly round a projecting point of the hill, and came suddenly in sight of the caravanserai of Kisra Shereen, which, from this distance, had the appearance of a strong fortification.

The ground in the neighbourhood of the caravanserai is so covered with stones, that we had great difficulty in finding a place to encamp on. We at length discovered a small level spot, of extent

just sufficient for our party. It was situate on the banks of the river, which, in consequence of the melting of the snows in the mountains, was swollen to a considerable size, and, forcing its way through large disjointed masses of rocks, rushed past us with roaring impetuosity.

This small space was surrounded on three sides by a semicircular range of hills, at the top of which were the ruins of the ancient city of Kisra Shereen.

While pitching our tents, the master of the caravanserai came, attended by some country people, and intreated us not to encamp outside, as the greatest danger was to be apprehended from robbers, which he stated were very numerous; adding, that as Franks of distinction, he was responsible for our safety, but could not guarantee it, if we persevered in our present intention.

To prove his assertion, he pointed to the neighbouring village, which was completely deserted on account of robbers; the few remaining inhabitants being lodged in the caravanserai.

Being too much accustomed to the miserable accommodation of a caravanserai, we rejected his advice: he then offered to furnish a guard of twelve men, which he told us would be absolutely necessary for our protection. This we also refused, saying that we were able to protect ourselves, having found, on all other occasions, that we could dispense with the proffered assistance.

After some time we got into tolerable order, but were all so harassed with our march, that, notwithstanding the beauty of the scenery, we lost both our spirits and temper. The caterer of the week delayed our breakfast a full hour beyond the usual time, and exposed the milk and butter to the sun, till the one was sour, and

the other rancid. We worked ourselves up to a state of wretched irritability, that was little consonant with the good humour and harmony that usually prevailed among us.

April 15.—As we had determined to resist the expense of an additional guard, deeming it at the time an imposition, our servants kept watch last night, and passed the time in smoking, singing, and playing the *dumbuck*, a species of guitar. At intervals, during the night, they discharged their fire-arms, to show the robbers they were on the alert. This appeared to have effect, as they did not think fit to honour us with a visit, and morning dawned without an adventure to grace our tale.

For the last three days, we have all been affected by the influence of the S. E. wind. Of the party, I have, perhaps, been the greatest sufferer. The effects produced by this wind, resemble, in many respects, the symptoms of a low fever; violent head-ache, pains in the bones, loss of appetite, nervous irritability, and a general lassitude which renders any kind of exertion painful.

Last night, I retired to rest with all these distressing symptoms, but on awaking in the morning, I felt so restored, and my spirits were so buoyant, that I needed not to be informed of the wind's having shifted to another quarter.

The S. E. wind is called in Arabic and Persian, the Shurgee, and, by a natural analogy in Oriental languages, is the same word as the Siroc, from the effects of which I have often suffered in the Mediterranean.

The natives of the Ionian Islands are so well acquainted with the unpleasant sensations produced by the Siroc, that when they perceive its approach, they immediately shut every door and window, and

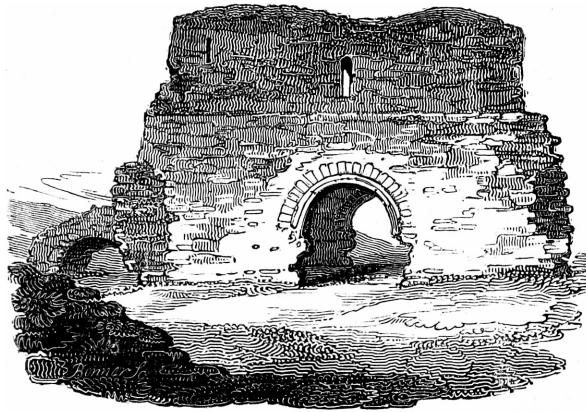
while it lasts, never go into the streets except on urgent business; while our countrymen, disdaining to avail themselves of the experience of the natives, and, believing air to be necessary to health, leave unclosed every aperture that can admit the pestilential blast.

At sunrise, we visited the ruins of Kisra Shereen. The first of these is a fort situated on the edge of a plateau, in a position to command the road, which passes along the valley by two of its faces. It is built of large quadrangular pieces of compact lime stone, with conical towers placed at small intervals. The towers are all vaulted, and vaulted communications lead to them along the walls. The E. and N. sides of the fort stand on the verge of the plateau. In the W. and S. faces, there is a deep ditch, excavated in the rock. The walls of the fort are levelled to the plain of the interior, as are also the buildings, which can be distinctly traced on the outside. The walls, which are from fifteen to forty feet high, are of so massive a structure, and composed of such durable materials, that they are likely to remain in their present condition for many ages. A quarter of a mile from the fort are extensive enclosures, surrounded by a wall about fifteen feet high, composed of massive square stones.

We passed over a level flat, which the natives call the garden. In the centre, is the ruin of an extensive palace of very massive structure: the walls stand from about ten to twenty feet, sufficient to mark its plan. To the north of the garden, is an oblong enclosure similar to a stadium. We were shown the baths, and a large mass of building, with vaulted roofs, called the bazaar of Kisra. We went hence to a large square building, the hall of audience: the walls are entire; but the roof, which appears to have been vaulted, has fallen in. This building has four entrances, facing the cardinal

points; whence the sovereign is said to have issued his commands to the four quarters of the globe. These entrances have arches of a parabolic form.

Our guides brought us to a hill, on which, they said, was formerly the Nukurah Khanah, and pointed to one similar on the opposite side of the valley, to which they gave a similar denomination. The remains of buildings could be traced in these two places. The accompanying sketch will convey an idea of the usual appearance of the buildings.



We were informed, that about two years and a half ago an European had made an accurate survey of all the buildings, and had taken with him a stone covered with inscriptions. Who the European was, we have yet to learn: at the time, we thought it might have been Sir Robert Porter, who visited these ruins some time since; but we have met with that gentleman, who saw no stone such as described by our guide.

The city, as its name implies, was built by Kisra, or Chosroes,

in honour of his beloved Shereen. This princess is said to have been a Christian, and the daughter of the Emperor Maurice.

To have fully surveyed the mass of ruins which exist here, would have occupied at least two days; but in this, as in other instances, the desire of proceeding on our journey made us give less time to our examination than they deserved.

April 16.—We suffered so much from heat in our last day's march, that we were determined for the future to travel by night. We separated soon after dusk, to take a little repose preparatory to our journey; but, as we thought it possible robbers might attack us this evening, we posted our sentinels as before. Our horses were secured by each foot being fastened by a hair rope to an iron staple which was fixed in the ground. A similar mode of picketing horses is mentioned in Scripture, in the account which the four lepers give of their visit to the deserted camp of the Syrians, that "there was no man there, but the horses *tied*, and asses *tied*, and the tents as they were."* Gibbon relates, that the success of Galerius, a Roman General, in the reign of Diocletian, was to be attributed to his having attacked the Persians in the night, who were consequently unable to resist him, from the difficulty they had in unshackling their horses.†

For the better securing our baggage, we placed it within a small space in the centre of our little camp. Having made fast the doors of the tents, we were about to sleep, when we heard a shot fired, which was quickly followed by two others. On inquiry, we found the robbers had descended the hill, and had commenced unloosing the cords by which our horses' feet were fastened to the

* 2 Kings, vii. 10.

† Gibbon, vol. 2. chap. xii. p. 146.

ground ; but, being fired upon, had fled. Shortly after, another set of men (for the same could scarcely have got round in the time) came to the opposite side, made a similar attempt, and met with a similar reception. This seemed to satisfy them, for we saw no more of them : though, as we afterwards heard, they formed a part of the Calor banditti.

After these interruptions, we again laid ourselves down to rest, when an incident occurred, which was nearly proving of a tragical nature, and will serve to show the state of watchfulness in which we were.

It had been our custom every night, previous to sleeping, to examine our arms, and then to place our swords beside us, and our pistols under our pillows.

I had been asleep about half an hour, when I was awoke by a rustling in the tent : upon looking to the place whence the noise proceeded, I could distinctly perceive the figure of a man forcing himself through one of the divisions. With my mind fully occupied on the late attack, I immediately cocked my pistols ; and, with the muzzle presented to the dark figure which appeared to be creeping along, I begged that Mr. Hamilton, to prevent accidents, would come close to me before I fired. By great good fortune he called out, and I discovered that *he* was the supposed robber, who, having gone to speak to Mr. Lamb, had been unable to open the door on his return, and had forced his way in the manner described.

CHAPTER XIV.

March by Moonlight—Our Chief Muleteer—Pool Zohaub—Stupendous Scenery—Curious Custom of Illyaut Women—Ancient Sculpture—Ascent of the Zagri Pilæ—Magnificent Scenery—Pa-ee Takht—Suridage—Vexatious Delay of the Muleteer—Town of Kurund—Visit from the Governor.

WE commenced our march this evening as the moon was majestically rising from behind the mountains. The night was delightfully cool, and we all felt the difference between our present situation and when suffering from the heat of a burning sun, augmented by the reflection from the surrounding rocks: nor do I think we were losers by the change, even on the score of scenery. Daylight is necessary to develop the beauties of a landscape, marked by a variety of tints; but in such as we here passed, the uniform colour of the hills, and the want of wood, soon palled on the eye. On the other hand, the bright beams of an Eastern moon striking upon the projecting points of the mountains, and presenting to our view their tops silvered by the snow, while the recesses were thrown into the deepest shade, left fancy to raise up images which reality could not identify.

We had frequent occasion to admire the activity and skilful arrangement of our intelligent muleteer. Mounted on a small high-bred Arab, he galloped over the most broken ground with the same

fearless security, as if he were scouring his native plains, constantly passing from front to rear, admonishing the indolent and encouraging the active, himself setting an example which seemed to inspire the others with emulation. When we approached any narrow pass where robbers were accustomed to take post, he galloped on several hundred yards to reconnoitre; thus forming an advance picket to afford us time to put ourselves on our guard.

Indefatigable as was his attention to the duties of his situation, he was equally mindful to those of his religion. Daily as the sun was about to rise, he would gallop forward with the rapidity of an arrow, throw himself from his horse, which grazed unrestrained by his side, and falling on his knees would finish his devotion about the time we came up.

April 17.—The weather continued temperate till a short time before dawn, when we came to a low swampy plain, and felt a chilly rawness in the air that was very unpleasant.

We reached Pool Zohaub, or Serpool, at sunrise, crossed the river over a well-built bridge, and pitched our tents on a rich plain, about half a mile to the south-east of the village, near an immense wall of limestone, which divides this from another fertile valley, about two miles wide, extending to the bottom of the higher range of the Hamerine Mountains.

Viewed from a distance in the dim twilight of morning, this singular rocky mass had the appearance of being the wall of a large caravanserai; although it was upwards of six hundred feet high, so small did it appear in comparison with the rest of the mountain range behind it. To the west it rises almost perpendicular from the plain, presenting a vast wall of rugged rock of astonishing

magnitude. The eastern side rises in a steep slope to about a hundred yards from the summit, when it shoots up in rugged perpendicular masses, pointed at the top, giving the form of a wedge flattened at one side.

As we were still shivering with the cold, we were not sorry to crowd round a large fire which some neighbouring Illyauts had assisted us in making. Mr. Lamb, who had strolled from our party to view the country, now returned, much pleased with the magnificence of the prospect. In ascending the mountain, he saw in a ravine near the top, some sheep's wool and some bones, and smelt a strong odour so like to that of a lion, that it accelerated his return, hearing that lions were often seen in this neighbourhood.

He passed in the plain a small horde of miserable-looking Illyauts, and was surrounded by the females of the party, who importuned him for alms till they had completely emptied his pockets; some of them seized him by the arm, others kissed his sleeve, and others, in soliciting charity, opened their robes in front, and exposed their bosoms and nearly the whole of their persons to view. This was practised by young and old, and might be intended to excite his commiseration by an appeal to their wretched condition. Such a freedom is always remarkable, when compared with the distance and fastidious reserve of Oriental females in general. Mr. Lamb says they were mostly good-looking, and all of them had very beautiful teeth.

While he was thus employed in resisting the importunities of the fair beggars, I was besieged by a merry old Illyaut woman, who brought us bread, eggs, and milk, for breakfast. She was not the least abashed by the strange appearance we must have presented,

but seemed determined to indulge her curiosity to the utmost; and examining us from head to foot, asked me numerous questions respecting different parts of my dress. She drew my sword, which was a staff regulation, and calling it a *mauli cubaub*, literally, “a roasting skewer,” burst out a laughing, not a little delighted with her own wit. She then proceeded to rummage my pockets, and was not satisfied till she had ascertained their separate uses.

The village of Serpool stands in a very picturesque situation, at the bottom of the N. extremity of the massy wall, with the stream of the Hulwan running in front. The caravanserai is a handsome building, with a small cupola, and the remains of an old serai stand at a little distance. This place is one of the most pleasing we have yet seen.

In the afternoon, as we were proceeding to examine some ancient sculptures, to which the natives attach much importance, we were overtaken by a number of Coords who seemed to be returning from work. We were rather surprized at the time, to observe many of these men salute us in the military mode, by putting their hands to their caps. We afterwards heard, that the troops of the Prince of Kermanshah had been drilled to the European system by some French officers in the service of His Highness. The short but bloody war between the late Prince and the Pasha of Bagdad having ceased with the death of the former, the greater portion of these troops had been allowed to return to their homes, till their services should be again required. The Coords we saw, formed a part of that army which, two years before, had caused the complete desolation which we witnessed on our march.

One of this party, a stout, fearless-looking ruffian, mounted on an

ass, rode up to me, and asked me if I had ever met Davoud Pasha? Upon my replying in the affirmative, he said, with a kind of savage glee, while his wild eye sparkled with triumph as he spoke: "When next you go to Davoud, tell him you have seen one who gave his baratollis (troops) a tremendous beating." This boast appeared to be peculiarly gratifying to his companions, who acknowledged its point by a loud roar of applause.

The sculptures are on the western face, on the limestone ridge, situated near a large gap, about three miles to the S. E. of our tents. We found the figure of a man, sculptured in low relief, dressed in a long robe, and holding in his hand what had the appearance of a club. This figure is about twenty feet from the bottom of the rock: the tradition of the country calls it a figure of David, and a small square chamber excavated at a considerable height above it, is shown as the place whence David saw Bathsheba, who lived in a neighbouring village, to the ruins of which they pointed. The chamber is called Dekāni Davoud (the shop of David), and the place is held in much respect by the natives, who make pilgrimages to it. We found a number of stones, having pieces of rag attached to them, and many little heaps of stones in the neighbourhood, both of which are common at the shrines of Eastern saints.

April 18.—We proceeded on our journey an hour after midnight. We passed through the stupendous mass of limestone that had so excited our admiration the preceding day, and which lost none of its grandeur from the distinct outline given by the moon, which was now shining in all her splendour. Having entered this chasm in the rock, we found ourselves in the beautiful valley in which we had seen myriads of cattle a few hours before; but these had all de-

parted, and nothing animate could be seen or heard to break in upon the dead silence and stillness of night. Upon entering the valley, we turned abruptly to the right, and continued our course along the base of the mountain. Numerous rills issued from it, and in their union formed a rapid stream, that traversed the valley to its whole extent. As we proceeded, the principal source of this water could be traced in the mountain, descending from a considerable height, to which the reflection of the moon gave the appearance of quicksilver, as it pursued its serpentine course along the valley.

At dawn we reached the bottom of the pass, leading over the loftiest range. The scenery at this place is inexpressibly grand; stupendous mountains rising with almost perpendicular abruptness, encompass a small valley, and form a basin, the sides of which are two thousand feet high, and broken into the wildest possible forms. We entered the gorge of this valley a little before dawn, and found it illumined with the fires of large parties of travellers in the bustle of preparation to commence the ascent by the first break of day: they were chiefly Illyauts marching with their families and flocks. By the time we reached the bottom of the pass, we were surrounded by numerous flocks of sheep and cattle; the latter were laden with the mat tents and other property of the wanderers. The ascent, which is two miles in length, occupies somewhat more than two hours. It is mostly very steep, and covered with loose stones, which greatly add to the difficulty and the danger of the ascent. The parapet wall appears to have been built when the road was originally constructed, and has been broken down in many places by the fall of masses of rock from above. As the present system of the government is not to expend money in works of public utility, the road is

in many places nearly impassable. We had to scramble over and between large fragments of rock, and we could not but admire the sagacity with which our horses succeeded in getting over obstacles which to us appeared insurmountable. Our situation was not free from danger, for in ascending we met a large caravan, which we had much difficulty in passing, and were several times nearly thrown down the precipice by the rear mules, which, laden with bulky articles of baggage, and unrestrained by driver or bridle, rushed impetuously past us to join those in advance.

Half way up the pass a military party was stationed, consisting of an officer and ten men, in the service of the Prince of Kermanshah. One could not but admire the judicious situation that had been selected at a period, perhaps, when the art of war was better understood in this country than it is at present; for here a handful of men might with ease dispute the passage of a large opposing army. The guard occupied a small square building, with an arched front of Grecian architecture, evidently of considerable antiquity. It is called Pa-ee Takht, (foot of the throne, which name is also given to the pass) and has probably been built originally for the purpose to which it is now appropriated. The natives of the country attribute it to their favourite Khosro, who, they tell us, constructed it as a place of repose after the fatigues of the chase. The guard claimed a present, which we gave on being informed by the muleteer that it was customary. We should have given it the more willingly, had we known at the time our obligations to them, for it was to the circumstance of their being stationed here, that the Calor banditti had for a while abandoned their hostile intentions towards us.

We at length arrived at the top of this stupendous pass, and

paused for a few moments to rest ourselves and cattle, and to enjoy the view which, combining so many magnificent objects, amply compensated for the labour of the ascent. From this height we felt an involuntary shudder in gazing at the yawning abyss beneath. The valley is covered with dwarf oaks, about twenty feet high, which, compared with the surrounding scenery, looked like underwood. The road, formed on the brink of the precipice, was still occupied by crowds of travellers, who, contrasted with the lofty scenery around them, resembled Lilliputians creeping along the narrow ridge at the imminent danger of their lives.

We descended a little after reaching the top of the pass. At the distance of two miles we reached the caravanserai of Suridage, adjoining a small Coordish village, whence we procured every necessary supply.

Immediately on our arrival, a farrier came to offer his services, which were much wanted, as our horses had suffered considerably since our arrival in the mountains, and particularly from this day's march. Indeed, there could scarcely have been a place better chosen than this for one of his calling.

We encamped close to the serai, in a small basin formed by precipitous mountains, rising from a thousand to fifteen hundred feet on all sides. The ruins of a small square fort, with four bastions, occupy a little mound in the centre of the basin; the tradition of which is, that it was built by the Guebres.

The caravanserai was built by the late Mohummud Ali Meerza, at an expense of three thousand tomauns. The whole of this range of mountains consists of limestone. We were strongly recommended by the muleteer to go to Kurund, the next stage, but we rejected his

advice, having no inclination for a hot ride in the sun ; and we soon found that his reason for wishing us to proceed, was his being obliged to purchase forage for his mules, from the dearth of pasture—every spot admitting of cultivation having been appropriated to tillage.

After breakfast, Mr. Hart went some distance to take a sketch of the pass. While he was thus employed, two of the guard accosted him, and told him that they had received orders to allow no traveller to wander alone in the mountains, on account of the numerous banditti that infest this neighbourhood : he was therefore obliged to put up his drawings, and the guard gave him safe conduct to the tents.

April 19.—The moon rose at two in the morning, and in a short time, our party was ready to start ; but our muleteer was so long in loading, that we did not leave our ground till near four. The delay was occasioned by a Persian family, who, availing themselves of the protection of our escort, had travelled with us from Bagdad. The party consisted of a man and three females, the eldest twelve years old, and the youngest seven ; the girls were carried in a pair of covered paniers, slung across a mule, the two youngest rode together. The morning was raw and cold, and we suffered much from the inconvenience, as the Persian party did not prepare for the march till we were ready to set out, and all the mules having to travel together, we were compelled to wait for them. By threatening the muleteer to withhold a present, we hoped to make him more alert for the future.

The road led through a narrow richly wooded valley, between two ranges of lofty mountains, rising abruptly, and terminating in rugged precipitous summits ; our course was, as usual, south-east, the general direction of this vast range of mountains. We continued

ascending over a very stony rugged road till day-break, when we reached an open level valley, running along the foot of a mountain, called by the natives, *Akooshaun*. It is still covered with snow on the north side, to a considerable distance from the summit.

The stream which waters the valley, takes its rise at the top of this pass, which is called *Surmy*. The ruins of a small fort, like that at the last stage, stand at the top of the pass, which it effectually commands ; this, the natives call, Mauli Giaour, the “ Property of the Infidel:” a Mahometan mode of assigning a date to any building prior to the birth of their prophet.

Two hours from the top of this pass, along a fine level road, brought us to the village of Kurund, where we encamped. We passed several small villages of low, flat-roofed houses, built on the northern side of the valley, at the bottom of the mountains, which shelter them from the north wind.

The entrance into this valley presented a more cheerful appearance than any place we had yet seen. Heretofore our road had lain through an almost uncultivated waste, though capable of tillage, as might be observed by the partial spaces covered with corn, surrounding the black tents of the Illyauts. This place was, for the most part, highly cultivated, and the present scene, as compared with the past, marked the difference between the pastoral and agricultural state.

Kurund has a southern exposure. It is built on the ascent of the mountain on the north side of the valley, with a ravine behind it, whence issues a fine stream of water, which runs through the centre of the town. It is surrounded with extensive orchards and vineyards, that produce the finest grapes in the whole of the Persian dominions. The gardens are kept in the neatest order, and every

thing indicates an advanced state of agriculture. It was the season for dressing the vines, which they cut close, and dispose in deep trenches. Our tents were pitched in a field, half a mile from the town. Immediately on our arrival, several men who were at work in an adjoining field, came up to us, and entered into conversation with us in the most uncereemonious manner, examining our dress and arms, and asking us numerous questions: a crowd surrounded our tents the whole of the day.

Just as we were sitting down to dinner, the Governor of the town paid us a visit. He was accompanied by his brother and attended by a numerous suite. He apologized for not coming before, having, he said, been hunting in the mountains, but that immediately on seeing our tents, he had hastened to welcome us to Kurund; he said that if he had sooner known of our arrival, he would have sent us some game, which is in great abundance in the hills. After these civilities, he asked us if we ever tasted spirits. Taking the hint, we told him that we seldom drank any ourselves, but had some at the disposal of our friends. While our servants were bringing in the spirits, the Governor's brother, who seemed to wish to prepare us for what was to follow, said by way of preface, "When a Mahometan drinks at all, it is not with moderation, as Europeans, but to a great excess;" an assertion we had not long reason to doubt. We filled a large breakfast cup with spirits, for the Governor, who hastily finished the draught, and held out the cup to be replenished; this he emptied in as short a time as the first, and again asked for another, but his brother prudently tried to dissuade him from another cup, reminding him that it was against the law. "It is true," replied the Governor, "that spirits are forbidden by our

law, but the Franks drink, and I like to follow such good examples," upon which he quaffed off his third bumper, to prove his admiration of European customs. His brother, who was aware of his failing, now nodded to him to depart, a hint he obeyed with some difficulty, from the effect of these quickly repeated potations. He was at last hoisted into the saddle, and had just power of speech left, to stutter his thanks for the liquor he had already drunk, and for two bottles of whisky, which we gave to his servants for him.

The success which the Governor met with in his visit, brought numbers of his family to us, with similar eulogiums on the excellence of English liquor; but as we had no intention of converting our tents into a drinking-booth, our visitors went away, disappointed to find they had reckoned without their host.

In the evening, we strolled out to look at the town, and went to a neighbouring burying-ground, situate on an eminence, to enjoy a finer view. Here we observed a crowd assembled round a tomb. Thinking there might be a funeral, we went a little nearer, and saw, not a dead body, but one in a state of almost suspended animation, that of no less a personage than our new acquaintance, the Governor, who, stretched out at his length, with his head reposing on a tombstone, and surrounded by his attendants, was lying totally insensible, from the potent effects of our whisky.

CHAPTER XV.

An Illyaut Breakfast—Beautiful Female—One of the King's Wives—Town of Harounabad—Beauty of the Women—Mahidesht—Escorted into Kermanshah—Description of the Town—An Order of Knighthood—Character of Mohumud Ali Meerza, the late Prince of Kermanshah—Anecdote of His Highness and Gaspar Khan—Visit from the Prince of Kermanshah.

April 20.—OUR scolding yesterday had due effect with the muleteer, and we got away very expeditiously. We commenced our march at the rising of the moon, by which our movements were regulated. The road was in general good, though in some parts exceedingly stony. We continued ascending till day-break, when we reached a small plain.

As the sun rose, it reflected its rays on a scene as beautiful as it was varied. On one side was a succession of thickly-wooded hills, exhibiting an almost endless variety of foliage; on the other an extensive plain, at the base of rude and craggy mountains, covered with the brightest verdure, the uniformity of which was relieved by the numerous black encampments of the Coordish wanderers, and by the occasional patches of cultivation observable in the immediate neighbourhood of their tents. The lofty Elwund,

raising its snowy head, seemed to peer in towering majesty over the surrounding landscape, and formed a beautiful back-ground to the scene; while a numerous caravan, tracing its way through the mazy windings of the road, added not a little to the living part of the picture.

The chief person of the caravan was adjusting his dress by a small looking-glass, and rode up to us with it in his hand. After the usual salutations, he enquired whence we came and what were our names, which he noted down in a memorandum-book. The caravan consisted of a number of families, apparently of good condition. Among them were some females, all closely veiled, riding in couples in covered baskets, with the exception of some few who rode astride on mules.

Since entering the Persian dominions we have been much struck with the marked civility of all ranks of people, who have always saluted us in passing. We passed numerous Illyaut encampments, scattered over the valley in every direction.

On this march we observed a number of carcase-shells, and broken gun-carriages, &c.

Pursuing our journey, we were addressed by some Illyauts, who, pointing to their tents, situate at some little distance, in the ascent of the mountains, invited us to breakfast with them. Messrs. Lamb and Hart, being much oppressed by the heat, declined the invitation; but Mr. Hamilton and myself, relying on their proverbial reverence for the rites of hospitality, went with them to their tents, taking with us only two servants.

The tents of these Coords were ranged in one long street, and disposed as booths at a fair: there appeared to be abundance of cattle,

it arranged in no kind of order; horses, cows, and sheep, being indiscriminately mixed with men, women, and children. We were drawn into a spacious tent. A carpet was spread for us, on a raised platform about three feet high, where, after taking off our capacious and travelling-boots, we were desired to seat ourselves in the manner most convenient. A breakfast of warm milk, eggs, and bread, was placed before us; and the whole camp turned out to see the Feringhees at their meal, which, to amuse them, we ate in the English fashion.

Delighted as all around us appeared to be with the novelty of our costume, we were not less gratified than they, in beholding the varied group of heads, forming an amphitheatre in front of us; the children standing in the foreground, behind them the women, and, towering over all, the bearded faces of the men, exhibiting a collection of countenances lighted up with a variety of expression, in which curiosity was predominant.

Our hosts talked much of the excellent sporting the mountains afforded. I asked them if they busied themselves much in cultivating the land; to which they replied, that they only tilled just sufficient for their own immediate wants. Mr. Hamilton's servant, Rahumud Ali, who never lost an opportunity of becoming the spokesman, finished the sentence by saying, "What do they care for cultivation, when their principal trade is robbery?" a remark to which the Coords smilingly nodded assent.

Our attention to the general group was suddenly arrested by the appearance of a young female, about seventeen years of age; whom we thought the most beautiful woman we had ever seen. She was leaning against the pole of the tent, with her head sup-

ported by her left arm, and was gazing at us with the most fixed attention: her jet black hair flowed about her in unconfined luxuriance; the brilliancy of her eyes, heightened by the dark stain of the *surmeh*, seemed riveted with a curiosity not the less gratifying to us from knowing that we excited it; her half-closed mouth displayed teeth of the most regular form and perfect whiteness. Her person, almost entirely exposed by the opening of her loose shirt, (the only covering she wore,) displayed a form of the most perfect symmetry: no sculptor could do justice to such a model.

We reached Harounabad in half an hour's ride, crossed a small bridge, and found our tents ready pitched on the opposite side, near the bank of a rapid stream.

We were advised most strongly by the inhabitants of the town to lodge in the caravanserai, on account of the numerous hordes of Illyauts, who, they said, would be likely to attack us in the night. As we were more in dread of vermin than of robbers, we said that we preferred remaining where we were, as we were well able to protect ourselves—a boast we thought it necessary frequently to repeat, thinking our safety depended considerably on confirming these banditti in the high notions we knew they entertained of European prowess.

In the course of the morning, one of the *khanums*, wives of the King of Persia, encamped close to us: she had just arrived from Tabriz, the court of Abbas Meerza, the Prince Royal of Persia, and was proceeding to Kerbela on a pilgrimage. She had only three small tents; her establishment, though inferior to ours, was sufficiently large for one of fifteen hundred partakers of the royal bed. As the lady belonged to the court of the Prince Royal of

Persia, who has always been very attentive to our countrymen, we sent to inform her that we were going to Tabriz, and should be happy to execute any commission with which she might honour us. This message produced a visit from two of the principal persons with her; and shortly after, her confidential eunuch came to thank us for our civility. He was a handsome young man of about two and twenty, very lively, and remarkably courteous in his manners; he stayed for about a quarter of an hour; and spoke in very high terms of our countrymen at Tabriz, particularly Dr. Cormick, the prince's physician, who is deservedly a favourite, not only with the Persians, but with all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance. The eunuch spoke also with much friendship of our late shipmate, Futteh Ali Khan, who, to have merited the encomiums bestowed on him, must have behaved much better at Tabriz as the dependant of a prince, than in India, when a prince himself.

Before dusk, we strolled into the town, and, as usual, collected a crowd about us: we were by this time so accustomed to the gaze of the inhabitants, that we rather courted communication than otherwise, with a view to lose no opportunity of becoming acquainted with the disposition and habits of the people. We found them very civil, and instead of objecting to our visit, they seemed much pleased with us for observing them. The women were without veils, and for the most part occupied in making those beautiful carpets, for which this country is so celebrated. Many of these were offered us as presents; a mode adopted in the East for disposing of goods for double their value, inasmuch as those who tender the gift expect a sum in return, correspondent to the consequence they are pleased to assign the party to whom they make the offering.

Harounabad is built on a gradual slope ; the houses are very low, with flat connecting roofs, in successive lines one above the other : as the backs are level with the ground, the principal communication is in many places along the roofs, and we were frequently surprised in finding ourselves walking on the tops of inhabited dwellings, when we thought we were traversing the solid ground.

This town, as its name implies, was formerly a residence of the famous Caliph Haroun, but we could not trace any remains of a palace fit to receive so magnificent a monarch. The town is small, and may contain about a thousand souls. It is remarkable for the beauty of its women, probably on account of the nearly perpetual Spring of the climate. To judge from some we saw washing clothes in the river, the fame of this place has not been ill bestowed. Independent, therefore, of the temperature of Harounabad, the luxuriant beauty of the women might have induced so gay a monarch to take up his occasional abode in this mountainous retreat.

April 21.—We left Harounabad at three in the morning ; and continued ascending, for the first four hours, a circuitous road : we afterwards passed through two deep basins formed by the surrounding mountains, having a considerable descent to the East. At ten o'clock we reached Mahidesht, situate in an extensive plain of an oval form, with numerous small villages scattered over it. The snow was still lying on the surrounding hills.

Notwithstanding our dislike to a caravanserai, we were obliged to take up our quarters there, as well on account of the robbers, who were said to be very numerous, as that there was no encamping ground in the vicinity. We established ourselves over the gateway, the post of honour in these buildings. By this arrangement we

were more commodiously accommodated, and avoided the necessity of coming in contact with the numerous badly embalmed corpses, with which the other parts of the caravanserai were promiscuously strewed.

As we were only one stage from Kermanshah, we sent forward by a servant the letters with which we had been entrusted: one was from Aga Saikais to Meerza Ahedy, the minister of war to the prince; and the others from the Chief of artillery to Messieurs Court and De Veaux, two French officers in the service of his Highness. With the recollection of the inconveniences attendant on the hospitality of the British agent, we sent to beg that we might either be allowed to occupy a vacant house, or to pitch our tents in any of the gardens adjoining the town.

April 22.—At three this morning we started for Kermanshah, distant from the caravanserai fourteen miles. The plain of Mahidesht is ten miles in breadth, four of which we traversed yesterday, and the remaining six this morning. Thence, after ascending for a little way, we went through a small valley between two mountains.

The remainder of the road led over a succession of low hills. The morning was very fine. In rounding a mountain, we came somewhat suddenly in sight of the smiling and fruitful valley of Kermanshah; a numerous caravan of pilgrims passed us, on its road to Kerbela.

Three miles from the town, as we were descending a hill, we saw marshalled at a short distance a gay party on horseback, equipped in the Persian dress. As soon as we came in sight, they met us at full speed: as they approached, two of the party galloped forward and threw the jereed. It was easy to perceive that this gaily caparisoned

cavalcade had assembled in compliment to us. We were for a moment in doubt who they were; for we looked in vain for the European costume: our conjectures were soon set at rest by one of the company, with a long beard, saluting us in the European military fashion, and in the French language, bidding us welcome to Kermanshah. The party consisted of the European residents of the city, together with their united trains of servants and followers: of these there were Messieurs De Veaux and Court, the two French officers, to whom we had letters; two Italians; and another person, calling himself a Spaniard, of whom more hereafter.

We did not come within sight of the town till we had entered a deep and broad ravine, at the top of which it is situated. Kermanshah is encompassed with gardens, and decked with numerous small kiosks (pleasure-houses). It is laid out in walks, canals, and reservoirs of water, all of which have a picturesque effect on the approach. The Kurasou, a river, or rather a mountain torrent, runs through the centre of the town: the overflowing of its banks, which occasionally happens, is attended with very serious injury. Three years ago an event of this description occurred, in which the lower parts of the town and a considerable portion of the inhabitants were entirely swept away. We were conducted by Messieurs Court and De Veaux to their house, and pressed so much to remain there during our stay, that we could not help yielding to their solicitations, though opposed to the resolution we had formed of not becoming the guests of any one. Soon after our arrival, Hassan Khan, the governor, came on the part of the Prince to tell us that a house had been prepared for our reception, and that his Highness desired we would consider ourselves as his guests; an invitation we

declined, with due acknowledgments for the Prince's hospitality and condescension.

We passed the remainder of the morning in conversation with our new acquaintances, who related many interesting particulars of the late war with the Pasha of Bagdad, in which they appear to have borne a very conspicuous part. These gentlemen and the Spanish officer, Senor Oms, are all *khans* (lords) of Persia, and knights of the lion and sun, as well as of another order, the insignia of which are a star, with the curious device of two lions fighting for the Persian crown. This order was instituted by the king's eldest son, Mohumud Ali Meerza (the late prince governor of this country), and derives its origin from the following circumstance :—

Some years since, the present King, in conformity to one of the most ancient laws of Persia,* assembled his sons for the purpose of nominating a successor to the throne, on the event of his death. Abbas Meerza, the king's second son, was promised this high dignity. All the princes present bowed in obedience to the declaration of the royal will, with the exception of Mohumud Ali Meerza, who alone stood erect. Unawed by the presence of his father and sovereign, he refused to acknowledge the decree. His resistance to the royal mandate was conveyed in the following bold and energetic language : “ May God preserve the King of Kings ; but if my brother and myself should have the misfortune to survive your Majesty,” (and he half unsheathed his sword as he finished the sentence,) “ *this* shall decide the accession to the throne.” The two warlike brothers nod-

* In the same manner Cyrus, previous to his expedition against the Massagetae, appointed Cambyses his successor to the Persian throne.

ded mutual defiance, and were, up to the period of Mohumud Ali's death, open and avowed enemies.

On the return of the French officers from some successful expedition against the Turks, they asked the Prince to institute some order of knighthood as a reward for their services. Mohumud Ali acceded; and not forgetting his oath of enmity to his brother, founded an order having the appropriate device of two lions fighting for the crown, in allusion to the circumstance related. It is remarkable that these insignia of opposition to the despotic will of the sovereign were openly sanctioned by the King himself; while Mohumud Ali, heretofore ignorant of the value attached to ribands in Europe, was surprised and gratified to find that his European auxiliaries were content with so cheap a remuneration for their many and important services.

Mohumud Ali is generally considered to have been the most war-like prince of the present (kajar) dynasty. His memory is held in the highest veneration by the tribes over whom he ruled. A man who could lead his followers to conquest and plunder must have been acceptable to these wild mountaineers, who had inherited a thirst for rapine from a long line of predatory ancestors. The French officers too are equally enthusiastic with the Coords in praise of their late commander; his daring spirit appearing to have found a congenial feeling in men whose love of military adventure has made war the highest enjoyment of life. In 1814, when the reverses of Napoleon appeared to have completely closed the prospects of a soldier in Europe, they sought and found in the troubled regions of the East an ample field for the gratification of their darling passion.

As mention has been incidentally made of the pursuits of these

officers, it may not be amiss to state a fact, perhaps not generally known, that a number of military men, of different nations of Europe, are at this moment wandering over Asia, offering their services to the Asiatic princes. Seven or eight European officers were at one time employed in this remote province (Kermanshah), the greater part of whom are now dispersed over the East. To what point they have shaped their course, Messrs. Court and De Veaux could give us no account, though of themselves, their past history, and their future prospects, they scrupled not to talk in the most unreserved manner. They had at one time, they said, intended to have gone up the Indus, for the purpose of offering their services to an Indian prince, who, they understood, wanted European officers to conduct his forces against the English; but they had been induced to abandon their design on hearing of the great impediments likely to be thrown in their way by our Indian government.

Among other anecdotes, our hosts related one respecting the late prince and our Bagdad acquaintance Gaspar Khan, which may be worth inserting, as it serves to illustrate a mode of punishment common at Kermanshah—of burying a man alive, with his head downwards and his legs in the air.

A short time ago, Gaspar Khan, who is employed by the King in commercial transactions, was passing from the court of Persia through Kermanshah, where he was received with much civility by Mohumud Ali Meerza, who took him round one of his gardens. In the course of the walk, his Highness asked Gaspar, if the garden was not deficient in something. The Khan, as in duty bound, replied, that the garden was quite perfect, and required no addition. Mohumud Ali replied, “ Yes, there is a tree that I have long wanted :

it is called Gaspar Khan, and it shall be planted immediately." Then changing his tone, he said, " You have been prejudicing the King's mind against me, so prepare for instant death." The Khan begged hard for life, which the fear of ill treating a king's agent most probably induced him to grant.

At 12 o'clock, the Persian hour of morning repast, we were summoned to a plentiful meal, combining a happy mixture of European and Asiatic cookery. We had neither chairs nor tables, the cloth being spread on the floor, and we seated in the oriental fashion. Our distress in this uneasy posture presented a singularly striking contrast to the obvious comfort enjoyed by our hosts, to whose muscles habit had given a flexibility certainly unknown to ours. The feast was seasoned by some excellent wine, made from the fine grapes of the neighbourhood, which was cooled by frozen snow brought from the mountain, the silver summit of which was visible from the apartment. A long abstinence from wine had made us more than usually subject to the powerful influence of the generous beverage; and after a few quickly repeated bumpers, our heads felt the effect of the potations so strongly, as to suggest the advantage, if not the absolute necessity, of taking a siesta.

April 23.—We went this morning to pay our respects to Mohumud Hosein Meerza, the prince governor. His Highness seemed disposed to treat us with more than ordinary civility; for he told the French officers that he should allow us to be seated in his presence, and, as this is an honour never granted to any of his court, he would advise them not to be present at the interview. These preliminaries settled, we set out in full uniform to the palace, where we found Hassan Khan, the governor, in waiting to conduct us to the Prince.

We passed, in our way to the hall of audience, through a number of passages, not remarkable for cleanliness, and arrived at an oblong court, in the centre of which a fountain played. At the top of this court, the Prince was seated near an open window. At stated intervals, the Governor made profound obeisances ; but as every thing military is in vogue in this country, we saluted his Highness merely by putting our hands to our hats. In conformity to Persian etiquette, he took no notice of the compliment, and even seemed to be unconscious of our presence. On our nearer approach, he bade us welcome ; so leaving our slippers in the court, we entered the hall ; and, following the directions of the Governor, seated ourselves near the doorway.

A few minutes before our interview, Monsieur De Veaux had been with the Prince, to receive his instructions relative to the issue of some clothing to those troops who were to escort the body of his father to Meshed Ali ; and also, respecting some other matters connected with the order of the funeral from Kermanshah, a ceremony which was to take place in two days. As the inspection of these arrangements was made in the public square, the Prince thought it necessary to play the mourner on the occasion. No sooner did he come in sight of the coffin which contained the remains of his father, than he threw off his cap, covered his head with ashes, and, rolling himself on the ground, bitterly bewailed the loss of so illustrious a prince and so good a father. Having performed this ceremonial of grief with all the usual Eastern decorum, he re-adjusted his cap, clothed himself in a scarlet robe, and in the short interval between the inspection and our visit, laid down the part of the mourner, and re-assumed that of the prince, so speedily indeed, that if we had

not had a peep behind the curtain, we could not have believed that one actor could so speedily have performed two such different parts.

His Highness, hearing I spoke Persian, put a number of questions, with such a rapidity that I often felt puzzled to give suitable answers. His first interrogatories were, why we had not accepted his hospitality, and whether we were satisfied with the Governor, at the same time casting an inquisitive glance at that personage. By a prompt answer in the affirmative, I in all probability saved the soles of the Governor's feet from the bastinado, a cheap compliment, and, though at the expense of as high a functionary, not unusually conferred on a guest whom an Eastern prince "delighteth to honour." Having enquired our respective ages, he wished to know the numbers of our wives and children; but when he found we were totally unprovided in both these necessities of life, he urged us all to marry the moment we returned to Europe. As he repeated this injunction often, I thought to escape from the oppressiveness of his reiterated advice by briefly observing, that in our country we were deemed too young to enter on so serious a state as matrimony. I could not have stumbled on a more inappropriate excuse. His Highness immediately informed us, that though younger by three years than either Mr. Hart or myself, he had been married some years, and, as I afterwards heard, had eighteen wives, a proportionate number of children, and was daily adding to both these branches of his establishment. The last, though, in his opinion, not the least important observation of this sapient Prince, was directed to the scantiness of hair which our faces exhibited, each of us having only mustaches, which are indispensable in this country; but this scanty allowance not corresponding with his idea of the toilette, he strongly

urged our wearing long beards, at the same time, with much complacency, stroking his own, which, for a youth of two and twenty, was of most precocious growth. I endeavoured to apologize for our want of whiskers by observing, that it was not the fashion of our country; though I should have been scarcely justified in urging such a plea, had I seen the present "men about town," whose hairy cheeks would almost excite the envy of the great Shah himself.

CHAPTER XVI.

Three Arab Visitors—A Chieftain—An Astrologer—A Moolah—Ancient Sculptures at Tauk Bostaun—Chosroes, Shereen, and Furhaud—Persian Dance—Equestrian Evolutions—Turcoman breed of Horses—Persian mode of clearing the way for a great Man—Funeral Procession of Mohumud Ali Meerza—The Moolahi Bashee—Suleiman Khan Kuruzungeer, and the Sect of Illahi.

ON returning to our quarters, we found Messieurs Court and De Veaux seated in the garden, in company with three Arabs, all of whom had lately fled for protection from the present Pasha of Bagdad.

One of these was the young Arab Chieftain, to whom we were indebted for our information respecting the Calor banditti. This young man's father had, a few months back, with only forty men, defended a fortress against Davoud Pasha, but had ultimately been induced to surrender, on a solemn assurance of protection. In the interview that followed the capitulation, the Pasha, unmindful of his promise, caused his head to be struck off, and packed up in a parcel, as a present to the Grand Signior, to adorn one of the spikes at Constantinople.

The second victim of oppression, in some measure, deserved his

fate. He was, by profession, an astrologer, and might have pursued his divinations undisturbed, had he not interfered in the domestic concerns of Davoud Pasha, a man little likely to allow such conduct to pass with impunity. It appears that one of the Pasha's wives, who had for a time held a considerable sway over his affections, was obliged to resign it in favour of some more youthful beauty. The discarded lady, in a fit of jealousy, applied to this dealer in occult sciences to exert his supernatural influence, either in alienating the affection of Davoud from her rival, or in sowing dissension amongst the whole establishment, in revenge for her neglected charms. Whether by magic influence or not, certain it is, he so far succeeded in the latter request, that he set the whole haram in an uproar. The Pasha, on discovering the destroyer of his peace, immediately issued orders for his apprehension. A timely flight saved the head of the Magician, though he left behind him property to the amount of ten thousand piasters, which has, in all probability, consoled the Pasha in his domestic afflictions.

The third person in this group had no claims whatever on our commiseration. His name was Moolah Ali, an Arab, though he wore the Persian dress; one with whom murder and every other crime had long been familiar. There was nothing, however, in his appearance to justify this supposition, nor in his features could there be distinguished any of those marks with which our romance-writers are wont to stamp the countenance of a murderer. On the contrary, his mild eye beamed with intelligence when he spoke, and his mouth was lighted up with so pleasing a smile, that the diabolical matter of his speech was often lost in attending to the pleasing manner of his delivery. Like many an Asiatic I have seen, his

countenance was so entirely at variance with his conduct, as to set at nought all the boasted science of a physiognomist; his manners were remarkably captivating, and possessed that easy polish for which the natives of these countries are so remarkable. His conscience never troubled him with "air-drawn daggers;" he had a real one in his girdle, to be used as inclination prompted.

Not many weeks before we saw this Moolah, he was one of the principal persons of Mendali, a Turkish town near the frontier. In those days he was the bosom friend of Davoud Pasha, "his best of cut-throats" and most willing instrument of assassination. It was during his intimacy with the Pasha that, on the day of some religious festival, he invited sixteen persons to a feast, and placing a confidential agent between each guest, caused every one of them to be put to death, himself giving the signal of slaughter by plunging a dagger into the breast of the person beside him. Such feats as these we may find in the histories of savage countries. Among all barbarians, the virtue of hospitality, so vaunted, has rarely, if ever, withstood the excitement of revenge or avarice.

It is natural to suppose, that a friendship between two such persons as the Moolah and the Pasha, cemented as it was by guilt, could not be of long duration; accordingly we soon find these brethren in iniquity the most deadly foes; each beginning to exercise on the kindred, what he could not effect on the head of the family. Seventy of the Moolah's relations have fallen victims to the revenge of the Pasha; his father is chained in a prison in Bagdad, and ten thousand piasters are set upon his own head. In the mean time, he has not been backward in retaliation. Leaving the town of Mendali, attended by several of his tribe, he sallied forth into the Desert, attacked the Turkish caravans, and (to use his own expression) struck off, at every opportunity,

the heads of all those wearing turbans.* The women of the party fell victims to the licentious passions of himself and followers, and other brutal excesses were committed by these ruffians, that would scarcely be credited in our own country.

Observing us listen with much interest to this detail of crime, and taking for granted that our attention was a mark of sympathy, he said, with an air of gratitude, "How kind it is of you to enter so warmly into my pursuits!"

During our stay at Kermanshah we were in daily intercourse with this accomplished villain, who upon most subjects possessed a degree of information far beyond the generality of his countrymen. Of his deeds and projects he always spoke with the most unblushing effrontery, telling us that his schemes of plunder were only suspended till the remains of Mohumud Ali Meerza should be safely deposited in the holy burying-ground. Any act of hostility committed by him while a retainer of the court, would probably be retaliated by some insult to the corpse; and this would make the Prince his enemy, with whom it was so much his interest to keep on good terms; "but," added he, "that business once settled, Allah grant that the Pasha may fall into my hands, and then I will tear out his heart and drink his blood." On our first salutation in a morning he would always repeat the words, "Inshallah Pasha," (God willing, the Pasha,) supplying the rest of the sentence by significantly passing his finger across his throat.†

We one day asked the Moolah how he generally deprived his enemies of life? "That," replied he, "is as I can catch them. Some I have killed in battle, others I have stabbed sleeping."

* The turban distinguishes the Turks from the Persians, who wear sheepskin caps.

† In allusion to the Turkish form of passing a sentence of death on a criminal.

Another time we had the curiosity to examine his pistols, which, we had often remarked, were studded with several red nails. On enquiring the reason, he told us that each nail was to commemorate the death of some enemy who had fallen by that weapon.

April 25.—We went this morning to examine the celebrated ancient sculptures in this neighbourhood, at a place called Tauk Bostaun, distant six miles from the town. We paid another visit to these antiquities the day before our departure from Kermanshah. They are situated in two recesses, excavated in the west side of the mountain, the principal of which is twenty-four feet seven inches wide, and twenty feet four inches deep. The entrance is a handsome semicircular arch, ornamented with well-executed sculpture. The pillars to the spring of the arch have elegant flower ornaments in pannels. Above these, on each side, are winged female figures, in Grecian drapery, holding in their right hands, which are stretched towards each other, circular fillets of jewels, and in their left, bowls of an Etruscan shape, apparently containing wreaths of flowers, similar to what are used in India on occasions of ceremony. These figures are dressed in loose flowing robes, with jackets fitting close to the body, distinctly displaying the upper part of the shape: round the waist of the entire figure is a band, fastened with a clasp of jewels. The features appeared to be Abyssinian; the hair is in regular curls on each side of the face. Between these figures, on the top of the arch, is a winged crescent; the sides of the recess are wholly covered with sculptures. Facing the entrance is a colossal figure on horseback, in such high relief, that only the left shoulder of the horse and horseman adhere to the rock. This is said to be Rustam, the most celebrated hero of Persian romance. He is clad in chain armour,

similar to that worn by English warriors in the early times of the Crusades, and by the Coords of the present day. He carries in the right hand a poised spear; in the left, a circular shield; and a quiver of arrows are bound on the right thigh. The horse is richly caparisoned, after the manner common in India at this time. The right hand of Rustam is broken, as are part of the head, and the off hind-leg of the horse.

Immediately above the statue are three figures, dressed in rich robes, said to be King Khosro, or Chosroes, with his wife, Shereen, on his right, and her lover, Furhaud, on his left hand. Both these last have circular wreaths in their right hands, which they are holding up to Chosroes, whose right hand is stretched to receive them from Furhaud, and whose left rests on a large double-handed sword. On the head costume of Chosroes is a sort of ball, observable on the coins of the Sassanian kings. Shereen appears to be holding an Etruscan pitcher, from which a fluid is issuing, apparently in the act of libation. This is thought to have some allusion to the neighbouring stream. The faces of these figures were mutilated by order of Nadir Shah, who wished to destroy the whole group. On each side of the recess, are two fluted pillars with flowered capitals, somewhat resembling the Corinthian order. On the right side of the recess is the representation of a boar-hunt with elephants, in which are several hundred figures of men, women, and animals. This side exhibits the appearance of a large jungle full of game. In the centre is a lake, on the surface of which are observed swans and four boats. In the two largest boats are two figures of a size superior to the others, and armed with a bow, an eastern mark of sovereignty. The two monarchs are attended with a band of female harpers. The boats are

of a peculiar construction, dissimilar to any I have seen in these countries, but propelled, after the ancient as well as modern manner, by two men, one at the prow, and the other at the stern. Two sides of the jungle are lined with men on elephants, which animals (as is common in Indian boar-hunting) appear to be driving them towards the sportsmen, who with their bows and arrows seem to do considerable execution. A small portion towards the corner is appropriated to those men and elephants disposing of the dead game. The human figures here are in the Grecian costume. On the opposite side to this group is a deer-hunt, which evidently was never finished. In this portion there are three royal personages mounted on horseback, all armed with bows; but one appears of superior rank to the others, as he has a parasol held over his head. On the top, at this side, is a band of musicians playing on various instruments, amongst which may be recognized the tamtam, the trumpet, the harp, and the flute.

I cannot close the description of this beautiful specimen of ancient workmanship without giving a short account of a more modern production of the chisel, which was intended to eclipse the ancient sculpture.

Above the boar-hunt, executed in very high relief, are three figures of colossal stature, but executed with true Persian disregard to symmetry or proportion. They are intended to represent the late Prince Mohumud Ali Meerza, his son the present Governor of Kermanshah, and the Khojahi Bashee (chief of the eunuchs), to whom the arts are indebted for this superlative piece of barbarous sculpture.

The figures are clothed in the full costume of the Persian court, the princes wearing their royal tiaras, and the chief of the eunuchs himself, in his dress of state, standing by in attendance. This person-

age, being of opinion that the mere stone gave too faint a delineation of real life, resolved to press into the service of statuary, her sister Painting. The sculpture is daubed and gilded in such a manner, as to eclipse, in the opinion of the natives, the more unpretending performance of the ancients.

A short distance to the left of this excavation is situated the second. In it are two figures holding in their hands a circular wreath: a figure stands behind that on the right with a bâton in his hand, and is urging or enforcing some counsel. The two figures appear to be cementing a treaty of peace over the body of a fallen enemy. On each side of the figures is an inscription in the ancient Persic language, which has been translated by M. de Sacy to the following effect: "This is the figure of the adorer of Ormusd, the excellent Shapoor, King of Kings of Iran and Aniran, sprung from the celestial race of Gods, son of the adorer of Ormusd, of the excellent Hoomuz, King of Kings of Iran and Aniran, of the celestial race of Gods, grandson of the excellent Narses, King of Kings."

On the other side, the words are—"This is the figure of the adorer of Ormusd, the excellent Baraham, King of Kings of Iran and Aniran, sprung from the celestial race of Gods, son of the adorer of Ormusd, of the excellent Shapoor, King of Kings of Iran and Aniran, of the celestial race of Gods, grandson of the excellent Ormuz, King of Kings."

These inscriptions fix almost precisely the æra of this excavation, and tend in some degree to give a date to the larger portion of the sculptures. The inscription to the right alludes to Shapoor, a king of the Sassanian dynasty, who died in the latter end of the fourth century: that to the left is to Baraham the Fourth, who, succeeding his elder

brother, Shapoor the Third, was surnamed Kermanshah (Shah or King of Kerman), from having formerly been Viceroy of that province :—by him the city of Kermanshah was founded.

These two excavations appear to be so related to each other, that they may be considered as belonging to the same dynasty of kings : but I should be inclined to consider them as the productions of different periods, because the principal excavation, in which there is no inscription, is executed in a style infinitely superior to the other. Both are so much beyond the workmanship of the native artists in the Sassanian æra, that they must be productions of Grecian sculptors, many of whom were retained in the Persian court after the overthrow of the Seleucian dynasty in the East. The ball, or globular appearance observable in the head costume of the figures, in both excavations, belongs evidently to the race of the Sassanidæ, as may be seen by referring to the coins of that race of kings.

The larger excavation is said to have been made in the reign of the celebrated Chosroes, or Khosro Puviz, as he is called in Persian history ; and, in the absence of more authentic information, I see no reason to doubt the accuracy of the tradition, as far as regards the period of the sculpture. Our guides attribute it to Furhaud, an Indian prince, who, they say, became so enamoured of the beautiful Shereen, that, unable to conquer his passion, he communicated the state of his feelings to her husband, Chosroes, and modestly requested that the king would yield up his lovely wife. Strange to say, though Chosroes was the most uxorious husband that ever flourished in Persian story, so great was his friendship for the young prince, that he consented to grant him his request, accompanied with this single condition, that, in testimony of his disinterested friendship, Furhaud would produce these specimens of art which I have endeavoured to describe.

There is a striking similitude in this relation and that of *La Nouvelle Heloise*. Here, as in the French tale, the love of Furhaud for this Oriental Julie is sanctioned by the husband. A slight discrepancy, however, occurs in this story, which puts in a much more generous light the sacrifice of the Persian, than that of the Swiss husband, Monsieur de Wolmar, who acquiesced in the affection of St. Preux for his lady, upon the understanding that it was to be conducted with the strictest regard to Platonic rules; while Chosroes, ignorant that such an individual, or his doctrine, ever existed, or doubtful of its efficacy, imposed only the conditions I have stated, before he would consent to resign the partner of his bosom to the arms of his friend.

The neighbourhood of the excavations is held in high veneration by the natives, as having been the retreat of Hajee Ibrahim Shah Zada, a royal hermit of great sanctity. A small low hut was pointed out to us as his cell. In the interior we saw a stone with a Cufic inscription. At a short distance were large heaps of stones, said to be the remains of an ancient city and temple of fire worshippers, but we could gain no further information respecting them.

After visiting the sculptures we retired to a tent, where we found a Persian breakfast prepared for us by Senor Oms. During the meal, a Persian dance was exhibited. The performer was supposed to personate a bride, though, in conformity to the depraved taste of the country, a boy twelve years old was her representative. Three musicians, with instruments more capable of making noise than producing melody, beat time to the dancer, whose motions were neither decent nor graceful, though our host and his native visitors seemed enraptured with the performance, and evinced their approbation by loud shouts of

encouragement and clapping their hands. A hunch-backed player on the tambourine got so drunk that he was unable to proceed; so he was hoisted on a horse, behind one of the servants, and with his departure ended this disgusting performance.

We were witnesses to a more pleasing exhibition, in returning homeward: a mounted servant of Nasir Ali Meerza, one of the Prince's brothers, went past us at full gallop, and vaulting completely over the high peak of his Persian saddle, seated himself on the horse's neck, with his face towards its tail; then seizing his gun, which was slung at his back, he threw down his cap and fired at it; the horse all the time going at full speed over uneven ground, strewn with loose stones and pieces of rock. The horse this man rode was of the Turcoman breed, which is here preferred to the Arabian. It is much taller than the Arab, standing generally from fifteen to sixteen hands; and in comparison with that beautiful animal appears to great disadvantage, both with respect to symmetry, and promise of strength or action. It has little bone, long legs, a spare carcase, and a large head out of all proportion with its body. Notwithstanding this unpromising appearance, the Turcoman is said to be capable of enduring very great fatigue, and the facility with which it ascends the most rugged eminences is astonishing. The plains in the neighbourhood of Kermanshah are supposed to be the same as those mentioned by Arrian* and Herodotus, as the country of the Nissei, famous for its breed of horses. Here, according to Herodotus, one hundred and fifty thousand horses were accustomed to graze; but Arrian says that there were only five thousand when Alexander the Great came here, nearly all the rest having been stolen away. As there is no

* Arrian, Lib. 7, cap. 13.

tale, however fabulous, in the Arabian Nights that has not some reference or allusion to reality, the fame of the cattle of this neighbourhood may have suggested to the mind of the author the story of the Winged Horse of Coordistan.

April 26.—The French officers accompanied us this morning on horseback, to make a survey of the town. We were attended by a considerable number of servants, armed with sticks, who led us through a succession of narrow streets, and at length brought us into the bazaar, which was at that time exceedingly crowded: here we were shocked to observe the use to which these batons were applied. Whenever our progress was in the least impeded by the crowd, the servants called out, “Make way for the Gentlemen!” and enforced their desire with the unremitting application of the stick, regardless of whom they struck, or where the blows fell. As we had reason to believe that this barbarous ceremony of Oriental despotism was intended as a compliment to us, we earnestly begged that the practice might be dispensed with on our account, as we could not but feel distressed at being the innocent instruments of such wanton barbarity. Our hosts ridiculed our scruples, upon the plea that it was the custom of the country, and our precursors continued to belabour the unresisting multitude as before. In the course of the ride, our consequence suffered a slight interruption. In turning one of the corners of the bazaar, we came suddenly on the retinue of the young Prince Tamas (Thomas) Meerza, governor of Hamadun, and a brother of Mohumud Hosein Meerza, who were pursuing the same measures to clear the way for his Highness; but so blind was the zeal of our lictors for the consequence of their masters, that the presence of royalty failed to arrest their attention, and the foremost of the Prince’s

attendants were favoured by a few marks of their unsparing regard. Our servants were thunderstruck on discovering their error; but our manifestations of respect to the Prince superseded the necessity of an explanation. The passengers enjoyed a momentary truce from this rencontre; the operation of clubs on both sides were suspended for the time; but the parties had no sooner got clear of each other, than hostilities upon the unfortunate crowd were again commenced with redoubled vigour.

April 27.—For the last two days, guns had been fired at intervals, preparatory to the removal of the late Prince's corpse for interment at Meshed Ali. This morning being appointed for the setting out of the *cortège*, we put crape on our left arms and sword-hilts, and mounting our horses, set off at an early hour, anxious to witness the novel ceremony of a Prince's funeral procession two years after his decease.

As our eagerness to be in time brought us out much sooner than was necessary, we dismounted in a garden near the road-side, and whiled away a couple of hours in observing the various chatting parties around us, all dressed in black, their merry faces being somewhat curiously contrasted with their mournful garb.

Our attention to these groups was diverted by the appearance of a blind horseman of about sixty years of age; he was attended by a train of servants, one of whom held the rein of his bridle: upon inquiry we learned that he was a counsellor of the Prince's, by name Hassan Khan, to which was added the epithet of Khoord (the Blind), to distinguish him from the numerous courtiers of the same name.

In the brief interval of anarchy that, according to custom, followed the death of the late King,—Hassan Khan, at the head of what forces

he could collect, became a competitor for the crown ; but being conquered, was deprived of sight by order of his more successful rival.

A sudden discharge of cannon, followed by loud shrieks and lamentations, announced to us that the Prince had left the palace with the body of his father. We took our station near the gates of the town, ready to fall in with the procession. Near this place, riding a handsome charger, was Nasir Ali Meerza, the youngest son of the late Prince, a pretty boy of about five years old. His little Highness was attended by a pigmy train of courtiers of his own age and size, who seemed as well versed in the art of rendering homage, as their little lord and master was in receiving it; as for himself, he appeared to be quite indifferent either to the noise of the crowd or the occasion of it, all the time preserving a serious and dignified demeanour; and, as we approached him, he returned our salute with the easy air of one long accustomed to this sort of attention. But—little Highnesses are always great people. The Duc de Bourdeaux, a boy of the same age as the young Persian, when he reviewed his troops, was graciously pleased to compliment them on their skill in military evolutions; and the King of Rome, just escaped from the go-cart, reviewed the Marshals of France with that precocious dignity so inherent in royal progenies.

In the mean while the procession issued slowly out of the town, led by the artisans: each craft had with it a black banner, and a horse equipped in the same mournful trappings. Next came two men renowned for their strength, carrying a large brass ornament representing a palm-tree. After them two hundred Coordish soldiers, who were to escort the corpse to Meshed Ali: they wore blue jackets, cut in the European fashion, and the rest of their dress was according

to the costume of the country. The escort was preceded by a corps of drums and fifes playing a variety of tunes, principally English: "Rule Britannia" was one; and there were several country dances. After the military, came the representatives of the Church—a large body of mounted Moolahs (priests), headed by their Bashee (chief), a jolly drunken-looking fellow, who, with a voice amounting to a scream, recited verses from a Koran, in which he was joined by his followers, who made the air resound with their vociferous lamentations. Behind them was the corpse of Mohumud Ali Meerza, borne by two mules, in that sort of covered litter called in Persian a *tukhte ruwaun*.

Immediately behind the corpse were Mohumud Hosein, the ruling Prince, and two of his brothers; the principal officers of the court closed the procession.

At intervals the cavalcade stopped, when every one, baring his breast, struck it so violently with his hand, that the flesh bore visible marks of the severity of the discipline: at these times the shouts were redoubled, and tears flowed copiously from every eye. Large groups of women, veiled from head to foot, and huddled together almost into shapeless heaps, were seated on each side of the road, and were by no means the least silent mourners of the party.

We fell in with the French officers in rear of the troops; two or three chiefs were in the same line with us. Immediately on my right was a handsome young man, whose eyes were red with weeping. He had been a favourite follower of the late Prince, for whom he had entertained a most sincere attachment; and I was beginning to sympathise with him in his sorrows, when it was insinuated that it was just possible wine, and not grief, had caused his tears to

flow—a surmise that his subsequent behaviour in some degree warranted.

After proceeding about a mile, we quitted the procession, and halting on one side of the road, waited till the Prince had given us the *murukhus*, or permission to depart. His eyes were much inflamed, and tears chased each other down his cheeks. Thus far the ceremonial of grief had been conducted with the greatest propriety; and any one witnessing the mournful demeanour of the Prince this morning, would have been impressed with a high opinion of his filial piety. The day closed on a scene of a very different description. The funeral procession arrived at Mahidesht near sunset, when his Highness ordered the caravanserai to be cleared of its inmates, and, taking with him several boon companions, this sorrowing son passed the night in drinking and singing, determined to keep his father's *wake* in the true Irish fashion, and, if any grief or care remained, to drown it in the bowl. The following morning, these merry mourners remounted their horses, and reached Kermanshah without accident; though the Prince was so intoxicated, that on arriving at the palace-gate he fell off his horse into the arms of his attendants, and was by them conveyed to his own apartment in a state of drunken insensibility.

Foremost on the list of persons selected by his Highness to assist him in the celebration of these funeral orgies, was the Moolah Bashee, once his tutor, and now his associate in every species of debauchery. He who as chief of the religion had, in the day, with weeping eyes and melancholy howl, sung the requiem to the soul of the father, was, in the night, administering *spiritual* consolation to that of the son. He who, in the morning, chaunted verses from that

book which inculcates wine as an abomination, was, in the evening, so overcome by its influence, as to be scarcely able to hiccup out the licentious songs* of his country.

The person from whom we received this information was likewise one of the party ; no other than Suleiman Khan, the chieftain whose grief had attracted my attention at the funeral. We were sitting after dinner in the evening, when this person, in the same “ suit of solemn black” as of the preceding day, staggered into the room. Interrupting his relation here and there with an occasional roar of laughter, he described to us those scenes of revelry of which he had been so willing a participator.

Suleiman Khan, surnamed Kuruzungeer, is chief of a tribe of twelve thousand Coords, the best foot-soldiers in the Persian dominions. They are not Mahometans, but of a peculiar sect called Ali Illahi, that is, Ali is of God. They acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, but believe that he appeared on earth a second time in the person of Ali. They practise circumcision, but not as a religious rite. As dissenters from the established religion of a country are generally viewed with more dislike than those who deny its tenets altogether, so these believers in Ali are held in greater abhorrence, by his other disciples, than either Jews or Christians. Our anxiety to proceed homewards induced us to decline a very pressing solicitation from Suleiman, to visit him in his own country ; which I now much regret, as this tribe is described as having many curious customs that would have amply repaid our inquiries.

* Some Persian love-songs have been elegantly translated into English by one of the most flowery poets of the last century ; but the reader would throw down the verses with disgust, if he were aware of the objects to whom these amatory effusions are generally addressed.

Although Suleiman Khan holds a despotic sway over his own tribe, it has not exempted him from the casualties incidental to the follower of a Persian court. By Mohumud Ali Meerza he was condemned to death for an unsuccessful attack on a fort, and only pardoned at the intercession of Monsieur De Veaux. By order of the ruling Prince he was so severely bastinadoed as to be unable to walk for six weeks. Thus, with the vicissitudes of an Oriental life, this mighty despot of a tribe becomes the unfortunate victim of a torture, inflicted at the will or caprice of one who, the moment before, was the social partner of his revels.

CHAPTER XVII.

Misunderstanding between Messrs. Court and De Veaux—Conduct of Senor Oms—Reconciliation between our Hosts—Moolah Ali's opinion of Duelling—Second interview with the Prince—Departure from Kermanshah—Unsuccessful Expedition into the Mountains—Pic-nic Breakfast—We take leave of Messrs. Court and De Veaux—Be-sitoon—Bas-reliefs—Sahanah—Concobar—Visit the Governor—Temple of Diana.

April 30—May 1.—We were now all ready to proceed on our journey. The preparations for the funeral of the late Prince, which had for some days past put a stop to all public business, had prevented our procuring a *rukum*, or order, from the Prince, to proceed unmolested, and to be supplied with whatever we might require on the road; the whole population between Kermanshah and Hamadan consisting, equally with that through which we had passed, of hordes of robbers. With the assistance of Moolah Ali, we obtained this document; and our arrangements being completed, we intended to have resumed our journey on the following morning, when a circumstance occurred which occasioned a farther delay.

In the course of conversation after supper this evening, a misunderstanding took place between our hosts. In consequence of this, Monsieur De Veaux left the house at daylight the next morning

(May 1), and at eight o'clock a challenge had been offered and accepted in due form by the parties, who agreed to meet with pistols the morning after our departure.

As we had been present at the whole transaction, we drew up a letter, declaring it our opinion that nothing had occurred to justify the proceeding. We were at a loss where to send our dispatch, as M. De Veaux, conjecturing our interference, had concealed his abode from us. In this dilemma, Señor Oms, under pretence of becoming a mediator, took charge of our letter: which he suppressed, and instead of attempting a reconciliation, did every thing to foment the quarrel between Monsieur De Veaux and his former friend. The motives for this conduct were as diabolical as they were dastardly—a most inveterate hatred towards both parties, which, in case of either falling, would have been gratified.

Failing in his attempt, and fearing the effect of our endeavours at a reconciliation, he tried to perpetrate with his own hand, what he had hoped would have been done by that of another. In the evening, as we were seated at dinner, this Spanish ruffian, attended by a body of soldiers, rushed into the room, uttered the most dreadful imprecations, and drawing his dagger, motioned his men to advance. As his object was evidently assassination, we deemed it high time to interfere, so, making a charge towards the door, we succeeded in routing the enemy, many of whom we obliged to go the shortest way down stairs, but, owing to the crowd beneath, without detriment to a single neck. As for the leader, he was content to walk out of the door, particularly as we intimated, that, if he demurred, the window would be the exit we should select for him.

May 2.—Early in the morning, we went to Monsieur De Veaux,

whom we found encamped two miles from the town. We recapitulated the events of the evening, and at last succeeded in bringing him home with us, and effecting a reconciliation between himself and Monsieur Court; a matter of some difficulty, as each had been successful in more than one fatal rencontre, and had, under Napoleon, imbibed those absurd prejudices so prevalent in that army, and which, half a century ago, was the bane of society in England and the sister kingdom; but which have now happily given place to better feelings, and truer notions of honour.

The pitch to which duelling had at one time been carried, by the European officers in the service of the late Prince of Kermanshah, at once excited his astonishment and alarm. It was in vain that he threatened the survivor with death, or tried by ridicule to do away with a custom which threatened to leave his little army entirely without officers.

We were considerably amused by the observations on the subject of duelling of our friend Moolah Ali, whose notions of honour somewhat resembled those set down in Falstaff's catechism.

"How foolish," said he, "is it for a man who wishes to kill his enemy, to expose his own life, when he can accomplish his purpose with so much greater safety, by shooting at him from behind a rock!"

Our hosts being determined to represent the conduct of Señor Oms to the Prince, requested us to accompany them, to give evidence if it should be necessary. As the French officers have at all times access to his Highness, we were admitted without scruple into the garden of the palace, and an officer of the household went to inform his Highness of our wish to have an audience. While here, our attention was arrested by hearing some one, at a short distance, sing-

ing, or rather screaming a song with all the power of his lungs. In spite of the drunken hiccup, which occasionally interrupted the harmony, we thought we could recognize the voice of the Moolahi Bashee, occupied, when last we heard it, in chaunting the requiem of the Prince's father: we were not mistaken, his Highness, not liking the rigours of the solemn fast of Ramazan, had invited a few friends to partake of a social bowl, and, among others, this holy man, who doubtless procured them a dispensation. The sudden silence of the chorister proved to us that our arrival had been announced; and as we were admitted to the presence, we observed him, with two or three effeminate-looking boys, stealing down one of the avenues.

The Prince was standing with his back against a tree, and, supported by a stick, was trying to conceal the impression the wine had made on his brain. Señor Oms had been sent for, and arrived shortly after. There were present at the interview, Assiz Khan, a young Coordish nobleman, and Hassan Khan Khoord, the blind counsellor whom we had seen at the funeral. Messieurs Court and De Veaux having related all the circumstances of the case, Señor Oms attempted a justification, but was interrupted by Hassan Khan Khoord, who used the expression *Koor Khoordeed*, a Persian term of reproach, for which the propriety of our language has no synonym. During this interview, we were frequently appealed to, respecting the truth of the French officers' statement, and just as we concluded in confirmation of what they had said, we were somewhat startled at the Prince's saying to us, "*Eedn keh Gofteed deroogh neest?*"—Is not that which you have told me a lie?—a harsh sound to an English ear, but in this land of falsehood, a mere idiomatical phrase of inquiry. Our conference ended with Señor Oms being sent to prison, and the

Prince resuming those enjoyments which we had so unseasonably interrupted.

May 3.—Our negotiations between the belligerent powers having been brought to a happy termination, we had nothing now to detain us at Kermanshah, so, having our mules laden, we bade adieu to this city, and once more found ourselves on the road. The next halting-place was Hamadan, four days' journey hence, and the seat of government of Tamas Meerza, brother to the Prince of Kermanshah. The country lying between these two towns is the most mountainous of all Irak. It is called by the natives Il Jebal (the mountainous), and is supposed to be the Matiene mentioned by Greek and Roman authors.

Wishing to give another day to the examination of the sculptures at Tauk Bostaun, we proceeded thither in company with our friends Messrs. Court and De Veaux, and two or three Persians. In the evening, we all dined together on the banks of the stream, which supplied us plentifully with fish, and we passed the time in high glee till a late hour; when the excavation furnished us with a classical night's lodging: and, with a rock for a pillow, we slept soundly till the bright light of the sun warned us of the return of day.

May 4.—We devoted this day to an unsuccessful expedition into the mountains, having been deluded into a hope of finding some antiquities by the account given us, that four miles hence was a cave full of statues and inhabited by genii, who suffered no person to return alive, who dared to penetrate their enchanted abode. After an hour's painful climbing up a steep and rugged mountain, we came to the mouth of the dreaded cavern, which we entered, having been

provided with lights. It was very spacious, and composed entirely of stalactites, produced by infiltration, which would exhibit the appearance of statues, when viewed from without; but fear had so long predominated over curiosity, that no native had ever dared to solve the mystery, though tradition had long given a celebrity to this place.

A good pic-nic breakfast compensated in some measure for our disappointment. A Persian, who was of the party, regardless of the solemn fast ordained by his creed, or the interdiction of wine, ate much, and drank more; but we had seen too many votaries of Bacchus among the Mussulmans to be any longer astonished at their debaucheries; being now fully convinced that a true believer may be as great a toper as any Christian infidel.

May 5.—This day's march was to Be-sitoon, a place celebrated for ancient sculptures, and supposed to be the Bagistana of Diodorus Siculus and Isidorus of Charax. Having sent forward our servants and baggage two hours before us, we stayed to breakfast with our kind European friends, who accompanied us half way on our day's march. We cannot speak in too high terms of the kindness and hospitality we experienced from these officers. During our stay at Kermanshah, every wish had been anticipated, and for the time we remained under their roof, they seemed to have forgotten their own pursuits, and to have studied only what would be most conducive to our interests and comforts.

We traversed the base of the mountain for eight miles in an easterly direction, after which, we turned to the north; here we met a numerous tribe of Illyauts marching with their tents and mules: they had just arrived from Arabia, and were about to take up their quarters for the summer season in this neighbourhood.

Six miles from Be-sitoon, at a short distance on our right, we saw the capitals and bases of some pillars, which may be well worthy the attention of any traveller following the same track: indeed it was much to be regretted that our time did not permit us to examine them more minutely, as we might have ascertained the order of their architecture, and have given a clue, that should fix some era to the antiquities of Be-sitoon, which, up to the present moment, are matters of doubtful speculation.

Mr. Macdonald Kinneir supposes the word Be-sitoon to be derived from the Persian negative particle *be*, and the word *sitoon*, signifying no pillars; but it is possible that the pillars seen by us, might have given the name to the city, as Beest-sitoon, signify twenty pillars: in the same manner the ruins of Persepolis are called Chehel-sitoon, or forty pillars.

We reached our destination at five o'clock in the afternoon, passed the caravanserai and villages, and pitched our tents on the banks of a rivulet, at the base of the stupendous rock of Be-sitoon, which forms an abrupt termination to the mountain chain bounding the valley of Kermanshah to the north.

According to Diodorus Siculus, Semiramis, in her march from Babylon to Ecbatana, the capital of Media, halted at the foot of a high mountain called Bagistan,* and there made a garden twelve furlongs in circumference, which was watered by a large fountain. Be-sitoon will answer in most respects to this description: it is situated in the

* Dio. Sic. Wess. Lib. i. p. 126. In the Byzantine History, mention is made of the city as well as of the mountain of Bagistana, *Βαγιστανα πολις τῆς Μηδίας καὶ οὐροῦ Βαγιστανον. τὸ ἔθνικον Βαγιστανος.*

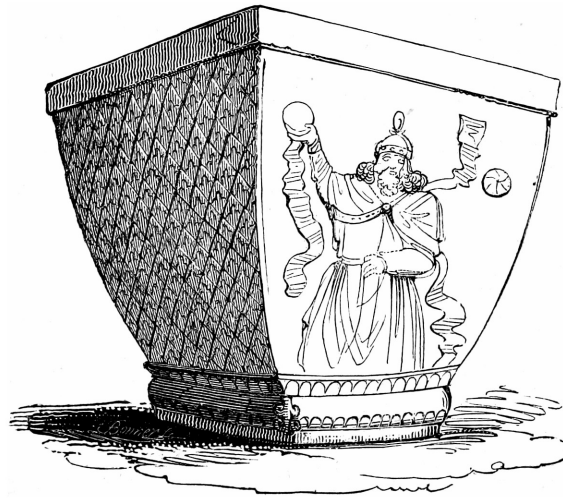
Bagistan is derived from the Persian words *bāg* and *stan*, signifying a region of gardens.

direct road from Babylon to Hamadan, the supposed site of Ecbatana; the high mountain of Be-sitooon will correspond with Bagistan, which is described as seventeen furlongs in height. The plain is well capable of cultivation, and is watered by a stream which issues from the rock. The same author informs us, that a piece was cut out of the lower part of the rock, where Semiramis caused to be sculptured her own image, surrounded by a hundred of her guards. An immense portion of the rock has evidently been scarped out, but, after the most minute examination, we are of opinion that no figures can ever have existed, though this has evidently been the commencement of some great undertaking.

As Diodorus Siculus did not see the sculpture he describes, may it not be possible that it was never farther advanced than the scarped portion of the rock before us? Indeed scepticism may fairly be allowed to exist on any subject concerning Semiramis, when eight authors, who have written respecting this famous queen, differ as to the time in which she lived, upwards of fifteen hundred years. But, putting the sculpture of Semiramis out of the question, the works at Be-sitooon bear marks of the most remote antiquity.

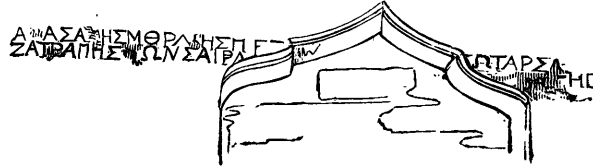
At the foot of the mountain is an extensive burying-ground, a proof of the former existence of population in this neighbourhood; many of the tomb-stones are of white marble, having inscriptions beautifully cut in the Syriac and Cufic characters. We found among them the fragment of a white marble pillar; the shaft appears to have been formed of one stone; the base and capital were in different parts of the burying ground, both richly sculptured. On the capital is the figure of a king, in rich robes; and I would willingly, in the absence of her hundred guards, have attributed this beautiful pillar to Semi-

ramis, who, according to Isidorus of Charax, erected one at Bagistan; but candour obliges me to add, that from the resemblance of the ornaments to those on the Tauk Bostaun sculptures, I cannot fix a more ancient date than the Sassanian era.



May 6.—We devoted this day to the examination of the sculptures, commencing from the west. The first object that arrested our attention was a large tablet, with an Arabic inscription, on the face of the rock, at about the height of twenty feet. On approaching this for examination, our interest was strongly excited by the appearance of two lines in Greek characters, forming part of an inscription, which we were mortified to find had been nearly obliterated to make way for this modern record, relating to a grant of land to the neighbouring caravanserai. In the imperfect record before us, we thought we could decypher the name of a person called Gotars, or Gobars, who was probably a Satrap, as that word twice occurs in the imperfect relic spared to us by the Arab barbarian. Who this Satrap was, whose

deeds were thought worthy of such a memorial, it is difficult to determine.



Quintus Curtius mentions that a prefect of Persagada, by name Gobares, delivered up that city to Alexander the Great.* Had Gobares been at Bagistan, he might have helped us out in the application of the inscription.

As a second conjecture I may add, that among the Kings of Persia I find the name of the third of the second dynasty of the Parthian race was Goters: nothing more is recorded of him—*stat nominis umbra*.

Below the inscription, we found the remains of a group of figures in low relief: after repeated examination at different periods of the day, and availing ourselves of the most favourable lights, we discovered (what appears to have escaped the notice of preceding travellers) a winged female figure, hovering in the air, in the act of crowning with a wreath an armed horseman, engaged in fierce contest with another similarly accoutred and mounted. Both have their spears in rest, on the point of attack. On the left, some animal appears to be running away. The figures of the bas relief were so much in proportion, and the general outline was so good, that, without the inscription, I should have attributed the work to Grecian artists.

Proceeding eastward, we saw in a chasm of the mountain, at a

* Cyrus Persagadam urbem condiderat, quam Alexandro præfectus ejus Gobares tradidit. Q. Curt. Lib. v. cap. 6.

great height, another bas-relief ; which, from its general resemblance to the sculptures of Persepolis, may be considered as coeval with those splendid specimens of ancient workmanship. This our guides called the Dervisham (Dervishes), but were not as usual prepared with a tradition respecting it : not so a certain French traveller, who has published an account of this sculpture, and gravely asserts it to represent our Saviour and the twelve Apostles.

It consists of a group of thirteen figures, appearing to represent two attendants presenting ten captives to their king, who is seated above in robes of state : one prisoner is lying on his back with his hands raised, in the act of imploring mercy, while a female figure, who stands near, is looking with a most piteous aspect, apparently seconding the supplication of the fallen captive. The general has his right foot standing on the prisoner's breast. The remaining nine figures, among which is the female, have their hands tied behind their backs, and they are fastened by the necks to each other with a rope. The figures, at the distance from whence we viewed them, appeared about two feet high ; the captives are dressed apparently in the costume of different tribes, and the last in the string has the high Coordish cap. On each side of the group, and immediately below it, are eight large compartments, covered with writing in the Babylonian character, which proves, beyond the slightest shadow of a doubt, their antiquity. Sir Robert Porter thinks that this bas-relief alludes to the Babylonish captivity. But for the female captive, I should be of the same opinion. In many particulars, the Scripture account of Esther pleading before Ahasuerus, in behalf of her Jewish brethren, is strongly illustrated in this sculpture.

We started for Sahanah, a distance of sixteen miles, at eight

o'clock in the evening. A quarter of a mile from Be-sitoun, on our left hand, we saw, by the light of the moon, some mounds which we were told had been a field fortification thrown up by Nadir Shah : the works appeared to be extensive, but we were too full of ancient relics to interest ourselves in the works of this modern conqueror.

The road led through a fertile and well irrigated valley, flooded in many parts from the overflowings of the water-courses. An hour after midnight we reached our destination ; and not liking the wretched appearance of the caravanserai, encamped outside the walls of the town.

Sahanah is situate at the base of one of the lofty ranges of mountains. As in most Persian towns, its houses are in a dilapidated state. It is somewhat larger than the generality of those through which we have passed ; and the surrounding gardens give an agreeable appearance, which does not correspond with the actual state of the place.

Curiosity brought numbers of the inhabitants round us this morning. They were inoffensive, and seated themselves in picturesque groups in the neighbourhood of the tents. Like the natives of all this country, they are professional robbers.

We commenced our march to Concovar, another sixteen mile stage, at half-past three in the afternoon ; having been induced to travel by daylight, at the suggestion of the French officers, who had advised us to reach a narrow defile in the mountains before dark, as it was a place where robbers were in the habit of issuing forth and attacking the caravans. We continued for two hours traversing a spacious plain, in a S. E. direction. This brought us to the ascent of a steep and stony mountain. At six o'clock, we passed

the narrow defilè in the mountains, without an adventure. To judge from the appearances of the pass, it is well adapted for the purposes to which robbers appropriate it.

After descending for an hour, we entered a well-cultivated valley ; and, at ten, arrived at the town of Concovar. By the imperfect light of the moon, we observed the remains of a splendid temple, supposed to have been dedicated to Diana. Our chief muleteer, not liking the trouble of unpacking the tents, assured us the caravan-serais were very comfortable ; but, as our ideas of comfort differed materially from his, we fixed upon a field near the Governor's house for our encampment. We had scarcely begun to unload our mules, when we received a peremptory order from the Governor to go into the town, on account of the robbers ; though I know not whether his command proceeded from the fear that we were of the fraternity, or that he was anxious for our safety. In this dilemma we produced the Prince's *rukum*, and, instead of being obliged to comply with the injunction, we were furnished by the Governor with a guard of ten men.

We had intended to have resumed our journey this afternoon, but Baba Khan, the Governor, sent his Mehmaundaur to say that he would not allow us to travel, except by day, as numerous hordes of banditti infested the road we were to pass, and that, in compliance with the Prince's *rukum*, he was obliged to provide for our safety, whether we liked or not. After breakfast we called upon this personage : he was attended by a numerous suite, dressed, for the most part, in the Persian costume ; though we observed one or two young men whose turbans showed they were Turks, detained probably as pledges for the good behaviour of some of their relations, who, like

the hostages at Kermanshah, may have sought the precarious protection of Persia from the persecution of their own tyrants.

In the interview with the Governor, we had no reason to be flattered with the cordiality of our reception. After coldly bidding us welcome, a silence of some minutes elapsed, unbroken by his attendants; he then stammered out some common-place compliment, and fell to muttering to himself a string of prayers, it being deemed an act highly meritorious for a Mussulman to invoke the deity in the presence of infidels. We had neither pipes nor coffee, on account of the Ramazan; and we were not sorry to shorten our visit, after obtaining a promise that a person should be sent with us to show us the temple, and to protect us from insult; but as this man never came, we set out accompanied by two of our own servants.

This temple is of the Doric order of architecture, comprising a square of two hundred and fifty paces. To the West, the bases of ten, and a portion of the shafts of eight pillars remain standing; these are from six to seven feet high: the pillars measure from four feet eight to four feet nine inches in diameter, and fourteen feet eleven inches in circumference; the basement is formed of large blocks from six to nine feet in length. The whole building is of greyish white veined marble; huge fragments of pillars lay scattered in every direction, and the stones seem marked as if to prevent their being displaced. The natives, who attribute this temple to the work of Genii, say that it had once four hundred pillars; but they have no tradition that could lead to its history; however, its name Concovar, or, as it might be pronounced with equal propriety, Concovar,*

* The b and v in Persian, are constantly used for each other: one instance will suffice—the plural of the word na-eeb, a viceroy, is equally pronounced nu-vaub, and nu-baub, or, according to our pronunciation, *nabob*.

is conclusive evidence, that here is the site of the ancient town of that name, mentioned by Isidorus of Charax, and that these are the ruins of the celebrated temple sacred to Diana.

While we were taking the dimensions of the temple, a crowd of four or five hundred people had collected and began hooting us; calling us dogs, shebres, infidels, and many untranslatable epithets of abuse, in which their language is very copious. Not content with this, they pelted us with stones, and showed every mark of hostility. Our Turkish attendants, being both dressed in the garb of their country, and consequently equal objects of hatred with ourselves, came in for a share of the attack. These, not so patient as we were, rushed in amongst the crowd, and used their large sticks, with a rancour which a religious difference of opinion unfortunately but too often generates for ourselves; we continued our measurements, though the counting paces was occasionally interrupted by fragments of the temple being unceremoniously rolled at our feet. On returning to our tents, we were followed by the crowd, now considerably increased; when one of the Governor's people came forward, and called out to them to disperse,—an order which was immediately obeyed; and a sudden silence succeeded to the unpleasant discord with which we had been regaled for the last hour. As all our annoyances had arisen from the Governor's not having sent the person he promised, we intimated to him that we should make a representation of his conduct to the King, who he well knew would have been happy for a pretext to extort money. This message brought his Mehmaundaur, with a submissive apology; so we sent him some tea, for which he had begged, as an earnest of our forgiveness, and here the matter ended: we were assured, however, that

the fear of injuring persons travelling with the Prince's *rukum*, alone prevented the inhabitants from assassinating the whole party.

Concovar is the frontier town of a tribe, and forms a kind of head-quarters to one of the most desperate gangs which infest these mountains; so, all things considered, we have reason to congratulate ourselves on having got so well out of the adventure.

May 9.—After all our troubles in the inhospitable neighbourhood of Concovar, we were not sorry to quit the sulky Governor and his riotous adherents; but, as every one here seemed determined to thwart us, we were delayed an hour by the impertinence of the master of the caravanserai, who refused to let our mules go till we sent him a present. We once more sent to the Governor, and begged he would send one of his attendants with our servants, and cause the master of the caravanserai to be brought before us and bastinadoed in our presence; but this fellow no sooner perceived the Governor's servant, than, as many a man has done before him, off he scampered, to escape the fangs of justice.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Sadawar—Our Host and his two Wives—Hamadan—A Chupper, or Courier—Hajee Abbas, the Prince's Mehmaundaur—Dispensation from the Fast—Ancient Inscription—Elwund—Morning Visitors—The Prince's Physician—His Eulogium on Sir John Malcolm—The Rabbi of the Jews—Chief of the Armenians—A Persian in pursuit of the Philosopher's Stone—High respect for the English Character.

AT seven in the morning we commenced our march to Sadawar. We first ascended a stony pass, which led into an extensive plain of an oval form to the North. We then passed through one of the numerous villages which lie scattered over the valley ; and three hours from the pass in the mountains, reached the village of Sadawar, seated at the base of the Elwund mountain, which forms the northern boundary of the valley. This village, or rather town, contains four hundred houses, and has a governor appointed by the King. While looking at the Serai, which we found to be very inconvenient, we accepted the offer of one of the inhabitants to take up our quarters with him, and took possession of the verandah of his house. Our new host was a man about sixty years of age : he had two wives—one a comely woman of eighteen years of age, and the other ten ; they looked cheerful and contented, and, if we may judge from the manner in which they performed their domestic duties, seemed not to

regard the disparity of years between themselves and their joint husband.

May 10.—We set out this morning at six for Hamadan, having a high mountain to cross, and a long march before us. In three quarters of an hour we reached the base of the Elwund, the Mount Orontes of Diodorus Siculus. The ascent, which is very steep and circuitous, occupied an hour, and proved very distressing to our cattle; large masses of snow lay in ravines near the top in every direction, over which the wind blew painfully cold. The western face of the mountain was covered with aromatic shrubs, which wafted a delightful fragrance through the air. The descent on the eastern side is gradual, but the road is much broken by streams of water supplied by the melting of the snow. Near the base of the mountain we passed a caravanserai; the centre was roofed in at the top, different from these buildings in general, and a very necessary protection against the severe cold in this mountainous region during the winter season. Bands of robbers have at different times occupied the building, and converted into a place of molestation to the traveller what had been built for his protection. We passed a fountain at the bottom of the pass, which the muleteer informed us was a common post for robbers to waylay passengers; they sometimes collected together to the number of thirty or forty, and laid the largest caravans under contribution. We had now been long accustomed to be in a state of readiness for attack, and our little band preserved as good an order of march as the nature of its force admitted; though we had occasion to regret the loss of our former intelligent muleteer, who, when any danger was to be apprehended, evinced a foresight and circumspection that in a great measure relieved us from the trouble of caution on our own part.

At present, our attention was constantly employed to prevent the muleteer from allowing the cattle to stray.

The whole mountain to the summit was clothed with rich verdure, chiefly aromatic herbs of great variety, to gather which, people come from all quarters, and even from India. We met here two natives of that country, who had travelled thus far to cull the simples, which they apply to medical purposes.

After descending the mountain, we traversed along its base in a S. E. direction, crossing numerous rills, the waters of which assist in irrigating the fruitful valley of Hamadan. Immediately on quitting the precipices of the mountain, we entered upon well-cultivated land, which extended to the city. Two miles from Hamadan, we passed a considerable stream of water, by a neat stone bridge. Near it were many marble tombstones, elegantly sculptured in flowers and inscriptions in the Cufic and Arabic characters. Hence the road led through gardens surrounded by walls, extending to the town. We had sent a servant in advance with the *rukum* to the Vizier, and made the same request as on entering Kermanshah—to be allowed to occupy a garden or empty house within the walls of the town. Awaiting his return, we entered a garden by the road-side. Numbers of people were at work in the different fields around us, chiefly employed in manuring and dressing the vine. After remaining a considerable time, we became impatient, and proceeded onwards.

Fragments of ancient buildings met our view as we entered upon the site of the once renowned capital of Media; but we felt too much fatigued, from a long march of eleven hours, the greater part of the time under the influence of a burning sun, to bestow much attention

on antiquities. As our servant had taken a different direction from that by which we entered, we had to wander about for a considerable time without any person to direct us, and were at the same time obliged to encounter the impertinent scrutiny of nearly the whole population, whom curiosity had gathered in crowds around us. Our servant at length returned; and from him we learned that, instead of an empty house, Tamas Meerza, the Prince of Hamadan, had ordered his Vizier to have the Mehmaun Khoneh prepared for our reception, and had desired that his Mehmaundaur, Hajee Abbas, should wait upon us, to see that we were supplied with whatever we might require, his Highness wishing that we should be considered as his guests during our stay.

Our new quarters are comprised in a building within a large enclosed space, protected by a square wall, which is flanked at each angle by protruding bastions; the interior of the dwelling is fitted up with nummuds and carpets, the usual articles of furniture in a Persian apartment. I must not except a large chafing-dish, with a sparkling fire, in the centre of the room, round which we were glad to assemble; for the evening was as cold as the day had been hot, and reminded us that this elevated spot had been selected, from the coolness of the atmosphere, as the summer residence of the Assyrian Kings.

Besides our own party, there was another public guest in the Mehmaun Khoneh, Mohumud Hassan, one of the King's chuppers or messengers: this man had left Kermanshah only the morning before, and arrived a short time before us at this place,—a journey of one hundred and twenty miles, over a very mountainous country, on one horse. As there are no relays, or post-houses, in this part of the

Persian territories, the next morning, he mounted on the same animal, and resumed his journey to Teheraun, two hundred miles distant, expecting to reach it on the second day.

Till within these few years, the only modes of communication between the capital of Persia and her provinces, were either by one of these mounted couriers, or by cassids, foot messengers. A chupper seldom changes his horse; generally going a steady amble at the rate of about four or five miles an hour: some have been known to go from Teheraun to Bushire, a distance of seven hundred miles, in the space of ten days. Of late, a post establishment has been formed between Teheraun and the frontier of Russia; but, like many other royal establishments, it is farmed out to some noblemen of the court, and has consequently been subject to very great abuses.

As Messrs. Hart and Lamb wished to continue their journey to Tabriz by the mountains of Coordistan, and as Mr. Hamilton and myself were anxious to visit the court of Persia, we agreed to separate at this place, and to meet again at Tabriz, whence we thought to resume our journey together. Leaving Messrs. Hart and Lamb to make their own arrangements, Mr. Hamilton and myself availed ourselves of the assistance of Mohumud Hassan, and by him dispatched a letter that had been given us by the Governor of Bombay to Major Willock, the British chargé-d'affaires, together with a few lines from ourselves, informing him of our intended visit to the Capital.

May 11.—It was our intention to have paid our respects to the Vizier, but he was unwell; and as he could not see us himself, he sent the Mehmaundaur Hajee Abbas with a message, welcoming us to Hamadan, in the name of the Prince. We found Hajee Abbas an

agreeable man, and tolerably well versed in the literature of his country. Of this he gave us abundant proofs; for we could scarcely ask any question, to which we did not receive in answer a quotation of some dozen lines from Hafiz or Sadi. The Hajee was at this time suffering from a stomachic complaint, brought on by an excessive use of opium; this he felt the more severely on account of Ramazan, which did not permit him to eat or drink while the sun was above the horizon. To soften the rigours of fasting, he had been in the habit of spending the day in bed; but he hoped that the English physician would give him instant relief. Mr. Lamb answered, that a disease of several years' standing could not be cured in a day; and, as preliminary to recovery, he must not fast so much. This advice was no sooner given, than off went the Hajee to order something for dinner; first taking the precaution to call his servant to witness the agreeable order given by the Hakeem. The success of Hajee Abbas in eluding the law of the Koran, brought a number of applicants for medical advice, apparently for the sole purpose of procuring a similar dispensation.

We made an excursion to the Elwund this afternoon, to see an inscription on the face of the mountain, an hour's ride from the town, in a southerly direction, along a road leading to Kerman-shah. The inscription is cut in a large mass of coarse grained granite, on the face of the hill to the West of the road, whence it is visible. There are two separate tablets, each divided into three compartments: one containing twenty, and the other twenty-one lines of writing, in the simplest form of the Babylonian character. From being in a sheltered situation, the inscription has undergone little change from the weather: but we did not take a copy of it, which

would have occupied a considerable time; understanding from our guides, that one had been already made by Sir John Malcolm. This inscription is called by the natives Gunge Namah, the history of the treasure which they say is buried near this spot; but that it will never be discovered till some one shall be fortunate enough to decypher the mysterious writing. Then, like the magic "Sesame," which afforded entrance to the den of the Forty Thieves, this mountain will reveal to the translator its hidden treasures. Our guides informed us, that there were some remains of an ancient structure on the top of this mountain, built by a son of Solomon, who, they say, gave name to the mountain.

The Orontes is celebrated over all the East, for its natural as well as supernatural properties. Many of the natives told us that there were several ores of silver and gold in the mountain, but that no one would take the trouble to work them, as the produce of their labours would go either to the King, or to the Prince Governor of Hamadan. Its vegetable productions are, as I said before, so good, that people from every country come to gather them; and the belief is general here, that there is a certain grass which has the power of changing every metal into gold; added to which, this mountain is supposed to contain that long sought object of cupidity, the philosopher's stone.

May 12.—All our morning was occupied in receiving visitors. Amongst them was the Prince's physician, a respectable-looking old man, of very amiable manners, possessing a degree of liberality of opinion and general information rarely to be met with in one of the shallow pretenders to medicine in this country. His visit was principally directed to Mr. Lamb, whose fame as a physician had

travelled before him to this place. Our visitor sat with us nearly the whole morning ; but he was so intelligent and entertaining, that we could not find fault with the length of his stay. As a proof of his modesty, he acknowledged the superiority of European medical knowledge, by consulting Mr. Lamb on the state of his own health, and by receiving medicine from him ; but what pleased us most, was the honourable mention he made of Sir John Malcolm, with whom he appears to have been well acquainted ; and our national vanity was much gratified by the admiration he professed for our highly gifted countryman.

Perhaps no man ever employed on a foreign mission has done more to exalt the character of his country than has this distinguished individual. The name of Malcolm is familiar to every one in the countries through which he has travelled, and all persons express the same unbounded respect for his talents and character ; his name, indeed, secures kindness for his countrymen throughout Persia.

In the course of the morning a Rabbi of the Jews came to pay us a visit. From him we heard a most affecting detail of the persecution exercised by the Mahometans towards his unhappy people : the whole tenor of his language was that of bitter lamentation ; and he spoke of their suffering with a degree of freedom, before the Mussulman doctor, that despair only could have dictated. It is not, said he, of the oppression of one tyrant alone that we complain ; for we are subject not only to the iron grasp of the government, but, on account of our religious tenets, are exposed to the avarice and cruelty of every petty professor of authority.

The Rabbi informed us that the number of his people amounted

to four hundred houses. The tombs of Mordecai and Esther are cherished here, amidst their misery; and the expectation of the promised Messiah is the hope that enables them to sustain the load of oppression which would be otherwise insupportable.

Every circumstance connected with the state of the Jews of this place is of important interest. Ecbatana is mentioned in Scripture as one of the cities in which the Jews were placed at the time of the captivity, and it is possible that the present inhabitants may be the descendants of the tribe who occupied the city under the Babylonian yoke.

While our interest was strongly excited by this account of a scattered remnant of Israel, the chief of the Armenians came with an offering of two large flasks of wine, which this Eastern Christian had brought to ensure a favourable reception from his more fortunate brethren. His detail was equally affecting with that of the Rabbi; here the unbelieving Jew and Christian dog are alike subject to the oppression of the intolerant Mussulman.

Our next visitor was a native of rank, who had expended the greater part of his fortune in search of the philosopher's stone: the ill-success he had hitherto met with, so far from discouraging him in his pursuit, seemed only to have encreased his ardour. The object of his present visit was to consult Mr. Lamb, whom he believed to be in possession of the secret. He entertained this opinion, in consequence of being told by some one who had been with us, that the learned Englishman was examining stones, and subjecting them to a chemical process. This was true enough; Mr. Lamb being a geologist had been so employed, and the stones and chemical tests lying still upon the table served thoroughly to confirm our visitor

in this conviction, which no assurances we could at first give had the power of removing. Finding Mr. Lamb what he deemed obdurate in withholding the desired information, he seized a bottle of acid, with which he had seen him produce effervescence with limestone; and thinking this phial would open to him the wished-for treasure, implored in the most piteous accent that it might be given him.

We gathered from his conversation, that he had been made the dupe of one of those artful impostors common in this country, who go about preying on the credulity and weakness of those whose avarice make them easy victims. We informed him that many years ago, the principal philosophers of Europe had been engaged in this visionary pursuit, which had now for upwards of a century been abandoned, from a conviction of its being unattainable; and we strongly advised him, on the next visit he received from his philosopher, to satisfy all further demands by a vigorous application of the bastinado. After an hour's conversation we appeared to have succeeded in somewhat staggering his belief, and his countenance on leaving us conveyed the impression that he would attend to our suggestion.

The belief, universally entertained throughout the East, in the existence of hidden treasures, and that Europeans possess the knowledge of discovering them, renders the inhabitants exceedingly jealous of our exploring ancient ruins, as they cannot comprehend any other object we can have in the pursuit than that of wishing to carry off these secret stores of wealth. Some also entertain a conviction, that there are magic qualities existing in ancient relics, which we have the power of converting to use; and the high price we frequently give for objects of this description serves to countenance their opinion.

May 13.—We had a curious proof this morning of the respect in which the English character is held in this country. Mr. Lamb, wishing to draw a bill upon Bagdad for the sum of one hundred tomauns, for our common expenditure, sent a servant into the town to know whether any of the shraufs (merchants) would be willing to give him money for it. After a short time, a miserable half-starved looking wretch made his appearance, and said he should be willing to advance us any sum we might require: at first we were inclined to laugh at his proposal, thinking, from his appearance and garb, that he was more like an object of charity than a lender of money. He soon undeceived us; for disencumbering himself of a few of his rags, he unstrapped from his body a black leathern belt, and having cut it open, counted out the hundred tomauns in gold. Mr. Lamb wrote a draft, in English, upon a merchant in Bagdad, which this man took in lieu of his money, contenting himself with merely asking the name of the merchant on whom the bill was drawn, and declaring himself to be the party obliged; “for,” said he, “if I am robbed, I shall at least be spared this piece of paper.” While we were wondering both at his ability to serve us, and his confidence in our honesty (for we could easily have deceived him), he said he had had too many proofs of English probity to entertain any alarm on that head. “The *Feringhees* (Franks) are not so worthy of being trusted, but the *Ingreez* (Englishmen) have never been known to deceive.”

This circumstance, reflects not a little on the general good conduct of our countrymen in Persia; for in this, as well as in many other examples, it might be shown that it is to Englishmen only that this confidence is extended. Of the *Feringhees*, as it is their custom to distinguish other Europeans from us the *Ingreez*, they are as distrustful

as they are of each other. Why we should have so excellent a character, I know not, though I have heard it somewhat oddly accounted for. It is said, that some time ago, an American vessel, in a trading voyage up the Red Sea, bought a considerable quantity of coffee, and paid for it in Spanish dollars, but the ship had not long sailed, when it was discovered that the money was counterfeit, and the merchants, in their indignation, vowed they would have no dealings with the English, for (as these sailors spoke our language) such they supposed them to be. Some one said that they were not English, but *Feringhee dooneaine noo*, “Franks of the New World,” by which name the Americans are designated in these countries. As the mart where this transaction occurred, was on the road to Mecca, the story rapidly spread, and numerous pilgrims, on their return home, were of course glad to promulgate any story detrimental to the Christian character. It is not to be supposed that our countrymen are always immaculate; but now, if an Englishman misbehaves, he is not designated a native of England, but a “Frank of the New World.” This is rather hard upon Brother Jonathan, who is to the full as honest as John Bull; but, as in many other cases, the roguery of an individual is oftentimes felt by a multitude.

I have, in a preceding page, brought a Chupper or mounted messenger to notice. I now beg to introduce this money-changer, Ishmael by name, as a Cassid, or foot messenger, showing the other channel through which the inhabitants of one city communicate with another. Ishmael was at this time on his way from Teheraun to Bagdad, having business to transact at Hamadan and Kermanshah, with probably nearly all the merchants of these cities.

CHAPTER XIX.

Departure for Teheraun—The Prince's arrival prevented by the Astrologers—The March of Alexander—Our Persian Costume—Advice to Travellers—Beebee Rubaut—Fatiguing March to Kujur Minar—Plain of Rubaut—Rubaut Kereem—Bukhtiari Banditti—Arrival at Teheraun—Persian Bath—Dyeing beards—Nigauristoon—Persian Flowers—Rhages—Visit Meerza Abool Hassan Khan—Kissera Kajar—Levee of the Ameen ed Dowlah—The Palace—Court Dress—The Prince Governor of Teheraun—Presentation to the King—Bastinado.

Mr. HAMILTON and myself had been waiting for some days past for a *rukum* before we commenced our march to Teheraun; but the Vizier informed us that it could not be granted till the return of Tamas Meerza, as his royal signet was necessary to the document. The Prince's arrival had been daily expected, and our patience was nearly exhausted, when we heard that his Highness had been on the eve of setting out for Hamadan, but had been prevented by the astrologers telling him that some misfortune would befall him, if he returned to his capital till after the Ramazan. This intelligence decided our movements. Being too much pressed for time to be influenced by the stars, we set out at an early hour this morning for the capital.

According to Arrian, Alexander the Great, having failed in overtaking Darius at Ecbatana, continued the pursuit to Rhagæ, at which city, after many difficulties, he arrived on the eleventh day. If, as is generally believed, Hamadan is the site of Ecbatana, we must have pursued the same, or a parallel route with Alexander; as the ruins of Rhagæ are only three miles distant from Teheraun.

Having now had some experience in the Eastern mode of travelling, and expedition being the order of the day, we disburdened ourselves of every superfluous article, and sallied forth, equipped in light marching order.

Leaving our tents behind us, and our heavy baggage with our friends, who were to travel more at their leisure to Tabriz, we reserved to ourselves six changes of linen, and our full uniforms. Instead of a number of mules, which had always occupied an hour on every day's journey in the lading, we had each our own two horses, one for riding, and the other for baggage, on the top of which a servant rode.

Up to this time we had always appeared in the honourable garb of British soldiers, of which we were sufficiently proud not to wish a change; but, to avoid a recurrence of such an adventure as that at Concohar, we thought it expedient to adopt the Persian dress: not as a disguise, but because we thought that it was not so much to ourselves as Europeans, as to the singularity of our costume, that the impertinence and importunity of the mob had been generally directed.

The British officers at Tabriz advise travellers to wear the English dress. It is certainly best for the direct road through Persia, where it is known and respected; but the dress of the country is strongly recommended to any one pursuing our less frequented route.

Our head-dress was a black sheep-skin cap, pinched into a peak behind, and fitting the head rather closely before. A pale blue gown, which extended to the calf of the leg, was neatly crimped, and decorated with innumerable little sugar-loaf buttons down each side of the chest, and from the elbow to the wrist. This gown was open in many parts, and discovered beneath it, what I fear must be called a petticoat, ornamented with a pine-apple pattern on a bright purple ground; over this was bound loosely round the waist a scarlet shawl. A capacious pair of silk trowsers, of a pale pink, covered the lower extremities. It is hoped that scarlet Hessian boots, in size equal to those in which Hogarth has drawn Hudibras, sabres by our sides, our pistols and dagger in our girdles, and our formidable mustaches, will in some degree redeem the effeminacy of our garb.

After quitting the town we traversed the fertile valley of Hamadan, and passed over a low mountain, on the brow of which wild flowers of every hue combined their fragrance with innumerable aromatic shrubs. We then came into a spacious plain, and followed the most beaten track till the road diverged into several branches. Being without a guide, we took the path which appeared to lead to a large town. Here we thought we could distinctly see the trees, the domes of the mosques, and the bastions of the walls; but after proceeding in the same direction for nearly three miles, it vanished, and we now discovered that we had been led astray by that curious optical delusion so common in the East, called the Saharaub, literally, "water of the desert." We were the more surprised at being deceived by this phenomenon, as from the day we landed we had been daily witnesses to its curious properties.

At one in the afternoon, we arrived at Beebee Rubaut, a small

untenanted village. We had intended, after a few hours' rest, to have proceeded onwards, but were dissuaded by one of the King's Shatirs (footmen), who with three other servants were proceeding to Teheraun the next day. As not one of our party had ever been this road, which was described as very intricate, we put ourselves under the convoy of these men, and agreed to accompany them the next morning.

May 15.—This stage, which could not have been less than sixty miles, was the most painful, and the least interesting, we had yet made. We commenced our march at the rising, and finished it at the setting of the sun, having had the full benefit of its scorching rays, which became every moment more intense as the snow-capped mountains of Hamadan receded from our view. Our road lay either through sterile and desolate mountains, or stony valleys formed by the beds of torrents. With the exception of a miserable village twelve miles from Beebee Rubaut, where we breakfasted, we did not see a single building: not a traveller passed to diversify the dull uniformity of the scene; and we reached Kujur Minar, our destination, so dispirited and feverish, that though our lodging was good and our dinner tolerable, we could scarcely eat or sleep.

May 16.—After a few hours of imperfect rest, we started at three in the morning for the village of Chummurum, distant twenty miles.

For the first six hours we traversed a country of the same appearance as that of yesterday: at nine we crossed a fordable river, which divides the districts of Hamadan and Teheraun, and entered upon a fruitful and well cultivated valley, the banks of the stream being strongly contrasted with that we had just quitted. Except in spots where extensive crops were growing, the whole valley looked like one vast meadow. There was also an appearance of extensive popu-

lation, as numerous villages seemed to deck the plain : but this in Persia is an “ optical delusion,” as common as the Saharaub ; for on our nearer approach we found they were the ruins of deserted villages.

Leaning our backs against one of the walls, as a protection against the heat of the sun, we made a hasty breakfast, and, resuming our march, reached Chummurum at mid-day.

May 17.—At three A. M. we started for Zerun, a long march of fifty-two miles. The morning was very dark ; and after wandering an hour, we had the bad fortune to lose our way : chance directed us to a village, where we procured a guide, and were led through a narrow pass of the mountains into the direct road.

The pasture with which these wild mountains are somewhat sparingly covered, afforded subsistence to numbers of the King’s camels, on the ungraceful forms of which, in the absence of all other living creatures, we gazed with satisfaction.

We continued winding through successive ranges of hills till we came on to the spacious plain of Rubaut. It appears to be about forty miles in length, and twelve or fourteen in breadth. Hence we could discern the mountains immediately behind Teheraun.

Half way across this plain stood the village of Zerun, where a small narrow apartment was allotted for our accommodation. On the ceiling of our new dwelling was a circular hole, which, though intended only for the admission of light and air, did not exempt rain : of this we became aware in the middle of the night, being awoke by a smart shower, which, before we could make our escape, had completely drenched us to the skin.

May 18.—We resumed our march over the plain at five in the

morning; and saw at some distance a small palace, to which the King goes every winter for the pleasures of the chase: here antelopes and various other kinds of game, are said to be very abundant.

We halted half an hour on the plain to enable our Persian fellow-travellers to eat their breakfast; but as no water was procurable, we deferred our own meal till we arrived at our stage: indeed, we acted thus on the whole march from Hamadan to Teheraun.

The scarcity of water here brings to mind the anecdote related by Plutarch of Alexander the Great, while on the same road:—Being one day overcome with heat and thirst, he met some Macedonians carrying water on mules in sheep-skins for their children. These men, on witnessing the exhausted appearance of the king, filled a helmet with water, and brought it to him to drink; but he, observing the eager looks with which his soldiers regarded the water, returned it to the Macedonians, and by this act so captivated his followers, that they said they were neither tired nor thirsty, and considered themselves immortal, whilst they had such a man for a king.

Four miles from Rubaut Kereem, we passed a succession of hillocks, which were pointed out to us as being much infested with banditti of the Bukhtiari tribe. We arrived at the town at one o'clock, and, being now only twenty-four miles from Teheraun, despatched a villager forward to give Major Willock notice of our arrival.

May 19.—An hour after midnight we remounted our horses, being anxious to conclude this wretched journey. Six miles from Rubaut Kereem, the Shatir pointed out to us several villages, a short distance from the road, as being entirely inhabited by Bukhtiari banditti; but we saw none of them, nor, indeed, any one else on this solitary road. The sun rose in fiery splendour over the mountains

of Teheraun, but the city itself is in so low a situation, that we could not distinguish it till we were not more than two miles distant. Here we were met by Major Willock and Dr. Macneil, who, being dressed in the English fashion, made us feel ashamed of our foreign disguise. We were conducted by our countrymen to the English residency, and by their care and attentions soon lost the unpleasant recollection of our miserable march.

In the afternoon we went to the Hummaum. In addition to the usual process of an eastern bath, the barber had dyed my mustaches before I was aware of his intention. Generally speaking, there are two sorts of dye used; they are made up in the form of a paste; one is henna, the other indigo. If the hair is dark, the henna is first put on, which turns the hair quite red. When dry this is washed off, indigo is substituted, and a jet black is soon produced. As my hair was light, the indigo only was used. This being the first time of wearing a dye, the skin became slightly affected, but it soon recovered. In the course of a few hours, my mustaches, after undergoing the alarming transitions from green to purple, settled at last into a fine auburn.

We employed the ten days of our stay at Teheraun in visiting every thing remarkable in and about the city. On the 21st, Major Willock took us to see one of the King's palaces, called Nigauris-toon, or Garden of Pictures. It is an oblong enclosure, containing three summer-houses. In the uppermost of these, at the top of the room, are painted on the wall fresco portraits of the King and several of his sons. His Majesty is seated on his throne, and the princes stand beside him. The sides of the apartment are decorated with the figures of all the ambassadors that have at different periods appeared

at the Persian court. To these the king is (with a poetic licence) supposed to be giving audience at the same time. On one side of the wall this motley assemblage is headed by the three English ambassadors, Sir John Malcolm, Sir Gore Ouseley, and Sir Harford Jones. On the other, for the sake of uniformity, there are three French ambassadors, though only one ever came to Persia. The European portraits, as may be supposed, are complete caricatures, but in the delineation of Asiatic dresses and features, the artist has been more successful. The other summerhouses are hardly worthy of notice: though newly erected, they have the usual Persian marks of dirt and decay. A stream of water, running in a channel of masonry, supplies a jet-d'eau in the centre building. On each side of the garden are a few formal rows of poplar; behind them are some cypress and some fruit-trees. There are also a variety of shrubs, some flowers, and no scarcity of weeds. It is let by the King for two hundred tomauns a-year, to one of the courtiers; who is obliged to keep it in repair. As the tenant has no taste either for beauty or neatness, he sows that which will yield him most profit: a clover-stubble marks his last crop.

Notwithstanding their poetic admiration of flowers, the Persians treat them with much neglect; still there are many which are beautiful and well worthy of notice. I am no botanist, so I must content myself with mentioning those which attracted my attention. The most remarkable in appearance is a large rose-tree, called the Nasteraun: it grows to the height of twenty feet; the trunk is nearly two feet in circumference; the flower, though larger, resembles the English hedge-rose, and has five leaves; the calix is in the form of a bell. The leaf of the tree is small, smooth, and shining. The branches

droop gracefully to the ground, and the flowers are so abundant as completely to conceal the stem of the tree. Numbers of this species are to be seen in every garden in Teheraun.

The next is the Durukhti Ubrishoom, a species of *Mimosa*, resembling the *Arborea* of that genus. It droops like the willow; the flower has silky fibres, of a delicate pink colour, and would resemble a swansdown puff, tinged with rouge. It sends forth a most fragrant perfume, and its name, "Durukhti Ubrishoom," the Silk-tree,—bespeaks its appearance. This flower thrives in Teheraun in the open air; the thermometer ranging between 16° and 110°, Farenheit; but it does not succeed so well at Tabriz, where the temperature is colder and more variable. It grows wild in the forests bordering on the Caspian Sea. There is one in the garden of the Prince Royal at Tabriz, and another in possession of the English officers resident there, who are obliged to protect it from the winter cold.

The Zunjeed is also a species of willow. The leaves are of a silvery hue, and the flowers, which are of a deep scarlet, send forth a most delicious perfume. When in blossom, the Zunjeed is viewed with a jealous eye by the Persians, from the belief that it has a strong tendency to excite the passions of the females. The Persian who was describing the curious properties of this tree, told me that twelve fursungs north of Teheraun, the men lock up their women while the flower is in blow.

May 22.—Five miles south of Teheraun are the ruins of the ancient City of Rhages, mentioned in the book of Tobit, as also by Arrian and Diodorus Siculus. To this city Alexander came in pursuit of the unfortunate Darius, and halted here five days previous to his expedition into Parthia.

Rhages continued to flourish till the time of Jenghiz Khan, whose general destroyed it, and Teheraun, the modern capital, arose from out of its ruins. It has met with the usual fate of old brick buildings; it has crumbled into dust, and a few shapeless heaps are nearly all the memorials of this once populous city. I should except a well-built tower, which I had not time to examine, and the commencement of a bas-relief cut in the rock, representing two warriors in the act of combat.

May 23.—We accompanied Major Willock this morning on a visit to Meerza Abool Hassan Khan, the late Persian Ambassador to the English Court. This gentleman is more portly than he was in London, and may be said to have grown fat on the pension which the India Company has granted him—for what services the Meerza probably knows as little as any one else; for, if common report be true, there are few men more hostile to our interests than himself. Notwithstanding all this, he is a very agreeable companion, and received us with much politeness.

After smoking a pipe in the common hall of audience, the Meerza conducted us into one of the rooms of his haram. The women had been previously warned to withdraw themselves; but whether by accident or from design, one or two lingered so long that we had a good view of their faces. They wore large turbans, and one of them seemed a pretty girl. The room we now entered partook of the European and Asiatic styles. The walls were hung with prints, which, for the honour of my own country, I am glad to say were not English. If the Meerza speak true, he has not been unsuccessful with the English ladies; if not, their civilities to him have been shamefully misinterpreted.

Our next visit was to the Kissera Kajar, the Palace of the Kajar or Royal Tribe of Persia. It stands two miles north-east of the town. When viewed from a distance, it has the appearance of a building several stories high; on approaching nearer, it proves to be a succession of terraces, built on the slope of a mountain. It is intended for a summer retreat, and is traversed in all directions by streams of water, which render it cool and pleasant. On the fifth terrace, we enter upon the principal part of the building: here are several pictures, some representing the ancient Kings of Persia, and all executed in a style greatly superior to any other specimens of the art I saw in this country. On the summit of the palace is a small but beautiful chamber; the windows and doors are inlaid with ebony and ivory, describing Persian characters: there are also several fine samples of Mosaic work, and some curious enamel paintings. The female apartments comprise a succession of small chambers, twelve or fourteen feet square: in each of these is a high wooden bedstead, occupying nearly the whole space, and said to contain a family: if so, the ladies of the royal haram must be stowed almost as close as negroes on board a slave-ship. The walls are whitewashed, but in a dirty state: they are without decoration, if I except the poetical effusions of their fair inmates, whose writings may be traced in every apartment.

At ten at night, Major Willock, Dr. Macneil, Meerza Abool Hassan Khan, Mr. Hamilton, and myself, attended the public levee of the Ameen ed Dowlah, Lord Treasurer, who performed the duties of Prince Vizier, that office being vacant. The reception room was spacious and unadorned. The minister, who was seated in a corner rose to bid us welcome; a compliment he does not pay to his own countrymen. The visitors all sate with their backs to the wall: four

or five thick candles in low tin candlesticks stood in the middle of the room: several Meerzas (Secretaries) were seated in a semicircle opposite the minister, and upon papers held in the palm of the left hand were writing from his dictation. The company in general had no particular business; those who had, went up by turns to the minister, made their statement in a whisper, and retired with a low bow. Servants came in at intervals with culaoons, which were rapidly passed from mouth to mouth. Every person in this assembly sate according to his rank. On our arriving, a place was immediately given to us near the minister: in other parts of the room such a concession was not so willingly made, and an amusing struggle for precedence ensued at the arrival of every new comer, who was excluded from a seat till the humility or good-humour of some one made room for him. As soon as we had settled the object of our visit,—a presentation to the King, which was fixed for twelve o'clock on the day after, we made our bows to the minister and retired.

May 26.—At twelve o'clock we accompanied Major Willock to the palace; but by mistake his Majesty was not apprised of our arrival till it was too late; so he sent a message to desire our attendance at four in the afternoon. We saw here several courtiers retiring from the daily levee, at which the King, whether in sickness or in health, is obliged to be present,—one of the taxes levied upon despotic power.

The court-dress is simple, but rich; the common sheep-skin cap is covered with a superb Cachemire shawl. Over the homely cotton gown, ordinarily worn by all ranks, is a scarlet cloth robe: a pair of boots of the same materials completes the costume.

We spent an hour in examining the palace. The outward gate

opens into a spacious court-yard, in which are several cannons of various dimensions. In the centre is a large gun, which was taken from Lootf Ali Khan, the last Persian king of the Zund family. Over each of the four gateways is a large drawing formed of glazed tiles, and executed in a truly grotesque manner. In one of these, Rustam, the Persian Hercules, is engaged in fierce contest with the Deevee Safeed, the celebrated White Demon of Ferdousi's poem.

This court leads to a second. In the centre of this is a piece of water surrounded by poplars. The Dewan Khoneh is at the further end. In this chamber is a large marble throne, on which his Majesty sits on extraordinary occasions. The walls and wainscoting are of the finest mosaic. There is a great profusion of ornamental glass of all colours, describing flowers. The ceiling of this room is a succession of looking-glasses divided by flowered ornaments. In every recess or panel there is some picture: in one is a hunting piece, in another a battle, in others portraits of the King. I was much amused at the style of some of the smaller paintings. One professes to represent Nadir Shah returning the crown to the Indian king, after having wrested it from him; the right hand of Nadir grasps the club of state, the left rests on the crown; but so fierce is the expression of the conqueror, and so peculiar his attitude, that it seems as if he intended to knock down the Indian monarch. A second exhibits Noorsheervan giving audience to the Grand Signior, the artist forgetting that the Persian monarch, having died before Mahomet, could not have been a contemporary with one of his successors. In a third picture we have Iskunder (Alexander the Great) listening to the discourse of Ufflatoon and Aristo (Plato and Aristotle). The Macedonian hero is dressed in the modern Persian fashion, and the two great philosophers are habited like common dervishes.

In the course of the morning we paid our respects to Ali Khan Meerza, a favourite son of the king's, governor of Teheraun, and designated by the title of Zilli Sultan, (Shadow of the Sultan,) as the king is called Zil Illah, (the Shadow of God). This prince is born of the same mother as Abbas Meerza, with whom it is thought, after the death of the King, he will have a contest for the crown. His Highness is very handsome, and very vain. We made a profound bow on entering, and were graciously invited to sit down, an honour granted to no Persians except princes of the blood. Five of these were present at our visit. One, a boy about ten years old, was dressed in a gown of light blue cloth richly embroidered, and was the handsomest lad I ever saw. In fact, the present royal tribe of Persia is unrivalled in personal beauty. Ali Khan Meerza had several trinkets by him—a string of beads, and a small crutch to support him in a sitting posture; but what seemed to give him most satisfaction was a hand mirror, at which, ever and anon, he gazed with much complacency.

At the appointed hour, Meerza Abool Hassan Khan, Major Willock, Mr. Hamilton, and myself, set out for our interview with his Majesty. The Persian was in his court-dress, we were in full uniform; and we all wore green slippers, and the court boots of red cloth, without which no one can approach his Majesty.

The King received us in a small palace in the middle of a garden, called the Gulestan—Rose Garden. When arrived at the top of the avenue which led to it, we imitated the motions of the Meerza, and bowed several times, our hands touching our knees at each reverence. We had, at this time, a good side-view of the King, who, apparently from established etiquette, took no notice of us. We repeated our bows at intervals. When within twenty yards of the palace, we left

our slippers behind us, and the King, turning towards us for the first time, called out, "Beeau-bala"—Ascend. A narrow flight of steps brought us to the presence-chamber. It is an elegant apartment, open at two opposite sides, where it is supported by spiral pillars painted white and red; a large carpet is spread on the floor; the walls and ceiling are completely covered with looking-glass. One or two European clocks stand in different parts of the room; but the accumulation of dust upon them shows that they are considered useless lumber.

On entering this chamber, we walked sideways to the most remote corner from that which the King occupied. After the usual compliments of welcome, his Majesty asked several questions respecting our journey, and surprised us not a little at his geographical knowledge, both with regard to the country we had quitted, and that which we purposed to visit. The audience lasted twenty minutes; his Majesty was in high good-humour, and conversed with unaffected ease on a variety of subjects. The titles used at the interview were "Kubla-hi-Aulim and Shah-in-Shahi"—Attraction of the World, and King of Kings. He was seated on his heels on some doubled nummuds, the Persians priding themselves on this hard seat, in contradistinction to their enemies the Turks, whom they charge with effeminacy for their use of cushions.

The King had a variety of toys, which gave employment to his hands, and assisted his gestures in conversation. One of these trinkets was a Chinese ivory hand at the end of a thin stick, called by us in India a scratchback, a name which faithfully denotes its office: another was a crutch, three feet long, the shaft of ebony, and the head of crystal. His Majesty has the appearance of a younger man than he

really is, but his voice, which is hollow from the loss of teeth, is a better indication of his age. I should have known him from his strong resemblance to the prints I had seen of him in London. I think, however, they hardly do justice to his beard, which is so large that it conceals all the face but the forehead and eyes, and extends down to the girdle. He was very plainly dressed, wearing a cotton gown of a dark colour, and the common sheep-skin cap. In his girdle was a dagger, superbly studded with jewels of an extraordinary size.

The dress of the modern Persian has undergone so complete a change, that much resemblance to the ancient costume is not to be expected; still there are some marks of decoration, which remind one of the ancient monarchs. The eyelids of the King, stained with surmeh, brought to our recollection the surprise of the young and hardy Cyrus, when he viewed for the first time a similar embellishment in his effeminate uncle, Astyages; and in that extraordinary chapter of Ezekiel, wherein Jerusalem is reproached for her imitation of Babylonian manners, the prophet alludes to this custom, when he says, "Thou paintedst thine eyes." *

A bracelet, consisting of a ruby and emerald, worn by the King on his arm, is a mark of ancient sovereignty. It will be recollected that the Amalekites brought David the bracelet found on Saul's arm, as a proof of his rank; and Herodotus mentions a bracelet of gold as a present from Cambyses, King of Persia, to the King of Ethiopia.

I must not omit the mention of a circumstance connected with our interview, as it illustrates a piece of etiquette at the court of a

* Ez. xxiii. 40.

despotic monarch. A few minutes before we were presented, we observed two men carrying a long pole and a bundle of sticks towards the audience chamber. Curiosity led us to ask the Meerza what was the meaning of this. "That machine," said he, "is the bastinado; it is for you, if you misbehave. Those men are carrying it to the King, who never grants a private audience without having it by him, in case of accidents." The pole we saw was about eight feet long: when the punishment is inflicted, the culprit is thrown on his back, his feet are secured by cords bound round the ankles, and made fast to the pole with the soles uppermost; the pole is held by a man at both ends, and two men, one on each side, armed with sticks, strike with such force that the toe-nails frequently drop off. This punishment is inflicted by order of the King upon men of the highest rank, generally for the purpose of extorting money. If Persia was not so fond of illustrating the use of this emblem of power, she would have as much right to the "Bastinado," as we have to the "Black Rod."

CHAPTER XX.

Summer Palace of Ali Khan Meerza—Gypsies—Soolimanea, Sougherabad, and Sufur Khojah—Casbin—Serah Dahn—Aubhaur—Saingula—Curious Animals—Ruins of Sultanieh—Tomb of Sultan Khodabundah—King's Summer Palace—Zingaun—Town, Bazaar, Mosque—Armaghanah—Auk-kend—Kaufilan Koh—Mountain of Tigers—Kizil Oozan—Bridge—Rude Scenery—Murder of Mr. Brown—Superstitions—Kurz Kula—Causeway—Oppression of Drowsiness—Arrive at Mæana—Curious Exhibition—Description of Mæana—Extraordinary Bug and Earth Louse—Turcoman Sha-ee—Tikhmadash—Wasmitch—Arrival at Tabriz—Departure of Messrs. Lamb and Hart—Introduction to the Prince Royal.

May 27.—WE made an excursion of ten miles to the Demawund Mountains, and stopped to breakfast at a summer palace of Ali Khan Meerza, a true picture of a Persian residence, whether belonging to prince or peasant—dirty chambers, broken windows, and dilapidated walls. In the garden which surrounded it, weeds had usurped the place of flowers. Luckily for us the nightingales did not sympathize with the proprietor's neglect, but warbled delightfully during our repast.

Close to this place was an encampment of gypsies. They are called in Persian, Girauchee. There is nothing to distinguish them from the other wandering tribes, who, it is said, hold them in low estimation.

The valley at the base of this mountain is called Shuma Iroon, the Light of Persia. It is celebrated for the salubrity of the air, and the beauty of its situation. It is richly wooded. The numerous pleasure-houses, mosques, and villages peeping from out the branches, form a pleasing contrast to the various shades of the verdant foliage. A large waterfall rushes down the rock, and breaking into several channels, traverses the habitations, and fertilizes the plain below.

May 28.—One of my horses dying, I obtained an order for three of the King's posthorses. We started from Teheraun in the evening, and arrived at a caravanserai in the course of the night.

May 29—30.—June 1.—Nothing worthy of notice occurred in the first three days of our march. Soolimanea, our first stage, was twenty-four miles, Sougherabad twelve, and Sufur Khojah thirty. The country throughout is intersected by channels for irrigation, the land is well cultivated, and the harvest abundant. The population here is greater than in any place we have yet seen in Persia.

June 2.—On the morning of the 2nd, we came to Casbin, the seat of a Prince Governor. Our first quarters were in a stable, where we were nearly driven mad by the musquitos; but the King's order soon procured us an apartment in the palace.

This city, once the capital of the kingdom, is still sufficiently populous to carry on an extensive trade with Ghilaun, but it is a Persian town, and therefore in ruins. Some remains of the buildings of the Abbacidæ may yet be seen. The gardens of Casbin produce abundance of fruit, and the grapes of the surrounding vineyards are unequalled in Persia.

At ten at night I obtained an interview of the Prince. He was

seated in the veranda of a circular summer-house, situate in a pretty garden. Aided by the bright light of an Eastern moon, I could almost fancy this residence a fairy habitation. It was hung round with Chinese lanterns, the variegated light of which was reflected on the group of surrounding courtiers, and tinged with a silvery hue the neighbouring fountain. This was the outline—imagination filled up the picture.

I did not stipulate for my privilege as an Englishman, to be seated in the Prince's presence, fearing that, if I did, I should not obtain an interview; so I was obliged to stand before him. I was presented by his Mehmaundaur, whose motions of reverence I imitated. His Highness's manner was haughty, but it seemed habitual and not assumed. He asked me several questions, mostly respecting himself: to these I always tried to give a reasonable answer; but the Mehmaundaur, pretending to attribute my plainness of language to ignorance of idiom, turned every thing I said into an extravagant compliment to the Prince, and then asked me if that was not what I intended to say. To dissent was impossible; so I let him have his own way, and thus all parties were pleased.

June 3.—We reached Serah Dahn, a march of twenty-two miles, in seven hours. The village is small, but surrounded by extensive fields of corn ready for the sickle.

June 4.—From Serah Dahn to Aubhaur, thirty-one miles, was an uninteresting march, over a succession of low hills. Aubhaur stands in the midst of a clump of trees, and is surrounded by a well-cultivated tract of land. The Persians assign it a high antiquity. As we devoted the few hours of our stay to rest, we did not ascertain whether there were any ancient ruins. From the coincidences in the

sound of the name, and from the geographical relation of the place to others, it is supposed to be "Habor, by the river Gozan," where Hoshea, King of Assyria, carried Israel away captive. The Kizzel Ozan, the reputed Gozan of Scripture, which we crossed three days afterwards, is forty-five miles from Aubhaur.

June 5.—We left our quarters before dusk, marched sixteen miles, and halted for a few hours at the village of Saingula; we then proceeded to Sultanieh, eighteen miles distant.

We passed over a plain swarming with animals resembling rats, which live in burrows, and are so tame that they will hardly get out of the way of the passing traveller.

June 6.—In the middle of the plain is Sultanieh, a city founded six hundred years ago by Sultan Khodabundah, but now completely in ruins. Amidst the heaps of fallen houses, the only building worthy of notice is the tomb of the founder. It is a noble structure, consisting of a beautifully shaped cupola on an octangular base, and is a hundred feet high. The outside has been covered with a sort of glazed tile, observable in many old Eastern buildings. In the interior are the remains of some fine Arabesque workmanship; but time, aided by the more active operations of destructive man, has made it difficult to trace the original beauties. There are several Arabic and Cufic inscriptions painted in fresco on the walls, but these are daily becoming more obliterated, as workmen are taking away the materials of the tomb for other buildings.

The King comes to Sultanieh every summer, to avoid the heat of Teheraun. When we left the capital, his Majesty was to set out in a fortnight.

We visited the palace this afternoon; the ascent to it is up a steep

and narrow staircase. It is a mean and ill-built dwelling, and the rooms are extremely filthy. The doorway of one of the apartments was bricked up, but opened to allow us to enter. This is a private apartment of the King's. At the bottom of the room, is a farcical representation of his Majesty on horseback, in the act of spearing a wild ass. In all the panels are full-length fresco portraits of different sons of the King. The Dewan Khoneh, or Hall of Audience, leads on to a terrace. The King sits in the most elevated part; a little below is a place for the princes and nobles; and another, lower still, for the inferior classes. The plain of Sultanieh cannot boast a single tree; we saw no birds, and, instead of the melody of nightingales, we heard only the croaking of frogs.

June 7.—On arriving at Zinjaun, a journey of twenty-six miles, we heard that Messrs. Lamb and Hart had passed through a few days before; that they had been overtaken by a violent thunder-storm, and that some of their baggage-mules had been carried away by the mountain torrent.

Zinjaun is the capital of the district of Khumseh, and is governed by Abdoolah Meerza, one of the King's sons, who resides here. The town is large and populous; it is enclosed in a mud wall, in good repair. The bazaar is superior to those at Hamadan and Kermanshah, and almost equal to that at Bagdad. It extends from the eastern to the western gate, and is covered over the whole way with light thatch. The shops are well stored with all the usual articles of consumption. A new bazaar, not yet finished, branches off into the great one, and terminates in the square in front of the palace. One portion is finished, and the shops are occupied; the other part is incomplete, and apparently going to ruin. It is vaulted throughout, and upon the whole is

well built. Adjoining the bazaar, and fronting the palace, a superb mosque is erecting; the front is covered with enamelled bricks in the form of Mosaic. It is complete to the first story; and the principal arch, which is formed of hewn stone, has a solid and handsome appearance. The Mehmaun Khoneh is situate close to the eastern gate, in a fortified suburb.

June 8.—We passed along the outside of the city wall to the south; we then entered on a stony plain, thinly covered with verdure. Our road followed the direction of a river to the N. W., along a hollow bounded on each side by high banks, which the stream has excavated in the course of ages. This hollow, formed of rich alluvial soil, is well cultivated, and covered with luxuriant crops of wheat. The country throughout is populous and cultivated. A fursukh from Zinjaun, we passed a large village on the banks of a river, with extensive gardens and groves of trees. Several other villages, surrounded by gardens, were visible, both on the banks of the stream and in the hollows of mountains, which bound the valley on both sides. In a march of twenty-four miles we reached the small town of Armaghanah, in the bosom of a verdant valley.

June 9.—Our next day's journey was to Auk-kend, a distance of twenty-eight miles, over a hilly uninteresting country.

The following night at nine we set out for Mæana. We continued traversing hills till we arrived at the range of mountains called Kauflan Koh, Mountain of Tigers. At the top of this range we first saw the Kizil Oozan, the Golden Stream.

The moon, which had been shining brightly, became at length partially obscured by a cloud, and showed to effect the bold outline of these black and craggy mountains, and at the same time reflecting

on the river beneath, gave it the appearance of some vast shining serpent creeping through the dark and lonesome valley. According to Rennell, the Kizil Oozan is the Gozan of Scripture. We crossed it at one in the morning, over a handsome brick bridge; and by so doing quitted Irak, and entered upon the district of Azerbaijan, the government of Abbas Meerza, the Prince Royal of Persia.

In former times, Azerbaijan was called Atropatena, from the Satrap Atropates, who, after the death of Alexander, assumed the title of King of this country, and transmitted it to his posterity, who retained it for several generations.

The structure of this bridge, as far as we could judge, indicates both skill and taste in the architect. It consists of three large arches, the centre the largest: the arches are lofty, to allow a passage for the water at the highest floods: the piers, which are very massy at the base, are relieved from the spring of the arches by a smaller arch, which gives a lightness of appearance and diminishes the pressure. Part of the sides are fallen in, and the bridge itself stands a fair chance of soon becoming impassable, when the communication of this road will be stopped for many months in the year. The scenery here is exceedingly wild. Immediately below the bridge, the river passes by a narrow channel between lofty precipitous mountains, that rise almost perpendicular in rude rugged masses. By the bright light of the moon, we saw down the river, at a little distance from the bridge, and at a considerable elevation, the remains of an ancient fort, standing on a detached rock of an irregular form. This rises nearly perpendicular on all sides, and is said to be the haunt of robbers. Our Mehmaundaur spoke of the danger of travelling here without an officer appointed by the King. It was not far hence that Mr. Brown, the African

traveller, was murdered, whose misfortune may be attributed to his not taking with him a Mehmaundaur.

Numerous tales are current regarding this desolate spot. It is said to be the scene of many extraordinary occurrences, both of an earthly and supernatural kind. Remote from human habitation, this is not surprising in a country where robbers are plenty, and superstition prevalent. The fort is called Kurz Kula, Daughter's Fort, said to have been built by the daughter of a king, but at what time is unknown: the bridge has probably been erected at the same time.

Crossing the bridge, we commenced the ascent of a steep mountain, which took us an hour. About half-way up, we saw the remains of a causeway, which, we were told, can be traced to the top. It appears to have been continued throughout the whole extent of the mountain. In some parts it is entire. The descent on the opposite side, towards Mæana, is very steep. Mr. Hamilton and myself suffered much from the intense oppression of drowsiness: to complete the matter, my horse was seized with the gripes, and continued every half-mile to lie down with me in the midst of the precipitous declivity. This sensation of wanting to sleep on a march is the most distressing inconvenience of an over-land journey.

We were nearly two hours in reaching the bottom. Beyond this is an open plain of considerable extent. About a mile from the foot of the mountain, we crossed a river, running to the S. W., by a flat bridge of twenty-three equal arches, two miles beyond Mæana.

June 10.—On entering the town, we were witnesses to rather a curious exhibition. I should first mention that the Persians are in the habit of sleeping on the flat roofs of their houses during the summer months. Day was just breaking when we arrived. As the houses of

the poorer classes are generally not more than eight feet high, we had a full view of nearly the whole population in bed. Many were asleep; some few had awoke; others were getting out of bed, to make their morning toilette. The scene was highly entertaining, and brought to mind the story of *Le Diable Boiteux* unroofing the houses for the gratification of *Don Cleofas*.

Mæana stands on the site of the *Atropatena* of ancient history, the capital of *Atropatia*, the modern *Azerbaijan*. Both town and district derived their names from *Atropates*. It is situate on a low swampy plain. Though half in ruins, it is still large and populous. It has numerous gardens, and is extensively cultivated. A large palace and garden, belonging to the Prince Royal, stand only a few hundred yards from the town; a situation in which one would scarcely expect to find a royal residence. We saw the remains of an ancient building, apparently the wall of a fort, built of large hewn stones regularly squared, but we could not learn any thing respecting it. Mæana is celebrated for the manufacture of carpets. It is said, to be the head-quarters of a savage tribe called *Chedaughee*.

We were regaled here with a story of an extraordinary bug, called a mullah, a native of Mæana. This inhospitable insect, the bite of which is mortal, is said to leave the natives unmolested, and only to attack the stranger. It inhabits the crevices of old walls. If a light is burning, it comes not forth, but when all is dark, this midnight assassin stalks from its concealment, and slays the way-worn traveller.

This story, absurd as it is, has gained credit with more than one person. For ourselves, we are inclined to acquit the mullah of murderous habits, and are at least grateful to it for letting us live to tell the tale.

We cannot so easily absolve from blame another species of insect, which accompanied us from Mæana to Tabriz. It is of a diamond shape, small, white, and flat. The bite produces an intolerable itching. At first, we could not imagine what caused our uneasiness, but on examining our clothes we found this animal. We observed that, after having feasted on us for a little while, a black mark appeared down its back. We understand this insect is generated in the earth, and is of the same description as the louse mentioned in Scripture as one of the plagues of Egypt; though it agrees in description with the common body-louse of our own country.

June 11.—We left Mæana in the night, travelled twenty-one miles over a hilly country, and arrived in the morning at the village of Turcoman Sha-ee, the neighbourhood of which is in a good state of cultivation.

June 12.—The next day's march was to Tikhmadash, twenty-four miles, road N. W. and hilly as usual. We passed two caravanserais in ruins, and saw several villages. In the latter part of the stage, the country was well cultivated.

Tikhmadash is a considerable village, on the brow of an eminence a mile to the west of the road. The situation is very much exposed.

June 13.—We next came to the village of Wasmitch; a laborious journey, though the distance was not more than twenty-six miles. In two hours we passed the village of Oojoon. After crossing a low bottom of marshy ground, we saw a number of oblong tomb-stones, about six feet long, and two wide and thick. The country was hilly, and presented the usual defect of Persian scenery—a total absence of wood. This remark is applicable to almost every day's march since

we left Bussorah. Once or twice in our route we might fall in with a few trees, but they were always scrupulously noted down as objects of curiosity. In towns, and in their immediate neighbourhood, there was generally a small collection, but these were mostly poplars, and rather added to the naked appearance of the country.

June 14.—We set out at daylight. Wasmitch being only nine miles from Tabriz, we had written to inform the English residents of our approach, but by the delay of our messenger the note arrived almost at the same time with us. We met Major Monteith, at the entrance of the town, riding full gallop to meet us, it being a customary compliment for the English residents in Persia to receive the strangers at the gates, and to accompany them into the town.

We were highly gratified at sitting down to an excellent breakfast with a party of our own countrymen: after which, Mr. Hamilton became the guest of Dr. Cormick, and I of Major Monteith. The English residents at Tabriz are, Major Monteith, who is employed by the India Government in a survey of Georgia; Captain Hart, the commander of the Prince's guard; and Dr. Cormick, physician to his Royal Highness. There were besides, Major Walker and Mr. Edward Bootle Wilbraham, travellers from England; and our friends Messrs. Lamb and Hart, whom we were delighted to meet again. They had arrived at Tabriz six days before us, and being anxious to proceed to England with all possible dispatch, had intended to set out the same evening. In consequence of our arrival, they were kind enough to defer their journey till the following day.

June 15.—The next day we took our farewell dinner with Messrs. Hart and Lamb, who started at ten at night. They were accompanied by all the English outside the walls of the town. As they

expected to be in England six weeks before me, I sent letters by them to my friends.

June 16.—The following morning Major Walker, Mr. Hamilton, and myself, were presented to the Abbas Meerza, the Prince Royal by Dr. Cormick. We were received in the Dewan Khoneh, and were seated opposite the Prince. His Royal Highness addressed us with the greatest civility and kindness. In the room was a picture representing one of his successful expeditions against the Turks. This naturally introduced the subject of his wars, on which we of course made some common compliments. His Royal Highness disclaimed all credit to himself, attributing his victories entirely to the assistance of our countrymen.

I was surprised to find that his Royal Highness immediately recognized the Waterloo medal which I wore, asking me if it had not been given for having been present at the last decisive battle the English fought with Napoleon. A reply in the affirmative produced numerous civil speeches relative to that event, and the compliments we had given were repaid with interest.

Among the expressions of civility used by his Royal Highness, was "*Be-dillum, nuzdeek mee-aed*," "You approach near to my heart;" which phrase he continually repeated till we took our leave.

CHAPTER XXI.

Dinner with Colonel Mazerowitch—Projected Route—Arrangements for the Journey—Departure from Tabriz—Appearance of the Country—Shehruk—Golijah—Aher—New Mehmaundaur—Hoja Kishlaukh—Arabshehr—Beautiful Scenery—Yokhari Perasewaun—Gulakundee—Wheat Harvest—Venomous Serpent—Illustration of Plutarch—Cross the Araxes—Illyaut Encampment—Arrival in Russian Territory—Meralian—Karabaugh, the country of the Sacaseni—Peerhumud—Luxuriant Foliage—Cossacks Haymaking—Khanakhi—Armenian Villages—Arrival at Sheesha—Appearance of the Town—Russian Officers' Quarters—Aga Beg, Chief of the Armenians, and his Brothers—Two Missionaries—Visit to the Commandant—Tomb of Nartuck—Sheesha, its Population, Trade, Climate, and Costume—Prescribe for my Host's Brother—My fame as a Physician.

WE one day dined with Colonel Mazerowitch, the Russian Chargé-d'affaires. Though all the party were Christians, and did not exceed twenty, there were present, natives of France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Holland, Russia, England, Greece, Sclavonia, Armenia, Georgia, Arabia, and Persia. Amongst the servants in attendance were, a Russian, Persian, Indian, Turk, and Kalmuk Tartar.

June 18.—Mr. Hamilton wishing to proceed to England by Poland, Austria, and Germany, remained at Tabriz with Mr. Wilbraham, who purposed taking the same route. They set out together about a fortnight after me, and reached home a month later.

My future road being left to my own choice, I had recourse to the map, and selected that which seemed to offer the most novelty.

My mind made up, I immediately went to the Russian Chargé-d'affaires for advice and assistance. He tried to dissuade me from my scheme; but, seeing me determined, gave me a letter to a relation at Astrakhan, and countersigned the passport which had been given me by Major Willock. I discharged my old servant, a Turk, and substituted a native of Ghilaun, who could speak Persian and Turkish. I engaged five horses to carry my baggage and servants, and obtained from the Prince Royal a Mehmaundaur, with the usual *rukum*.

As the remainder of my route through Asia differs from that of nearly every preceding traveller, a short notice of it will be necessary.

I quitted the Persian, and entered the Russian territory, by crossing the river Arras, the Araxes of Plutarch. Between this river and the Kur (the ancient Cyrus or Cynus) is the beautiful province of Karabaugh, formerly the country of the Sacæ or Sacaseni, a warlike tribe of Scythians mentioned by Pliny and Strabo, and supposed to be the same people as our early ancestors the Saxons.

On quitting Karabaugh, I proceeded eastward through the province of Shirvan, the Albania of the Ancients,* the scene of many of the actions of Cyrus, and subsequently of Pompey the Great. The capital of this country is Nova Shumakhia, through which I passed on my road to Bakoo, a sea-port town in the same province on the western shore of the Caspian, the Casiphian sea of Scripture history. Hence I went north along the seashore through Daghestan, or “ Re-

* Vide Solin., Dionys. Hal., Justin, Strabo, Pliny, Pomp. Mela, Plutarch.

gion of Mountains," which name sufficiently denotes its character. Daghestan includes the states of Lezguistan, Shamkhaul, Durbund, and Tabasseran. The most important of these divisions is Lezguistan, a country inhabited by the most warlike tribe of Mount Caucasus, and which till within these few years was considered invincible. From Daghestan I passed through the province of Kumuk to Astrakhan, and entered Europe at the Russian town of Saritzin.

After this preamble I resume my daily narrative.

I left Tabriz in the evening of the anniversary of Waterloo, for Sheesha, the capital of Karabaugh. Major Monteith, Monsieur de Ambourger (Secretary to the Russian mission), and my old friend and fellow traveller Mr. Hamilton, accompanied me the first four miles; after which we commenced the ascent of a mountain, which led through so steep a defile as to oblige us frequently to dismount.

The appearance of the country for the first three days was a continuation of that description of scenery to which I had so long been accustomed—a succession of rugged eminences, intersected with valleys partially cultivated, but without a tree to relieve the dreary prospect.

After travelling sixteen miles, I felt an inclination to sleep, and, being now entirely my own master, I threw myself on my mattress, and in a moment was in a profound sleep by the road side.

June 19.—At seven we arrived at a small village on an eminence, called Shehruk, where we breakfasted, and halted for a few hours. In this neighbourhood the inhabitants were ploughing; though the soil was light and sandy, each plough was attended by two men and drawn by four oxen.

At 3 P. M. we set out, and in a distance of sixteen miles reached

the village of Golijah, containing about forty huts. We soon collected a crowd about us ; and the inhabitants, but especially the women, seemed to vie with each other in offering their assistance. The females wore no veils ; they were handsome black-eyed damsels, low in stature, but of excellent proportion ; their extreme plumpness was well set off by their large turbans, loose jackets, and capacious trowsers.

June 20.—After a sleepless night, welcome daylight at length arrived, to relieve me from the myriads of bugs, fleas, and other vermin. In a march of eight miles we reached Aher, a fortified town, commanded by Yusuf Khan, and garrisoned by three thousand Persians, who are organized on the European military system, by Russian deserters, fifty-seven of whom are at present in the town. One of them told me that the greater part of his countrymen had been here since the battle of Kertch, which took place in 1812, when the Persians gained a victory over the Russians on the banks of the Araxes.

At this place the Governor dismissed my old Mehmaundaur, and substituted one of his own followers. We left Aher at two in the afternoon, and halted for the night at a village called Hoja Kishlaukh, containing about ten wretched huts. I took up my quarters in a bullock-shed, in company with my horses ; but this was a paradise compared to last night's lodging.

The road was, as usual, over a succession of mountains : a gentle breeze springing up at sunrise, rendered the morning cool and pleasant. We were now approaching the Russian frontier ; and the Mehmaundaur particularly desired me to keep close to the baggage, on account of the banditti, who, he said, inhabited these mountains.

We stopped to breakfast at Arabshehr, five miles distant from the last stage ; a very pretty village, situate in a small but fruitful valley, and overhung with craggy mountains. My mat was spread in a cherry orchard; the boys climbed the trees for fruit, and the women brought bowls of milk, bread, and butter. We continued ascending till mid-day, when, arriving at the summit of the highest range of hills, a most beautiful scene suddenly and unexpectedly burst upon my view, rendered doubly interesting from having so long traversed a barren waste.

The sloping declivity of the mountain was beautifully covered with all kinds of forest trees ; a rich underwood, the woodbine interwoven with the varied colours of other creepers, roses, aromatic shrubs and wildflowers, rendered the scene sweet to the sense and grateful to the eye. From this point might be seen successive ranges of mountains, decreasing in height until they marked the nearly level banks of the river Araxes. Abruptly rising on the extreme and broken line of the horizon, were the black and lofty mountains of the fruitful province of Karabaugh : large masses of rock in the foreground, appearing as if thrown up by some great convulsion of nature, completed the splendid variety of the scene.—We continued marching for several miles under the shade of a natural arbour, which, formed by the meeting of the trees, was sufficiently thick to protect us from the heat of the sun. The descent of this mountain was exceedingly steep, and not always devoid of danger ; two of the horses fell twice.

In the course of the day we passed the beautiful little village of Yokhari Perasewaun, situate in the midst of corn-fields ; and at sunset arrived at Gulakundee, a village in the mountain heights, where I bivouacked for the night on the roof of a house.

June 23.—I was again consigned to another Mehmaundaur. The road for seven miles led along the ridge of a mountain, overlooking a pleasant valley with abundant cultivation. The inhabitants were at this time busy in gathering in the wheat, which was in sheaves placed horizontally, and not vertically as in England. As the cattle proceeded slowly, I got off my horse to shoot, and in my walk was near treading on a snake. Upon describing it to the Mehmaundaur, he told me that it was probably a very venomous serpent called a *tulkha*, of which species there were numbers in the neighbourhood. The natives speak also of a spider, the bite of which is mortal, probably the *phalangium arenoides* of Linnæus. In the course of the day I saw three large snakes, and a small one resembling a cobra di capello.

The abundance of these venomous creatures illustrates the account given by Plutarch of Pompey the Great, who, after having overcome the Albanians between the Araxes and Cyrus, (consequently at a short distance hence,) wished to pursue the enemy to the banks of the Caspian Sea, but was compelled to abandon his design in consequence of the vast number of snakes and other reptiles which occupied the plains through which he would have been obliged to pass.*

As we descended towards the Araxes, the atmosphere became exceedingly sultry. The Mehmaundaur, to beguile the time, sang the “Loves of Furhaud and the Fair Shereen;” and that fertile theme of Persian songs, the Nightingale, the note of which he imitated with great correctness.

* Gibbon doubts Pliny's account of the existence of venomous reptiles in this country. —Vide *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. iv. chap. xlv. note 5.

We reached the banks of the river at three in the afternoon, and proceeded to an encampment of the Laurijaumee tribe, whom we found occupied in manufacturing carpets and winding raw silk. We remained here till the cool of the evening, when we crossed the river Araxes (or, according to the present appellation, the Arras), which here separates the Persian from the Russian dominion.

The Araxes at this point is about one hundred yards wide: the rapidity of its course is much augmented by the confluence of mountain torrents, which, here rendering their tributary streams, throw up large isolated heaps of stone, and cause it to sweep along—"pontem indignatus Araxes." With motives probably similar to those which induced a noble poet to cross the Hellespont, I tried, but not with the same success, to swim over a river *once* celebrated as

"The proud Araxes whom no bridge could bind."

In the mean while my servant and a party of Illyauts were transporting the baggage in a boat made of the hollow trunk of a tree, the fibres of which formed a rope to secure it to the bank. In this frail bark we crossed the river in perfect safety, at the same time that my horses, which had been made to swim over, had also arrived on the opposite shore, though one was nearly drowned by the rapidity of the current.

Some Illyauts, of the same tribe as those we had just left, occupied this bank of the river. I was here shown to the best tent, and a fine new carpet was spread for my accommodation.

The cattle had just been brought in for the night, and the promiscuous assemblage of man and beast was highly amusing. Before

each tent the women were busily and variously employed, some in manufacturing carpets, others in milking cattle, and others in making bread of the same description as that mentioned in Scripture, as having been made by Sarah for the three Angels.

As I had now arrived in Russian territory, my Mehmaundaur delivered me formally over to the Chief of the encampment, from whom he took a written receipt for the safe consignment of my person.

The place occupied by this camp is a marshy swamp, extending several miles, called Meralian: myriads of musquitoes visited me as I retired to rest, but I slept soundly in spite of them, and at daylight set out for Sheesha, the capital of Karabaugh. The inhabitants of this province, which in ancient maps is laid down as the country of the *Sacaseeni*, the learned have tried to prove are from the same stock as the Anglo-Saxons.*

In a march of twelve miles we reached Peerhumud, a Tartar encampment, containing forty tents. We remained here two hours. Though the thermometer was 88 in the shade, and 122 in the sun, I felt but little inconvenience from the heat.

We put up vast numbers of partridges on our march, saw herds of antelopes, and swarms of locusts. We continued travelling till evening, when we fell in with a large body of Tartars, who had struck their tents for the summer season.

June 24.—We started at three in the morning. The appearance of the country has gradually improved, since we left the marsh on the banks of the river. We travelled for several miles this morning com-

* Turner's History of the Anglo Saxons, vol. i. p. 114.

pletely protected from the heat of the sun by the luxuriant foliage of the trees. We passed a Cossack station to our left. A few straw huts comprised the barracks. The soldiers were employed in hay-making. As I passed, they all faced towards me, and stood at attention, with their heads uncovered, in compliment to my military dress. The country people also observed the European ceremony, by taking off their caps, which, discovering their shorn heads, had a curious appearance.

At some distance on the left hand we saw Khanakhi, a well-built town, in which is a Russian force. We passed several Armenian villages, all remarkable for their cleanly appearance. The cattle were now so knocked up that I almost despaired of reaching my destination. One of the horses, which was unable to proceed, was consigned to the care of an Armenian, and died shortly after.

On arriving at the summit of a mountain I came in sight of Sheesha. The town is built on a huge mass of sloping rock of great height. The ascent is so precipitous that the houses appear to be hanging on it like bird-cages. I was upwards of two hours in reaching the top. All the horses but two were completely knocked up. I took the least laden of these, and my servant and I rode by turns till we arrived at the gate. Unluckily I had left my passport with the baggage, which occasioned the sentinel to give me in charge of a corporal and a file of men, by whom I was conducted to the Russian officers' quarters, and afterwards to the house of the commanding officer of the regiment, where I remained for two hours in arrest.

My casual stay at the barracks gave me no great idea of the comfort of Russian subalterns. In a small dark dirty room I saw four beds : on each of which an officer was snoring as I entered.

It was now three o'clock in the afternoon: I had been for twelve hours employed in a laborious march, and for nineteen had not tasted food. I was almost worn out with heat, hunger, and fatigue, and with but a faint hope of release, when something was said about assigning me a quarter. At this moment, a jolly fat-looking gentleman stepped forward, and begged for me as his guest. His name was Aga Beg; he was chief of the Armenians. With so fine a promise of good cheer as his appearance gave, I eagerly accepted his hospitality, and accompanied him home. A plentiful repast was spread on the floor. As soon as it was ready, two brothers of my host, the counterparts of himself, came in; and to judge by their appetites had, like myself, arrived half starved from a journey.

In the evening, two Missionaries came to call upon me; one a Swiss, the other a Pole. The latter was a Polish nobleman: his motive for leaving his own country was twofold: the first was the laudable object of preaching the Gospel of Christ; the other was to attempt to establish liberty and equality wherever he went. He gave me a specimen of this visionary scheme, in inviting me to dinner the next day, and desiring to know whether I would object to sit at table with his servant, an Armenian of the lowest description. I told him I should be happy to dine with him, provided his servant should be behind a chair, and not in one.

June 25.—I dined with the Missionaries at one o'clock, and afterwards paid my respects to Colonel Tschikoff, the Commandant of the district, who had just returned from visiting the different posts of the district under his command. Several officers were present during our interview, but, agreeably to Russian discipline, none sate in the presence of their superior officer. As neither the Colonel nor myself

spoke any European language which the other understood, we were obliged to call in the aid of two Asiatic languages; he spoke Turkish, I Persian, and my servant acted as interpreter between us.

June 26.—The Commandant returned my visit the next morning, was very civil, and promised to do every thing in his power to facilitate my journey. He had not long taken his leave, when Aga Beg and his brother entered the room in high altercation, because the latter had allowed the Commandant to leave the house without partaking of a feast that had been prepared for him: this he considered a great affront; and so indignant was he at it, that he was very near going to the Colonel to persuade him to pay me another visit, solely for the purpose of making him eat some of the good cheer.

In the afternoon I accompanied one of the Missionaries over the town and the suburbs: in returning, he took me to the Armenian burying-ground. A boy who was with us ran forward, and kneeling down kissed one of the tomb-stones. Upon asking to whose tomb such honours were paid, I was told that it was that of a man named Nartuck, who is dignified with the title of Martyr, and respecting whom the following story is told and almost universally believed.

Forty years ago, when the Tartar *Khans* (Princes) were in possession of Sheesha, Nartuck, a Christian of Georgia, was the property of a Mahometan, whom he killed in attempting to commit a brutal assault upon his person. The brother of the deceased seized Nartuck, and gave him the usual alternative of suffering death or embracing Mahometanism. His belief in our Saviour and the Trinity was the only answer he made to the often-repeated proposal. After undergoing the most dreadful tortures, he expired, and his body was conveyed to this spot. At night, a large flame appeared over the tomb,

which was seen by both Mussulmans and Christians : one said it was fire from heaven, as a mark of divine wrath at an infidel having killed a Mussulman, and the others hailed it as a sign of the Deity's approbation of the conduct of the deceased : all parties, however, are agreed as to the fact. One with whom I conversed said he saw the flame, and described the size of it to me. Such an appearance might easily present itself without supernatural aid, in a country so abounding in bituminous productions.

Sheesha contains two thousand houses : three parts of the inhabitants are Tartars, and the remainder Armenians. The Tartars of the town, as well as of the whole province of Karabaugh, are of the Shiah sect of Mahometans. The present town was built eighty years ago by a Tartar prince : the remains of the old town are visible at the foot of the opposite hill. The lower parts of the houses are built of stone, with roofs, which are shelving, of shingle. The town and fort are surrounded by a wall ; but the natural advantages of the situation, on the top of an almost inaccessible rock, have left little occasion for artificial defence. The language is a dialect of the Turkish ; but the inhabitants, with the exception of the Armenians, generally read and write Persian. The trade is carried on principally by the Armenians, between the towns of Shekhi, Nakhshewan, Khoi, and Tabriz. The population was formerly greater than at present ; but it is beginning to increase, as numbers of the inhabitants who fled from the oppressions of the Khans, are attracted back again by the milder yoke of Russia. During my stay, the thermometer in the daytime ranged from 68° to 76° ; the atmosphere in the town is 12 or 14 degrees cooler than the valley below.

The costume is much the same as the Persian ; the greatest

difference is in the head-dress. Instead of the small Persian cap, some of the Karabaughians have one as large as that worn by a French drum-major; others have a cap fitting close to the head, and bound round with fur.

June 27.—One of my host's brothers, whose inordinate addiction to eating and drinking had brought on a violent fit of indigestion, had applied to an Armenian doctor, who had recommended a double allowance of the strong bitter brandy he had been taking, and which was, no doubt, the original cause of his complaint. This prescription, as might be supposed, had only added fuel to the flame, and the poor fellow, gradually becoming worse, was at last in a burning fever.

In this dilemma, as Englishman and doctor are synonymous terms, he applied to me for assistance, which I gave by administering calomel, with the reckless profusion of an Indian operator. The dose was fortunately attended with most complete success; and so grateful was my patient for the relief I had occasioned, that instead of a fee he presented me with a Georgian silk handkerchief, a snuff-box, and a curiously wrought purse.

This cure soon spread my fame through the town, and brought numerous applicants for professional assistance. Defects of sight and hearing, and various other difficult cases, were laid before me, in the full confidence of obtaining instant relief. Amongst those willing to become my patients was a handsome young married woman, who began stating her ailments with such minuteness, that had I not interrupted her detail, I should soon have acquired more professional information from her, than I could have had the opportunity of communicating in return.

CHAPTER XXII.

Cossack Posts, Horses, Cheer—Mode of making Tea—Ruins of Berda—Abundance of Game—Lug—River Kur, the Ancient Cyrus—Koordameer—The Na-ib—Shumakhi—Interview with the Commandant—Town of Bakoo—Bazaar—Productions—Population—Military Force—Fire-Temple of Indian Pilgrims—A Brahmin—A Viragee—A Naphtha Well—My Servant knocked up—Cossack Officer—His Quarters—Breakfast—Town of Kuba—Kula noo—Fall asleep on Horseback—Flooded state of the river Samur—Lesguy Tartars—Russian Notion of English Radicalism—Major of Cossacks—City of Durbund—Ancient Walls—Population—Extensive Barracks—Russian Salutation—Dinner—My new Servant—His Appearance and Dress—His easy Manners—Polite Attention of my Host—Departure from Durbund—Nervous Irritability—Vexatious Delays—My Servant a Catcher of Tartars—His desisting from Sleep.

At the distance of every eight or ten miles, detachments of mounted Cossacks, with relays of horses, are stationed from Sheesha to Bakoo, and along the banks of the Caspian Sea to Kizliar, a town skirting the great desert of Astrakhan. By the commandant of Sheesha I was furnished with an order on all these stations for five horses, to carry myself, servant, and baggage : I had besides, one, and occasionally two Cossacks, to escort me on the road, who also took back the horses at the end of the stage.

The Cossack horses here are stouter than those of the Don; they stand from twelve to thirteen hands, and are well calculated for the mountainous country in which they are principally used. The saddle is a frame-work of wood, much peaked before and behind; on this is strapped a black leather cushion, which serves the rider for his pillow at night: after a few days' riding I preferred this to the English saddle.

I started at six in the morning, and arrived at nine at the first Cossack station, the appearance of which did not impress me with any favourable opinion of Cossack comfort. Ten men were huddled together in a mud cabin, as closely as they could well be stowed; a few sheets of dirty paper formed a substitute for glass windows, which, if they admitted an imperfect light, so excluded the air as to render the abode extremely hot and fulsome.

The men occupying the stations from Sheesha to Kizliar, are Cossacks of the river Terek. They are, I believe, on the same footing with those of the Don and Ukraine. They are free, serve for three years, receive no pay, but are fed: if their horses die, others are given them.

This day's march led us through as fine a country as any I had yet seen. Each turn of the winding road brought some new beauty to view; the trees which clothed the hills were entwined with wild vines, producing abundance of grapes. On quitting the mountains, we passed through extensive fields of corn, and we afterwards came on a spacious plain, over which vast herds of antelopes were bounding in every direction.

At sunset, having travelled about thirty miles, we forded the river Tartar, and halted for the night at a station so called. Being

very hungry, I sent my servant to the Cossacks to purchase provisions; but he returned with the unwelcome intelligence, that black bread and the water of the river formed their only subsistence, and that even of such miserable cheer not a crumb remained. I fared well enough with Mahometans:—on arriving amongst Christians, I went supperless to bed.

June 29.—My object in coming to this station had been to visit some ancient ruins at a place called Berda; but I was informed that, Berda being out of the road, I could not be supplied with horses: I also heard that the regular stages to Bakoo were by Ganja, forty miles out of the direct line. These circumstances being duly weighed, and the cravings of an empty stomach thrown into the scale, determined me to forego for the present the advantages of my order for horses, and to take the shorter route through the Tartar villages, trusting to the inhabitants for safe conduct, and still hoping for more palatable fare than bread and water.

With some little difficulty, and a small *douceur*, the Cossacks agreed to send me as far as Berda, which I reached in a pleasant march of a couple of hours, along the banks of the river, through a beautiful forest of oaks, walnuts, and lime-trees. I found here a body of Tartars occupying some cane huts. Instead of indulging in idle curiosity, they all bustled about to prepare breakfast, and were so expeditious that I was well pleased with the resolution I had formed.

As every hint that will save time is useful to travellers, I strongly recommend my mode of making tea. I always carried my kettle at the bow of the saddle, and the moment I halted, the kettle was unloosed, and in it were put water, tea, milk and sugar, all toge-

ther, making, when boiled, a very palatable beverage ; and I saved by this process, on an average, about an hour a-day.

While at breakfast the Mollah of the village paid me a visit, and conversed with me in Persian. Hearing that I came from India, he was particularly anxious to know any accounts relative to the Afghauns, who, he had heard, were the most warlike people of Hindoostan, with whom his tribe boasted a common origin. In my journey through the province of Shirvan, and the adjoining countries, questions respecting that nation were frequently asked me by the natives, and are worthy of remark, as they agree with the commonly-received opinion that a colony from ancient Albania (Shirvan) forms that tribe of Indian Tartars known by the name of the Afghauns. Amongst my notes I find the following extract from a book, but do not at this moment recollect the name of the author : —“ The present Shirvan is the country of the ancient Albanians, conquered by Pompey ; they are likewise called Alanians ; and the Armenians, who never pronounce the letter l, who say Ghouka for Luka, and Ighia for Ilia, have called them Aghouani. These ancient Albanians have given up their country to the Turks, by whom it is now occupied, and have very probably formed the nation of the Afghauns, whom the Armenians acknowledge as their brethren, though their languages are now different, which may easily happen, and on which subject I think I have treated in my *Primitive History*.”

The ruins at Berda are said to be very ancient ; by some thought to be those of a city of Amazons, who, according to history, once inhabited this country ; but while the existence of these female warriors is a matter of doubt, the site of one of their cities does not deserve much notice ; nor indeed do the appearance of these ruins

justify the assignment of an earlier date than the beginning of the Mahometan æra. A dilapidated wall running north and south, can be traced for upwards of a quarter of a mile. At the end of this, enclosed in a quadrangular fort, is a ruined mosque of glazed tiles, like that at Bagdad, attributed to Caliph Alraschid. Near the mosque I was shown some mounds, which were called the remains of Fire-temples; and a little further on was the tomb of a near relation of Mahomet, before which my guides fell on their faces, and remained prostrate for nearly a minute. The person here buried is said to have been the grand-niece of the Prophet, which, if true, would give to these ruins as remote a date as a thousand years.

We quitted Berda at eleven, and passed through a continuation of the forest. The game that I saw on this march is incredible: partridges were getting up every moment almost under the horses' feet, and hares literally galloped in droves before us along the road.

I was informed that though the hare is forbidden to be eaten by the Mahometan law, both the Sunnis and Shiahs, inhabiting this country, have a dispensation from their priests, of which however they do not avail themselves, having a great dislike to the taste of that animal.

A traveller who is a sportsman, and not pressed for time, would find many modes of dissipating the tædium of his journey, as game of every description is most abundant, and as, I was told at Tabriz, the trout-fishing here is unequalled in any part of the world.

On leaving the forest we came to a small village called Lug, and thence went ten miles in an easterly direction, across a marshy plain, and arrived at dusk at Lumberan, where I became the guest of and the Ket-khoda (the chief man) of the village.

June 30.—I started at sunrise, with fresh horses ; and, having marched ten miles across a plain covered with antelopes, arrived on the banks of the Kur, which forms the southern boundary of the extensive province of Shirvan. This river, the Cyrus of the ancients, is considerably larger than the Araxes, but less rapid in its course : not far hence, it receives the waters of the Araxes, and the united streams then disembogue into the Caspian sea. It was on the banks of this river that Cyrus was massacred, together with his army, by the neighbouring mountaineers.

We hailed the village on the opposite side, and a boat was immediately sent, which conveyed us over. We here speedily procured horses, and proceeded to a village ten miles distant, of which I forget the name ; where, after a delay of two or three hours, we engaged some horses at four times the usual charge. The weather throughout, was almost insupportable. The sun, which had been burning hot, took the breeze with it as it went down. As night came on, there was not a breath of air, and I had to pass through a swampy plain, nearly suffocated with heat, and devoured by mosquitoes. I arrived at the village of Koordameer, a distance of thirty-four miles, and threw myself down to sleep in the first vacant space I could find.

July 1.—We travelled for fourteen miles over an uncultivated plain, covered with low brushwood, and came to a range of mountains, the base of which was for several miles studded with well-wooded villages, surrounded by extensive corn-fields. In the midst of these, stands a town, where a Cossack post is stationed. I called upon the chief person, who is called the Na-ib (deputy governor) : he was seated in a garden, and dispensing justice as I arrived. He

was a handsome Tartar, well informed, and of polite and easy address. Telling him I wished to proceed as quickly as possible, he immediately sent for my escort of Cossacks, and in a short time set before me a comfortable meal of antelope venison.

The Na-ib pressed me very much to stay two or three days with him, that we might hunt together; but the wish to proceed onwards surmounted every other, and as soon as the horses arrived, I took leave of this hospitable Tartar.

The road hence led over mountains abounding in plentiful crops, but with nothing else in the appearance of the scenery to recommend it to notice: the range continued to Nova Shumakhi, where I arrived in the evening. This town, once the seat of government of a Tartar prince, though now in a dilapidated state, exhibits marks of former splendour; the buildings are principally of bricks, and the masonry is very good. It is defended by a quadrangular wall and a broad ditch. Like other towns in this turbulent region, it has felt the bad consequences of so often changing masters. Its present possessors, the Russians, are repairing the ravages inflicted by Aga Mohumud, who wrested it from the Tartars in the latter end of the last century. A new street of shops, on an European plan, is raising its head from amongst the remains of Asiatic architecture; and the places of Mahometan worship have been converted into storehouses and magazines. The place where I passed the night, had once been a Mudrissch, a Mahometan college, but now serves as a Cossack post-house.

July 2.—I had sent my passport to be sealed and countersigned by the Colonel-Commandant of this province, whose head-quarters are established here. In the morning it was brought me by one of his officers, with a civil message from the Commandant, desiring to see

me, if not inconvenient. With the aid of one of his Meerzas (secretaries) who understood Persian and Turkish, the Commandant and I managed to converse, till, hearing I spoke French, he dismissed the Meerza, and sent for an officer who, he said, understood that language. An awkward silence of five minutes succeeded the entrance of this officer, who could neither interpret the Colonel's, nor understand my observations; at last, he stammered out "*le Colonel mange vous*," which I, supposing to mean an invitation to dinner, declined; and to relieve all parties, took my leave of the Colonel and this *professor* of the French language.

One of the stations at which I changed horses to-day, is situated in the midst of the ruins of the old Shumakhi, the Shumakha of ancient history: fragments of stone walls are still visible, and appear to extend a considerable distance, but I was not tempted to examine them more minutely.

July 3.—I slept at a Cossack station, and started at dawn of day for Bakoo. Our road was over a range of mountains, and as we reached the highest, the Caspian Sea first came in sight, from which the sun was rising in splendid majesty.

We descended rapidly from hence into the low and arid plain, at the extremity of which is situated the sea-port town of Bakoo, where herds of double-humped camels were cropping the scanty pasture.

July 4.—Crossing over the drawbridge of the town, I was stopped by the officer of the main guard, to whom I delivered my passport; but, as reading was not one of his accomplishments, I had to wait in the sun till he could find some one to decypher the document. As at Sheesha, I was sent in charge of a file of men to the commandant's

house, when, meeting the colonel of the engineers, who spoke French, I became his guest for the three days I remained here.

Bakoo, pleasantly situated on the peninsula of Abosharon, is a neat, though small sea-port town, built entirely of stone. It is surrounded by a deep ditch and double wall of stone, the western side of which was completely carried away last year by one of those violent hurricanes so common in this place, and from which the name of the town is derived.* The roofs of the houses are flat, and covered with a thick coating of naphtha. There is one Armenian church, and twenty mosques; but some are in ruins, others have been converted by the Russians into magazines; and the only Russian church here was once a place of Mahometan worship.

The bazaar, which, though small and narrow, is neat and clean, forms an advantageous contrast with the general appearance of these Asiatic marts. There are no vegetables here, nor, indeed, is there a blade of vegetation. The water, which is drawn from pits in the suburbs, is reckoned very wholesome. The principal productions are the black and white naphtha, which are in such abundance, that some of the wells are said to produce fifteen hundred pounds a-day. The principal commodities of commerce are common silk and small articles of Russian manufacture. The population is computed at four thousand souls, which, with the exception of a few Armenians, consists of Tartars. A force of five hundred men comprises the nominal strength of the garrison; but the mortality is so great, especially amongst the new conscripts, that they have seldom more than half that number effective.

* Bakoo, Badko, "literally, the Wind of the Mountain; so named from the violent gusts of wind which blow at times from the chasms of the mountains."—Kinnier.

In my evening strolls along the banks of the Caspian, I had occasion to observe the immense quantity of herrings which had been caught by the fishermen here. These fish, which are called by the Persians the royal fish, were the finest of the species I had ever seen. I have little to remark respecting the Caspian Sea, except that the answers to my enquiries confirmed what has been said of it by Pallas and other travellers.

On the site of the modern town, once stood a city, celebrated in the times of the Guebres for its sacred temples, on the altars of which blazed perpetual flames of fire, produced by ignited naphtha. To this place thousands of pilgrims paid their annual visit, till the second expedition of Heraclius against the Persians, when he wintered in these plains, and destroyed the temples of the Magi.* The fire which fed these altars continues to burn, and a temple is still inhabited by pilgrims, who, though not Guebres, still pay their adorations to the holy flames. To witness this, I had diverged so great a distance from the usual route of travellers returning through Persia to Europe.

July 6.—I left Bakoo early this morning, attended by my servant and a Cossack. Sixteen miles north-east of the town, on the extremity of the peninsula of Abosharon, I came, after ascending a hill, in sight of the object of my curiosity. The country around is an arid rock. Enclosed within a pentagonal wall, and standing nearly in the centre of the court, is the fire-temple, a small square building, with three steps leading up to it from each face. Three bells of different sizes are suspended from the roof. At each corner is a hollow column,

* Gibbon, vol. iv. chap. xlvi. page 520, fol. edit.

higher than the surrounding buildings, from the top of which issues a bright flame ; a large fire of ignited naphtha is burning in the middle of the court, and outside several places are in flames. The pentagon, which on the outside forms the wall, comprises in the interior nineteen small cells, each inhabited by a devotee. On approaching the temple, I immediately recognized, by the features of the pilgrims, that they were Hindoos, and not Persian fire-worshippers, as I had been taught to expect. Some of them were preparing food. I was much amused at the surprise they showed on hearing me converse in Hindostany. The language they spoke was so mixed up with the corrupt dialect of the Tartars, that I had some difficulty in understanding them. I dismounted from my horse, and gave it in charge to the Cossack, whom they would not allow to enter the temple, giving, somewhat inconsistently, as a reason, that he was an Infidel. I followed one of the pilgrims, who first took me into a cell where a Brahmin, for so his thread proclaimed him, was engaged in prayer. The constitutional apathy of the Indian was strongly marked in the reception this man gave me. The appearance of an armed European, it would be supposed, would have alarmed one of his timid caste ; he testified, however, neither fear nor surprise, but continued his devotions, with his eyes fixed on the wall, not deigning to honour me with a look, till his prayers were over, when he calmly and civilly bade me welcome to his poor retreat.

My first acquaintance and the Brahmin then accompanied me round the other cells, which were whitewashed, and remarkably clean. In one of them was the officiating priest of the Viragee caste. This faquir wore only a small cloth round his loins ; he held a piece of red silk in his right hand, and wore on his head a cap

of tiger's skin: this is, I believe, emblematical of the life of the wearer, who, on leaving the society of man, is supposed to have recourse to the skins of wild beasts for a covering. In a small recess stood a figure of Vishnoo, and near it one of Hunoomaun,

——— "he
Whom India serves, the monkey deity."

My acquaintance with their deities seemed to please them much: one of them said, "You know our religion so well, that I need not tell you where you ought, or ought not to go." While I was here, another Viragee came in: he was a stout, well-looking man, with matted locks and shaggy beard, and covered with a coarse camel-hair cloth; his body was tattooed all over with the figure of Vishnoo.

On entering the temple he prostrated himself before the image. The priest then put into his hands a small quantity of oil, part of which he swallowed, and rubbed the rest on his hair. This man was once a Sepoy in the Indian army, and had been an orderly to a Colonel Howard in the time of Lord Cornwallis: he was the only man who seemed to have any acquaintance with the English. I was informed, that there is a constant succession of pilgrims, who come from different parts of India, and relieve each other every two or three years in watching the holy flame. This rule does not apply to the Pundit, or Chief, who remains for life. They spoke of their present chief as a man of great learning and piety: as they wished me very much to converse with him, I accompanied them to his cell, which was locked: they told me that he was either at prayers or asleep, but no one offered to disturb him. Of

the pilgrims present, five were Brahmins, seven Viragees, five Sunapeys, and two Yogees. They spoke favourably of the Russians, but with more rancour against the Mahometans than is usual amongst Hindoos for those of a different persuasion. They said that Nadir Shah treated their predecessors with great cruelty; impaling them, and putting them to several kinds of tortures. All these faquirs were very civil and communicative, with the exception of one Viragee, the severest caste of Indian ascetics: he was quite a Diogenes in his way; and, when asked to accompany me, called out that it was no business of his.

Outside the temple is a well: I tasted the water, which was strongly impregnated with naphtha. A pilgrim covered this well over with two or three nummuds for five minutes; he then warned every one to go to a distance, and threw in a lighted straw; immediately a large flame issued forth, the noise and appearance of which resembled the explosion of a tumbril. The pilgrims wished me to stay till dark, to see the appearance at night; but the bright prospect of home in the distance got the better of curiosity, and made me hurry forward. I passed several villages, the inhabitants of which were employed in collecting black and white naphtha, and arrived at a Cossack station in the evening.

July 7.—In the first part of this march, the road led principally along the seashore; the country, throughout, is a salt desert, which continues till within twenty versts of Kuba.

In my anxiety to proceed at a quicker pace, I so completely knocked up my servant, that he could with difficulty be prevented from falling out of his saddle. After a hot and fatiguing march, we arrived at a Cossack station, where I purposed breakfasting;

but my exhausted domestic had no sooner dismounted, than he threw himself into the first shady spot he could find, and was soon in a profound slumber, leaving me without breakfast, or the power to make known my wants. Thinking I should only lose time by disturbing the poor fellow's rest, I let him sleep on, and sate down on my baggage, hungry and dispirited. In this mood I was accosted by a gigantic personage, whose face, studded with pimples, was curiously set off by his huge Tartar cap. The rest of his person was incased in a cloak formed of undressed sheepskins, with the wool worn inside. He turned out to be the officer of the station, and was one of those Cossacks who visited Paris in 1815; and whose Tartar skill in spoliation must be still fresh in the recollection of the Parisians.

In a friendly growl, which he intended to be French, I distinguished the word *déjeuner*: immediately at the sound, I followed him into a wretched hovel, to which he welcomed me with an apologetic sigh. The chamber was about twelve feet square, and lighted by three small panes of glass and a few sheets of oiled paper; an uniform coat, a pair of pantaloons, a sabre, a cartouch-box, and a pair of pistols, suspended from several nails, were the only decorations of the mud walls; and a bed of straw, with the black saddle cushion for a pillow, formed the couch of the warrior. For the humble appearance of the dwelling I had been prepared; but bitter was the disappointment on observing the meal which he had dignified with the name of *déjeuner*. Bread, the blackest and heaviest I ever tasted; water not of the cleanest, three cucumbers, and a tough strip of salt fish, formed this morning's sorry bill of fare.

After breakfast, I returned to my servant, and sate watching his eyes for two hours, which, in my impatience, I thought never would

re-open. At length he awoke, and with the assistance of a hearty shake, which I gave to prevent a relapse into drowsiness, he was so far recovered as to be hoisted into the saddle, and we again got under weigh.

From this day to that on which we parted, the poor Persian became worse than useless : as, instead of his being of any assistance to me, I had to wait upon him, and to use every means of persuasion to induce him to continue the journey. On arriving at the end of the stage, I discovered that I had left behind me the order for horses, but the serjeant on the station, after making a few difficulties, which were silenced by a small fee, allowed me to proceed. I halted at a Cossack station, after a cool moonlight ride along the seashore.

July 7.—The appearance of the country improves as we approach the district of Kuba, the most fertile part of Shirvan. The villages are thickly inhabited, and the cultivation abundant.

July 8.—At mid-day I reached Kuba, once the residence of a Tartar Khan, but now in possession of the Russians, who have here a garrison of three thousand men.

Kuba stands in an elevated situation on the banks of the river Deli, a rapid stream, which, issuing from the Caucasus, flows into the Caspian Sea. Except towards the river, the steep banks of which are a sufficient protection, the town is defended by fortified walls. The population is computed at about five thousand souls, one-third of which are Jews. As I had no order for horses, I applied to the commandant for assistance, who, saying that the Cossack horses were most probably engaged on public employ, gave me an order, in Turkish, on the villages.

The country, for several versts, is populous, well cultivated, and

abounding in wood and water. I passed through a forest of lofty trees, and saw large parties of soldiers employed in felling timber for building. After fording a river, I came to a commanding eminence, called Kula Noo, (New Fort,) where two hundred Russian soldiers were employed in building barracks on a very extensive scale.

From the first setting out in this expedition, I had tried in vain to shake off the painful feeling of drowsiness with which I had always been assailed at some period of the day's march. This evening, however, I fell sound asleep in my saddle for three hours; and though the road led over precipitous mountains, I did not awake until I had arrived at the station, when I was roused by the Cossacks, who had spread my mattress for me in the middle of the yard.

July 9.—I found here three Cossack officers, who informed me that, had I been able to have forded the river Samur at the usual place, I should have reached Durbund in a journey of forty versts, but the river had become so swelled by the sudden melting of the snows on Mount Caucasus, that I should be obliged to travel double the distance.

I proceeded a considerable way along the banks of this angry torrent, and afterwards passed through several villages. At one of them I met with an officer in charge of specie for the troops; finding we were both about to cross the river, I breakfasted with him, and then accompanied him to the water's edge. The country, as we proceeded, was extremely flooded, and our progress slow in consequence of the difficulty of getting the treasure-waggons through the muddy ground.

We forded the river at about twenty-five versts from the last station, but the torrent was running with such violence, that we were

nearly three hours in reaching the opposite bank, which we could not have done without the timely assistance of the neighbouring mountaineers. The Samur, ancient *Albanus*, is three hundred and fifty yards wide, and not more than four feet deep; large heaps of stone are dispersed over the surface, and render the passage rugged and dangerous. In crossing the Samur we quit the province of Shirvan, and enter on the southern boundary of Lesguistan. In the natives of this country, we again fall in with a tribe possessing the same wandering and predatory habits as the numerous hordes which I have passed in the course of this journey. The Lesguis are reckoned the bravest people of Mount Caucasus. Till within a very few years, they proved most formidable enemies to their Russian neighbours; but now, owing to the late encroachments of the latter nation, they are in a state of subjection. They occasionally, however, make a gallant stand in defence of the liberty they had enjoyed from time immemorial. When I was at Tabriz, I had heard of a Russian force being sent against the Lesguis, and I had expected, on my arrival here, to find that the two countries were engaged in war; but I was one day set right by a Russian officer, who, alluding to the expedition against the Lesguis, said, that the affair was a mere trifle; which, by way of illustration, he compared to our mode of quelling an English insurrection, when we occasionally send “a brigade of troops against Hunt and his army of Radicals.”

Once, on the opposite shore, I quitted the convoy of my comrade, and proceeded at a quicker rate over a well-cultivated country. Reapers, consisting entirely of females, were gathering in the harvest. In one spacious field I saw no less than a hundred women at work. In the evening I bivouacked, as usual, at a Cossack station.

July 10.—In the morning the sergeant was very impertinent; would pay no attention to my Tartar order for horses, and would not furnish me with any. Soon after, a Major of Cossacks, a personage with a round hat and a long beard, and attended by an orderly, rode up, and, on hearing the sergeant's story, supported him in his refusal. As the major was very haughty and uncivil, I put on as big a look as I could assume, and, producing my passport with the signatures of several Russian commandants, told him to decline furnishing me with horses at his peril. This blustering had the desired effect, for the major muttered a few words, looked exceedingly foolish, and then galloped away, leaving me for a moment in doubt of my application; but this was soon dispelled by the sudden appearance of the sergeant with the horses, who, with a crest-fallen look, and in the most submissive manner, held the stirrup for me to mount. This major is nearly the only Russian officer from whom I experienced uncivil treatment. I changed horses ten versts distant, and at mid-day reached Durbund. I immediately reported myself to the Commandant, who, in the most hospitable manner, assigned me a good quarter, introduced me to his lady, and invited me to dine and breakfast with him during my stay. In the afternoon he sent me one of his horses, and accompanied me in a ride over the town.

The modern capital of the province of Durbund, Daghestan, stands on the site of the city of Albania, and corresponds in position with the *Albania pylæ* of the ancients. The walls, which are of undoubted antiquity, are visible from the height of the mountain, and, by the appearance of the water, may be traced a considerable distance into the Caspian Sea. These divide the city into three compartments; the highest, comprising a square of half-a-mile, con-

stitutes the citadel. The town is in the centre, and there are a few gardens in the lower division. Near the sea, I was shown the foundation of a house built by Peter the Great, who visited this city soon after it had been taken by the Russians. The highest portion of the walls is in the middle division, and is about thirty feet high, twenty thick at the foundation, decreasing to twelve in the upper part, over which is a parapet three feet thick.

The walls are built of a compact stone of a dark colour, and consist of large blocks: the cement which binds them together, is concealed by the insertion of a narrow slip of stone between each. Sixty bastions protrude at regular intervals. One of the gates towards the north, probably that which had been most in ruins, has lately been repaired by the Russians, who have adorned it with an inscription in their language: the new work sets off to advantage the more ancient appearance of the other parts of the buildings. Over another of the gates, is an inscription by Chosroes, King of Persia, in whose possession it was prior to the Mahometan æra; and so impressed was he with the importance of the place, that he granted the governors the privilege of sitting on a golden throne, which once gave a name to the city. There are various conjectures as to the founder of these walls, though all are agreed upon their high antiquity. Some say they are the celebrated Gog and Magog of history; others, that they were founded by Alexander the Great, though it seems quite improbable that he could ever have come so far as this place. There are others, again, who affirm that the founder was another Alexander, who flourished several centuries before the Macedonian hero. The universal belief among the Orientals is, that the wall formerly extended hence to the Black Sea; and though the Russian officers told me

that remains have been seen in the Caucasus to a great distance, I have the authority of Major Monteith (who has frequently attempted to discover them), that no traces whatever are visible in any part of Georgia. The most probable conjecture appears to be, that the wall terminates in some strong feature of the Caucasus, and was built for the purpose of closing this pass against the invasion of the northern Tartars.

In more modern times, Durbund has alternately been in the hands of Turks, Tartars, Arabs, Persians, and Russians; the latter nation having now possession of it for the second time. The number of the inhabitants, independent of the Russian garrison, is estimated at twelve thousand; and comprises a mixed population of Armenians, Georgians, Mahometans, principally of the Sunni persuasion, and of Jews; of which religion there are great numbers along the coast, and, as I am informed, throughout the interior of Mount Caucasus.

The bazaar is tolerably good, but the houses are mean and poor. I understand that General Yermōloff, the commander-in-chief of Georgia, intends pulling down the old town and building it anew. To the south of the town is a large tract of cultivated land, laid out in corn fields and vineyards; and there are some gardens which produce abundance of a variety of fruits, the white mulberry among others; a great quantity of saffron is also grown here. My guides took me to the burying-ground, as many of the tombs are said to be very ancient. The tomb-stones are round blocks of marble, with inscriptions in the Cufic character. Several were pointed out as belonging to some Tartar princes, who died in this spot with sword in hand, while fighting in defence of their religion.

July 11.—This morning (Sunday) the Commandant took me to dine with the colonel of a regiment quartered in the neighbourhood.

The colonel received me with much politeness, and introduced me to his lady, a lively and pretty Livonian, who, I was pleased to find, spoke French fluently. The officers as well as the men occupied temporary buildings, made of the branches of trees; but barracks on an extensive scale were preparing for their reception. While dinner was getting ready we went round the buildings, which are all of stone, and will have a grand appearance. This work is performed entirely by the soldiers; and the colonel informed me, that there was not a man in the regiment who did not follow some trade. On my return to the room, the company, consisting of the officers of the regiment and the staff-officers of the garrison, were thronging in. I here saw, for the first time, the Russian salutation. Every officer, on entering, took the right hand of the hostess and pressed it to his lips, while she at the same moment kissed his cheek. Dinner was prefaced by a glass of brandy and a piece of salt-fish. The ladies, of whom there were several, seated themselves together: the post of honour next our fair hostess, was assigned to me as the stranger; the band played during dinner; after which the company (with the exception of myself, who took a siesta,) sat down to cards.

July 12.—My Persian servant, hearing I intended to resume the journey this afternoon, told me that he would not, for any sum that I could offer, accompany me again; but as I had also determined that nothing should induce me to take him further, I had, with the assistance of the Commandant, provided myself with a substitute, who made his appearance this morning ready equipped for the march. He was a tall, fearless-looking Tartar, upwards of six feet high, with large, fierce black eyes, an aquiline nose, and a pair of mustaches that nearly covered his face. His dress, the same as that worn by other Lesguy Tartars, consisted of a low cap fitting close to the head and



From an oriental Drawing:

Printed by Engelmann & Co. & Co.

A LESGUY TARTAR

Published by H. Colburn London Dec 1. 1826.

bound round with fur, which being of the same colour as his mustaches, heightened the ferocity of his weather-beaten features. A robe of blue stuff extended to the knee; on each breast were fixed a row of painted cartridge cases; a narrow leather strap bound his loins, and in it were stuck a flint, a steel, a small tobacco-pipe, a handsome dagger, a pair of pistols, and a Tartar whip, consisting of two thick thongs. On his feet he wore a sort of sandal, which was fixed on with lacings bound tightly round the leg up to the knee. This, I have observed, is common to the mountaineers of Coordistan and Persia, as well as throughout the line of Caucasus, and is probably of use in supporting the muscles of the leg when ascending a height. The crossed pattern of the Scotch Highlander's tartan hose, may possibly have some allusion to this mode of binding.

In mentioning my Tartar's equipment, I had almost forgotten the most material article, for such he considered it—a quart bottle of Russian arrack, to which he always resorted on the journey, as his only and infallible cure for hunger, thirst, and fatigue.

The free and easy manner of this fellow towards myself was curiously contrasted with the respectful deportment to which I had been accustomed from his predecessor, who never addressed me but with the title of Jenaub (excellency), nor spoke of himself but as my bundah (slave).

My stipulation with the Tartar was that he should accompany me to Kizliar, and for this he should receive a tomaun a day, provided he was always on the alert, and was content with the small portion of sleep I should allow him. He immediately replied, that he would not sleep at all; a promise which, to the best of my belief, he faithfully kept. The bargain was scarcely concluded, when the Persian, in an earnest tone of remonstrance, spoke a few words

to him in Turkish, which I found were intended to dissuade him from accompanying me, saying that, if he did, he would certainly die of fatigue. In reply to this friendly caution, the Tartar cast a contemptuous glance at his adviser, and turning round familiarly to me loudly exclaimed, “God be praised, *we* are not Persians!”

As a small acknowledgment for the truly kind and hospitable behaviour of the Commandant towards myself, I made him a present of my pistols; and he in return gave me a handsome Lesguy dagger, and a curious segar tube. At two o'clock we sate down to a farewell dinner; after which, as I was preparing to take my leave, several ladies of the garrison, attracted perhaps by curiosity, came to see the English officer: at this I was of course well pleased, as it gave me an opportunity, at parting, of practising the Russian mode of salute.

I had ordered the baggage to be packed, and every thing to be got ready by four o'clock. At the appointed hour, my Tartar arrived with six men, whom the Commandant had sent to escort me to the first Cossack station, commanded by a Major, his particular friend, to whom he gave me a letter of introduction. This stage was only ten miles; but, my object in leaving Durbund in the afternoon being to avoid the probable detention at the barrier in the morning, I accepted the Major's invitation to sup with him, and take up my quarters for the night.

July 14, 15.—I find a chasm of these two days in the notes of the journal; an omission attributable to the anxiety I felt to hurry forward on the journey, which sensation superseded every other, and rendered me as incapable of mental exertion, as insensible to bodily fatigue. In this nervous state I could find but little time for meals and rest, and still less for paying the necessary attention to the

objects of interest on the march. Thus I continued travelling night and day, availing myself of the occasional delay in changing horses to procure a few hours' sleep.

Notwithstanding the hurry I was in, our progress was but slow. Vexatious delays were sure to occur at every stage, the Cossack posts not having been long established: at one place, the horses were out in the fields; at another, they had just arrived from a stage; in short, I had frequently to lament, that though always a great loser of patience, I was not often a proportionate gainer of time.

With no such stimulus to exertion as that by which I was actuated, my indefatigable servant was fully as much on the alert as myself during the march, and, as I said before, never slept a wink during our occasional halts. This habit of wakefulness he had acquired as a "Catcher of Tartars;" a situation in which he had been employed by General Yermoloff, when the road was infested by the Lesguy hordes.

Though I have no notes, I remember arriving on the night of the 14th at a Cossack station, where, as was my custom, I reclined with my face towards the east, that I might have the advantage of the sun's earliest rays to rouse me from slumbers which a restless spirit grudgingly considered as so much lost time.

As I was about to fall asleep, the bright light of the moon was reflected on the huge figure of the Tartar. He was sitting by my pillow, a bottle of arrack was in his lap, and his glaring eyes were watching mine. At dawn of day I awoke, and beheld him seated exactly in the same position; and, but for the evident diminution in the contents of the bottle, I should have given him credit for having stirred neither hand nor foot.

CHAPTER XXIII.

District of Shamkhaul—The Shamkhaul—Tarkee—A little Amazon—River Koi Soui—Extraordinary Flight of Locusts—Nogai Tartars—Quarantine-house—Arrive at Kizliar ; am the guest of a friend of my Servant's—The Town, Population, and Produce—My new Servant, a Jew boy—Anecdote—Departure from Kizliar—My new Equipage—Post-horses, Cossack and Kalmuck Drivers—Locusts in the Desert—Quarantine—Arrival at Astrakhan—Scotch Missionary-house—Alexander Cassim Beg—Obstacles to the Missionaries—Their Privileges—City of Astrakhan—Population—Variety of Costume—Prisoner begging—Russian Charity—Trade—Salt—Productions—Indecent Custom—Sturgeon Fishery.

July 16.—WE passed through the populous and beautiful district of Shamkhaul, the name of which formerly gave the title to the Prince of the country. The present representative of the family, though stripped of his authority by the Russians, is indulged by them with the honorary rank of Lieutenant-general in their army, and with the permission to retain the appellation of his ancestors.

The capital of this district is Tarkee ; but the Shamkhaul himself resides in a romantic village, situate on the brow of an eminence, which commands a beautiful view of undulating mountains clothed with trees, and verdant valleys traversed by numerous rills.

My Tartar had so excited my curiosity by a description of the Sham-

khaul, that I diverged, from the direct road to see him, and, on my arrival, presented him with a letter from the friendly Commandant of Durbund, which I hoped would procure me an invitation to dinner, as my servant had particularly enumerated a love of good living among his estimable qualities.

In this scion of a royal stock, who is celebrated for eating a whole sheep at a meal, I beheld an unwieldy, red-bearded Tartar, with a forbidding countenance, that at once destroyed all hopes of a dinner. Our interview was short; he was nearly the first uncivil Mahometan I had met, so I lost no time in remounting my horse, and tried at parting to return with interest the cavalier deportment with which I had been received. I did not arrive at Tarkee till four o'clock the following morning, having been twenty-two hours on the march.

July 17.—I resumed the journey after five hours' rest, and did not stop to look at Tarkee, which contains a garrison of Russians: it is considered half way between Kizliar and Durbund. I crossed the Tarkali-oozan, and arrived at a small village in the afternoon.

On dismounting, my stirrup was held by a fair and handsome-looking person, who proved to be a female. Admiration of a military life had induced her to deprive herself of her fair tresses, and to wear the dress of a man, preparatory, as she said, to offering her services to the Emperor as a soldier. Hearing I was in the army, she told me, that, if she had been a little older, she would have accompanied me. I told her that she would be rejected, from her feminine appearance; but she said, she would cut off her breasts, whenever they were too large for concealment. On taking

leave of this little Amazón, I gave her an old aiguillette, which she accepted with great delight, and strutted off with it on her shoulder, to the no small amusement of the villagers.

At midnight I reached the River Koi Soui, which divides a large Tartar village, occupied by a party of Russians. The commanding officer of the detachment (a lieutenant) had been in bed some time, but, hearing of my arrival, ordered refreshments to be prepared; and such was his strict sense of discipline, that nothing would induce him to be seated in the presence of one he considered his superior officer.

July 18.—We crossed the river in the morning, and marched thirty versts in a northern direction over a level plain.

Looking towards the east, I observed an opaque body moving gradually forward. It was a flight of locusts, so large as to have the appearance of a black cloud extending over the horizon. "They covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened." These winged strangers, more formidable than the banditti of the country, had destroyed every blade of vegetation, and had turned a well-cultivated plain into a desolate waste.

The Nogai Tartars, with whom we now were, differed in features from the handsome tribes occupying the countries we had just quitted. They had thicker lips, flatter noses, smaller eyes, and that peculiar expression of countenance common to their race. Scattered over the plain were several large encampments of bell-shaped tents, which had a very picturesque appearance.

In the afternoon, I arrived at the Quarantine-house, a small fort surrounded by an inconsiderable ditch. I wished to have continued my journey, but the commandant, though he said he would not

detain me, was so pressing in his invitation, that I halted for the night.

July 19.—I reached Kizliar, only ten versts distant, at an early hour. Not knowing where to find a lodging, I followed my servant, who offered me the hospitality of a friend. As I had not much faith in his promise of good cheer, I was agreeably surprised on seeing him stop at a neat and spacious house, where a respectable Armenian received and ushered me into a clean and comfortable apartment.

This being a fast-day, no meat was allowed to be sold at the shops; but these rules of abstinence not always applying to the commandant, who, doubtless, thinks his office entitled to a dispensation, my host very kindly procured from him some mutton, which seasoned by some excellent red champagne, of Kizliar growth, afforded an entertainment to which I had long been unaccustomed. The town of Kizliar, standing on the banks of the river Terek, is sixty versts from the Caspian Sea. The population, including those of the dependent villages, may be computed at twenty thousand. Of these the Tartars and Armenians form the two greatest divisions; the rest of the inhabitants are the refuse of the numerous tribes of Mount Caucasus. The grapes of Kizliar produce several different kinds of wine; indeed the vines grown on the banks of the Terek, are equal in quality to those of the Don. The inhabitants cultivate also cotton and tobacco, but import the greater portion of their corn from Astrakhan.

July 20.—As Kizliar is the last Cossack station on the road, here ended my journey on horseback: horses and carriages are procured hence to St. Petersburg. Being resolved to proceed with as little possible delay, I asked the commandant for an order for post-horses, but he refused to let me go without being attended by some one

whom he could hold responsible for my safety. As it would have been cruel to have again accepted the services of my Tartar, who, poor fellow, had scarcely awoke from the sleep he commenced the morning before, I offered a reward to any one who would become my travelling companion to Astrakhan, and soon succeeded in engaging a Jew boy in that capacity.

The rude customs of my Tartar friends are exemplified in an anecdote respecting this new servant, which, I confess, it gives me pleasure to relate, though I make a considerable figure in it.

He is a native of a small remote village on the banks of the Terek, whence his sister, a beautiful girl twelve years old, was carried off by some Tartar kidnappers, who sold her to a Mahometan merchant resident here. The poor Jew, after an unsuccessful application to the commandant for her release, flew to the merchant, who agreed not to make her his wife for two years, and in the interval to return her for a specified sum. The time had nearly elapsed when I saw him. The money I gave was sufficient for his sister's release; and I feel somewhat proud of having relieved this fair damsel.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, my new equipage came to the door, driven by a Kalmuck Tartar. The vehicle was an open four-wheeled carriage, without springs, called an *Arba*. It was five feet five inches long, three feet broad, and perhaps three deep, resembling a beef-barrel sawed in half. To this wretched conveyance were attached three half-starved ponies abreast. The collars were of wood, and the reins and traces of rope. Over the collar of the centre horse were suspended three bells. Not a moment was lost in packing the baggage. A little straw was placed at the bottom, the mattress was spread on it, and the clothes-bags served as pillows. We were

no sooner seated than off we went, full gallop, to the jingling of the bells; our party consisting of the master, a Christian, the valet, a Jew, and the coachman, a worshipper of the Grand Lama.

Quitting the suburbs of Kizliar, you immediately enter on the great desert of Astrakhan. The road hence to the city is tolerably good, with the exception of some high sandy ridges, which require you to take a circuitous route.

We reached the first post-house at dark: I here found the utility of the bells, which had so annoyed me before. Their sound being heard at a considerable distance in the stillness of the desert, warns the keeper of the post-house of the traveller's approach, and enables him to bring in the relay horses from pasture. The man employed in this office was mounted on a horse without saddle or bridle: he had a long two-pronged stick in his hand, and drove before him about thirty horses, which obeyed him as readily as a pack of hounds do the voice of a huntsman.

With the exception of the keepers of the post-house, no population was visible till within the vicinity of Astrakhan. In the winter, twenty-four thousand families encamp here, and retire in the summer season to the different branches of Mount Caucasus.

The post-houses, which are most miserable dwellings, are kept either by Cossacks or Kalmucks. The contrast between the representatives of these two nations was highly amusing. At one stage I was driven by a shaggy, unshaved Russian, in a European hat. At the next, my coachman was a lank-haired, beardless Kalmuck, in yellow cap and scarlet boots. Each driver was very sparing of his whip. If the horses flagged, he commenced a song, which, like the melody of Orpheus, so charmed the brutes, that they always quick-

ened their pace. There was but little harmony in the performances of either Cossack or Kalmuck ; but I forgot the toil of the journey in listening to the whine and hum of the one, and the gay and sprightly air of the other.

July 22.—The only change from the sand of the desert, which for two days we had now been traversing, was here and there a patch of rank grass. On these forlorn vestiges of verdure the hungry locusts had settled in swarms ; not to be disturbed by our carriage-wheels, which rolled over them with as little scruple as the car of Juggernaut crushes a devotee.

At midnight I arrived at the Quarantine-house, where I heard I should be detained four days. I found here three Kizliar merchants, who had passed me in a kibitka.

July 23.—I wrote a letter to the Governor of Astrakhan in the morning, which brought me a release in the afternoon ; but my three companions had to remain in confinement during the whole period.

We reached Astrakhan, a distance of twelve versts, in an hour's drive. We crossed a branch of the river Wolga, on which the city is built. After a slight detention at the custom-house, we were allowed to proceed in any direction we chose. My Jew servant, who had not long left his village on the banks of the Terek, and had always considered Kizliar as the greatest of cities, was so confounded at the populous appearance of Astrakhan, that he could not say a word, and left me to find my way about as I could. The Kizliar merchants had spoken of *Khaneé Fering*, an English inn : by repeating these words, I was at last directed to a spacious house, at the door of which was playing a rosy-cheeked boy, whose features were so English that I spoke to him in our own language. He told me

he was the son of the Rev. Mr. Glen, and that this was the Scotch Missionary-house. I had scarcely recovered from the satisfaction of hearing the welcome accents of my native land, when his mother, a handsome woman, begged I would come up-stairs, and remain with her family during my stay. I partook of a slight refreshment, and soon after there was a general summons to prayers. The congregation consisted of twenty English persons, including women and children. Psalms were first chanted. One of the missionaries then put forth an eloquent extempore prayer to the Almighty, into which he introduced a thanksgiving for my safe arrival and escape from so many dangers.

At no period of my life do I remember to have been impressed with so strong a feeling of devotion as on this evening. Few persons of the same general habits will understand my particular feelings. Few have ever been placed in the same situation under similar circumstances. Quitting countries once the most rich and populous, now the most desolate and lone, fulfilling in their calamities the decrees of Divine Providence; safe from the dangers of the desert, and from the barbarian tribes with whom every crime was common, I found myself in a religious sanctuary among my own countrymen, in whose countenances, whatever were the trivial errors of their belief, might be traced the purity of their lives, and that enthusiasm in the cause of religion which has caused them to become voluntary exiles: whose kindness promised me every comfort, and whose voices were gratefully raised to Heaven in my behalf.

July 24.—After breakfast I was introduced to Alexander Cassim Beg, a Persian of rank, who had been converted by these missionaries from the Mahometan to the Christian faith. He is a fine, in-

telligent young man, and speaks English with great fluency: he is nearly the only Mussulman who has had the courage to acknowledge his conversion. Several others, equally convinced of their errors, do not forsake them, from a fear of the consequences. The missionaries are met by almost insurmountable obstacles. The person changing his religion, ceases from all intercourse with his countrymen: he must choose his companions from the natives of a foreign land, with whose habits and language he is unacquainted: if a mechanic, no one gives him employment; if a merchant, the only excuse for dealing with the apostate is an intent to defraud him.

The Scotch missionaries at Astrakhan belong to a colony in Circassia, or, more properly speaking, Cabardia, named Karass. The affairs of the colony are managed by their own laws, except in criminal cases. They have a free exercise of their own religion, and have liberty to receive into their communion converts from amongst either Mahometans or heathens. They are exempt from military service, and from having soldiers quartered on them. They pay no taxes, except about five copecks for each acre of arable land; this is not paid by the individual, but by the community. They may travel all over Russia with their own passports, and may leave the empire when they choose. They have power to purchase slaves (not being Russians or Georgians), with the understanding that they are free at the end of seven years. At the first establishment of the colony, a number of Mahometans were purchased, or, as they call it, ransomed. A Circassian, christened John Mortlock, and one or two others whom I saw at Astrakhan, are of this description; but the Society not approving of this plan, the privilege has not been acted upon for many years.

Astrakhan stands at the mouth of the river Wolga, on an island formed by two of its branches. The island is called *Zauchy Baugor* (a Hare's Seat.) The city is inclosed within a fortified wall, but the water may be said to define its natural boundary. A navigable canal traverses it in various parts. A person so recently arrived from the mud palaces of Persia, is not perhaps well qualified to speak of the state of this place. To me it appeared clean and well built; its streets broad and commodious, its houses lofty and regular: I saw it, however, under considerable advantage. In consequence of the expected arrival of the Emperor Alexander, the inhabitants had white-washed their houses, roofs and all, by order of the government. The cathedral, a magnificent building, with its green cupolas, is the most beautiful object here, and may be seen at the distance of sixty versts by traders approaching from the Caspian Sea. In the middle of the town is the principal square, about two hundred yards wide N. and S., and one hundred E. and W. On the east are the houses of the Governor and Vice-Governor. Opposite is the house occupied by the missionaries. On the south is a *Gostenoi Dvor*, or range of shops, which, being uniform, have a pleasing and grand appearance. A new *Gostenoi Dvor* is now erecting a little to the west of the square. The natives of every country enjoy religious toleration here. The town is full of temples of Hindoos and Kalmucks, of the mosques of Mahometans, and of the churches of different Christian sects. Astrakhan is considered as the see of the Armenian Archbishop in Russia: I believe there is no other north of the Caucasus.

The city contains a population of sixty thousand Russians, numerous tribes of Tartars, Armenians, Indians, Kalmucks, and natives of Bokhara. As every one retains the dress of his country, the grand

square at the time of daily market has a very picturesque appearance. It was curious to observe so great a variety of costume and feature crowded into so small a space. I was delighted again to hear the fair sex enjoying one of their greatest privileges, that of speech, which they here used with noisy volubility, in haggling their wares with the natives of nearly every Asiatic country. While watching the various groups, I saw a prisoner, heavily ironed and guarded by a file of men, going round the market begging; numbers gave him a trifle. It was amusing to observe the ceremonious behaviour of the giver and receiver on these occasions. Both took off their hats, made a profusion of low bows, and then embraced each other with a politeness that accorded oddly with their half-savage appearance.

Charity is a very prevalent virtue amongst the Russians, though they appear to care little whether the object be worthy or not. I have not unfrequently seen a Russian give a coin of five farthings value to a professed beggar, who returned him two farthings in exchange.

The eastern shore of the Wolga, along the city and suburbs, is lined with vessels for two versts. Of these, some belong to the Caspian trade, but the greater portion to the inland navigation. Foreign trade is carried on chiefly by Russians and Armenians, but for the most part in Russian and Astrakhan vessels. Few towns can boast of a more advantageous situation for the purposes of commerce. The Wolga, which is three versts broad opposite Astrakhan, is navigable hence to St. Petersburg, the passage varying from fifty-six to about seventy days. Several of the missionary families came from Leith to Astrakhan by water.

In the government of Astrakhan, the salt-trade is carried on to a

very great extent. The salt taken from salt-water lakes, is piled up in vast quantities on the banks, and thence transported to different parts of the country by carriers, and, when practicable, by vessels. Its plenty and its cheapness are of great importance to the fisheries.

In the neighbourhood of the city are extensive vineyards, the site of which is generally marked by windmills, erected for the purpose of raising water for irrigation, without which assistance the parched earth would not bring the vintage to perfection. The grapes here are delicious. There are besides, a great variety of fruits; the melons are said to be the finest in the world, not excepting those of Ispahan.

The principal promenade in Astrakhan is on the banks of the canal. I was astonished to see here men and women swimming together, without the slightest regard to decency, at a time when all the principal inhabitants were taking their evening walks. This indelicate practice is very common throughout Russia. At Nishney Novogorod, I saw women walk from one bath to another, in a complete state of nudity, past a large concourse of people.

July 28.—On the 28th, Mr. Glen went with me to visit one of the sturgeon-fisheries of Mr. Ssaposhenikoff, a wealthy merchant of Astrakhan, who with the greatest civility sent us down in his own barge, having previously given orders that the fishermen should await our coming.

The distance was about thirty versts, but we had ten active Kalmucks, who soon rowed us down. The name of this fishery is Karmaziack. The dependent village contains a population of six hundred persons. One hundred boats are employed. Two persons are in each boat; one, generally a female, rows, and the other

hauls in the fish. The instruments used, are a mallet, and a stick with a large unbarbed hook at the end. Every fisherman has a certain number of lines; one line contains fifty hooks; these are placed at regular distances from each other; they are without barbs, sunk about a foot under water, and are kept in motion by small pieces of wood attached to them. The sturgeon generally swims in a large shoal near the surface. Upon being caught by one hook, he generally gets entangled with one or two more in his struggle to escape. Immediately on our arrival, the boats pushed from shore; each fisherman proceeded to take up his lines; on coming to a fish, he drew it with his hooked stick to the side of the boat, hit it a violent blow on the head with the mallet, and, after disengaging it from the other hooks, hauled it into the boat. This part of the process was excellent sport. On every side, the tremendous splashing of the water announced the capture of some huge inhabitant of the deep.

As soon as we had seen enough of this part of the business, we went into a large wooden house on the banks of the river, where a clerk was seated to take an account of the number caught. Seventy copecks is given for each fish. There were caught this morning four beloogas, one hundred and ten sturgeons, nine shevreegas, and several sterlets, a small kind of sturgeon, which, though the most delicious, are never counted. These last are distinguishable from the sturgeon by a mark above the mouth. The sterlet is almost peculiar to the Wolga, though occasionally a few are caught in the Don. The belooga is a large fish; one of those caught to-day weighed four pood, one hundred and forty-four English pounds. The shevreega is like a pike, having a very long head. There was also a

large black fish, called a som. It is very voracious, and will attack a man in the water. The head is not sold, as nobody but the Kalmucks will eat it, and they will eat any thing. It was given to our boatmen, who went off in high glee to make a meal of it.

In this house, men with instruments like boat-hooks drew the fish from the boats, and laid them in a row. Their heads were split in two; the roe, or caviar, and the isinglass were taken out and separately disposed; the bodies were cut in half and washed in a reservoir of water, thence they were taken into a large warehouse, between the walls of which are placed a quantity of ice; a few shovels of salt were thrown over them, and by this short process they became ready salted for exportation. The isinglass was taken into a room, where children were employed in laying it out either on flat boards, or rolling it up exactly in the same mode in which it is exposed for sale. The former mode constitutes what, I believe, is called the book, and the latter the sheet isinglass. In the mean time, the caviar was collected in pails, and placed on a frame of net-work over a large tub, and, by being passed to and fro, the fat fibres which connect it together were separated from it, and afterwards converted into oil. This done, thirty-five degrees of salt and water were thrown upon it, which, after being worked for twenty minutes with paddles, was drained off by a sieve, and the caviar was put into mat bags; these were squeezed well between two boards, and there the process ends. In the short space of three hours, I saw the fish caught, killed, and salted, the isinglass prepared for sale, and the salted caviar ready packed for exportation.

What we saw was the morning process. The hooks, on being separated from the fish, require no farther preparation. The fisher-

men go to their dinners, and in the evening make a second visit to their lines, when all the operations to which we were witnesses are repeated. In the winter, a particular spot, with deep holes, is left for a considerable time undisturbed : when the ice is sufficiently strong, the fishermen of the various fisheries assemble, and breaking holes in it throw in their nets ; after two days, the pit or hole is exhausted, and scarcely one fish escapes.

Mr. Ssaposhenikoff hires these fisheries of Prince Korackchin at an annual rent of four hundred and fifty thousand roubles. Besides this fishery of Karmaziack, he has twenty-nine others : a good season will produce three hundred thousand roubles clear profit.

After having seen this interesting exhibition, we went to a small house by the water-side, where a sumptuous entertainment had been prepared for us by the polite attentions of Mr. Ssaposhenikoff. We had a great variety of wines ; but that which deserves particular notice, was a bottle of London porter, which had arrived at this remote and inland quarter in a state of perfect preservation.

As I was stepping into the boat, the superintendent of the fisheries presented me with some book-isinglass, and a bag of salted caviar from the fish which I had seen alive four hours before.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Departure from Astrakhan—Mode of dispersing Locusts—Colony of Sarepta—Modern Hippophagi—German Colonies—Russian travelling—Saratoff—Penza—Nishney Novogorod—Effect of an Uniform—A Cossack Sentry—Rascolnicks—Horsemanship—Theatre—Russian dance.

ON the 30th of July I quitted the hospitable roof of Mr. Glen, and resumed my journey, for the purpose of being present at the grand annual fair which is held at Nishney Novogorod. I was accompanied from Astrakhan by Mr. James Mitchell, a young man, the son of a Missionary, whose father paid me the compliment to commit him to my care. Mr. Mitchell, who is a native of the colony of Karass, had never been farther north than Astrakhan. He travelled with me as far as St. Petersburg, and proved of the greatest service to me; as, besides Oriental languages, he was well acquainted with Russian and German: so we managed very well on the road, being able between us to speak eight different languages.

We were escorted to the opposite bank of the Wolga by all the English residents of the city, who came to bid farewell to their

young friend. Our carriage hence was a kibitka, which had been given us by the Missionaries.

For the first time during my long journey I was this evening caught in a shower of rain. We traversed the grand steppe or desert of Astrakhan for two days. On the evening of the 1st of August we arrived at a Russian village, which was surrounded by a considerable tract of well-cultivated land. While changing horses, I witnessed what was to me a very curious sight: a vast flight of locusts, extending fifteen miles, suddenly made their appearance from the east, and came in a huge phalanx to attack the crops. In an instant every villager was on the road to his own field. Some took dogs, others were on horseback, and others ran shouting and clapping their hands all the way, the inhabitants finding from experience that the locusts very much dislike noise. My fellow-traveller told me, that in the colony of Karass, when the locusts come in sight, not only all the inhabitants, but the military, turn out, and endeavour to drive them off by drums and fifes, and a perpetual discharge of musketry. The enemy thus repulsed make a speedy retreat, and commit their depredations on the lands of those who are less on the alert to resist them.

August 3.—It is difficult to describe the pleasurable sensations with which I entered the beautiful little town of Sarepta, after having been for four days and nights travelling through an almost barren waste. There had been no previous indication to point out the haunts of man, when Sarepta, seated in the bosom of a rich valley, suddenly burst on the view. Our carriage passed through small but regular streets, and stopped at the door of the inn, a neat house, in a pretty square, which, together with the church at the opposite

end, brought the snug villages of England to my mind. We were here received by a respectable-looking old German, who soon laid before us a dinner, that did not destroy the illusion of home in which I had indulged.

The greater part of Sarepta was destroyed by fire two years ago ; but the active little colony is fast repairing the devastation, and new buildings are rearing their heads in every direction. It is gratifying to know, that the principal funds which enabled them to rebuild the town, are derived from a London subscription.

In the morning we were waited upon by a deputation of the inhabitants, begging us to visit their shops. Every member of this infant republic being anxious to exert his interests for the general good, our landlord was particularly solicitous in seconding this request. His motive for so doing is gratitude for a law of the colony in his favour, which prevents any one of their number from asking a stranger to dinner, as such invitation would be prejudicial to his interest as an innkeeper and a member of the commonwealth. In return for this excellent decree, he puffs off the goods of his fellow-citizens to every new comer, which obliges them, as it did me, to purchase some trifle at every house. As for myself, I returned home laden with gingerbread and baby-linen, and tobacco. I afterwards went to visit a Moravian establishment. Opposite the inn formerly stood a house containing eighty bachelors, and near it one containing eighty spinsters. The house of the former has been burnt down ; that of the latter has escaped. The females divide their own dwelling with the men till theirs is rebuilt. When a bachelor is tired of a life of celibacy, he goes next door, chooses one out of the eighty spinsters, and makes her his wife. The pair become members of the ge-

neral community, and keep house for themselves. The vacancies are filled up by the children of those who had once been inmates of these mansions of single blessedness.

I was highly gratified with my visit to this human hive. Every thing was in the neatest order; the sisters, as they are called, with their little caps and uniform dress, reminded me of our fair Quakers. The female children were reading and writing; the young women were engaged in domestic employments. The old maids, for there were a few, were occupied in knitting and needlework. All were busy at the occupation best adapted to their peculiar habits and talents. Nor were the brothers idle; here were shoemakers, tailors, weavers, printers, and bookbinders. I was shown a fine collection of the serpents and other reptiles of Southern Russia. I saw also a large collection of antiquities found in the neighbourhood, which proves the former existence of an ancient city on this spot.

I regret that the anxiety to pursue my journey prevented my giving the necessary time to these relics; but I was obliged, though with regret, to take a hasty leave of the Sarepta community.

Before we bade farewell to our Moravian friends, we visited their burying-ground. Even this partakes of republican simplicity. It is a square enclosure. The tombstones are exactly alike, being three feet by two. On each is inscribed, without comment, the Christian and surname of the deceased, and the day on which he died. These humble testimonials of the dead are singularly contrasted with the aristocratic marble tombstone of a Russian Princess who is buried here.

We left Sarepta at three in the afternoon. Eight miles west of the town is a mineral spring: near it are a suite of baths. The

inhabitants of Sarepta bathe here once a week: in the month of May, people come from a distance to take the benefit of its medicinal effects.

August 4.—We travelled all night, and at daylight reached a village, where we changed horses. One of the poor beasts died as he was taken from off the carriage: some Kalmucks immediately carried him away for their breakfast. Ptolemy designates a tribe of Scythians (Tartars) by the name of Ἱπποφαγι, or Horse-eaters.

August 5.—On the morning of the 5th, we fell in with some German colonies, which occupy a tract of land extending hence to the north of Saratoff. It was not till we arrived among these settlers that we saw any thing like regular cultivation: corn is very abundant here: each driver seated himself on a bag of flour, with which he fed his cattle at the end of the stage. In the desert we had just quitted, wormwood is the principal, and sometimes the only food for the horse. We passed through several German villages, and were struck with the appearance of the broad hats of the women. Vast quantities of buck-wheat are grown here: the lower orders make it up into a porridge, of which they are very fond.

I cannot agree with those who speak in favour of Russian travelling. Its only merit is its extreme cheapness. Sometimes our road was formed of the trunks of trees: on these occasions, off would go our driver at full gallop; and as we passed over holes made by the fracture of timber, the kibitka would spring into the air, and return with such a bound that I often expected dislocation of a bone must follow. It is true, this painful ordeal may be alleviated by having springs to the carriage; but the remedy is worse than the disorder. Few springs can stand such a violent shock; and if they

are once broken, there will be great difficulty in having them repaired.

The traveller is recommended to be careful in having old instead of new wheels to his carriage. Those of ours were new; the consequence of which was, in a short time they were so warped by the sun, that one or two spokes fell out every day, till at last only four remained in one of the fellies. By great good luck I succeeded in purchasing another set of wheels, for which I willingly gave five times their value.

Another grievance on a Russian journey is the vexatious delay the traveller undergoes from the conduct of the smatreetels or superintendents of the post-houses, who will refuse horses to any one weak enough to submit to such treatment. With Mr. Mitchell for interpreter, I occasionally addressed these men in rather strong language. One of them, from whom I had, by dint of abuse and threats, succeeded in obtaining a relay of cattle, vented his spleen on my fellow-traveller; saying, that he should report his conduct for having spoken disrespectfully to one of his rank. My young friend, who, though not a soldier himself, had been bred up in all due veneration for military precedence, seemed alarmed at the consequences of having wounded the dignity of a smatreetel, who, he assured me, ranked as "an officer of the fourteenth class." When angry words failed, I used to bribe these "officers" with twopence, an affront their dignity generally pocketed with a bow. I know but of one more mode for insuring the good offices of the smatreetel, which I shall illustrate in an anecdote of a French nobleman:—This personage, an *attaché* to the embassy, being on his journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow, had been, as usual, delayed

on the road for want of horses, the smatreetel telling him that there were none in the stable. He had one day been deploring his hard fate a full hour, when a Cossack officer with despatches arrived at the post-house. To dismount from his *arba*, to unsling his whip from his own shoulder, to lay it across that of the smatreetel, to have fresh horses attached to his vehicle, and to be again on his journey, was but the work of a moment. The hint was not thrown away on the Frenchman: he immediately unlocked his portmanteau, took out his Parisian cane, and imitated the action of the Cossack. The effect was equally instantaneous. The little cane, like the wand of Cinderella's fairy godmother, was no sooner waved, than a coach and horses appeared, and carried off the French magician, who, by repeating the secret of his newly acquired art, reached Moscow a day sooner than he had any reason to expect.

August 7.—At Saratoff, the capital of the district so called, we found the houses had all been lately whitewashed, and the streets put in repair, in expectation of the Emperor Alexander's arrival. As we proceeded, we found the verst-posts and bridges newly painted, and the road patched up and sanded for the same occasion. We were, however, not allowed to profit by these improvements. The repairs were of such a nature, as to be only just sufficient to sustain the weight of the imperial retinue; so we poor travellers were doomed, by an ukase, to jog on by the road side, to have ease and luxury in sight, but to have them denied to every sense.

August 8.—We reached Penza, another capital town, in the afternoon of the 8th. Every body was in the bustle of preparation; a large body of troops were assembled for the purpose of being reviewed by the Emperor. The same active preparations were going

on as at Saratoff, and the vamping system was in still greater force. Bricklayers and plasterers were fully occupied. Opposite the place where we changed horses, they were literally pulling down an old house, as too unseemly an object for autocratic eyes. The town was crowded with military. Generals, attended by their aides-de-camp and orderlies, were seen prancing through the streets. Large smoking groups of wasp-waisted huzzars met the eye at every turn. Every thing partook of "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war." A crowd is always to me a gratifying sight; it was doubly so on arriving from a thinly-populated country. The review was expected to take place very shortly: with any other place but home for my destination, I would gladly have stayed to witness the Russian system of evolutions.

August 9.—We arrived at Nishney Novogorod on the 9th, at the height of the grand annual fair, hired lodgings, and then sallied forth into the crowd in search of amusement. But my ideas had been so associated with the boyish recollections of Gooseberry-fair,* and its numerous wild-beasts, booths, swings, and merry-go-rounds, that I was wofully disappointed in witnessing the noiseless, orderly, and stupid scene at Nishney Novogorod. Here were no national pastimes, not even a *Montagne Russe*.—Though merchants had assembled from every quarter of the globe, they had come on business, not pleasure. The few Russian noblemen present had estates in the neighbourhood, and had come to collect their rents. Indeed

* In my time, Gooseberry-fair was held every Easter and Whitsuntide, in the Westminster's cricket-ground of Tothill-fields. The field is now enclosed, and subsequent improvements have destroyed all the enjoyments of that dirty, yet delightful quarter.

I question whether, out of this vast concourse, I was not the only person who had been attracted hither solely by motives of curiosity and amusement. Still, to a person who has always lived in a crowd, this motley assemblage could not be without its interest; and before I left Nishney Novogorod, I managed to extract more amusement than I had expected.

The place in which the fair is held is encircled by a canal of an oblong form. Within this space are several formal lines of roofed shops or warehouses, in which articles are exposed for sale, without any attention to the attractive order of their arrangement. British goods seemed to be in high repute; and often, in passing along a row of shops, did I hear the venders of some flimsy articles puffing them off as being “Anglicansky”—English.

For the first day I was dressed in a plain blue coat, and wandered through the fair friendless and forlorn; Mr. Mitchell being unable to render me assistance as an interpreter, from the diffidence he naturally felt at having thus suddenly fallen in with so great a concourse of people. Tired of this neglect, I next morning, by the advice of my fellow-traveller, tried the effect of a military dress. Not the disguised corsair in Sheridan’s “Critic,” when he first discovers his embroidered waistcoat, could have produced a greater change on his beholders, than did I on mine in my aide-de-camp’s uniform. Those who had jostled me the day before, now vied with each other in paying me attention: the Director of the fair solicited the honour of being my cicerone; and I, who in the morning could not boast of an acquaintance, found myself in the evening possessed of fifty friends.

In the course of the day, I paid my respects to General Grou-

koff, the Governor. He received me very civilly, and begged I would make his house my home during my stay. I dined with him this afternoon; and in the evening met at his house the Prince of Georgia, and several other Russian noblemen.

As it rained hard when I was about to return home, I borrowed an old hat and coat from one of my fifty friends, to save my military dress. In following the banks of the canal to arrive at the bridge, I felt myself suddenly arrested by the muscular grasp of a man, whom I discovered to be a huge Cossack on sentry. With a broad grin on his savage features, he grasped his horrible whip, and, beckoning a comrade, motioned by signs too plain to be misunderstood, what would be the alternative if I did not give him money for something to drink. With all a Westminster's science in boxing, it would have been in vain to have contended with two armed men, so I gave him a small silver coin; but as this did not satisfy him, he had already raised his arm for punishment, when I opened my coat and showed my military boots and spurs, and, with all the Russian I was master of, told him that I was an English officer and an acquaintance of the Governor's.

It was evident I had made myself perfectly understood, for he quitted his hold as though I had been a serpent, relaxed his grin, and took with him his comrade, who had just arrived to assist him in his depredation. Upon enquiry, I heard that such a line of conduct was very common with these ruffians, who not unfrequently rob and murder merchants falling within their grasp. The next morning I reported the circumstance to the Governor, and am inclined to believe the Cossack underwent the punishment he had designed for me.

August 11.—As I was looking at a collection of Siberian minerals, which were enclosed in a glass case, I observed an old man with a long beard similarly engaged. On his entering the room, I was struck with the marked coldness shown him by every one present : by chance, his elbow broke one of the glasses : the company seemed delighted at his having accidentally furnished them with a grievance : they simultaneously left the room, and returned with a corporal and file of the guard, to whom they gave him in charge. On enquiring, in a tone of pity, the reason for this hard usage, I was answered that he was a “Rascolnick,” a dissenter from the Greek church ; and therefore, said my informer, unworthy of your sympathy.

There are many dissenters under the general term of Rascolnick : one of these sects, chiefly in the south of Russia, become eunuchs. The Emperor Alexander tried to put them down, but without success.

I accompanied the Director this afternoon to see some feats of horsemanship. The performer, who was a Frenchman, danced on the bare back of a horse with considerable skill ; but, as I could see this sort of sight at home, I turned my attention to one much more interesting—the spectators. Assembled round the equestrian ring were natives of nearly every country of Asia, all dressed in their national garb, and exhibiting features as varied as their dresses. I was particularly attracted by the wonder expressed by some Tartar horse-catchers, who, great equestrians themselves, knew not what to make of this kind of riding. “Look ! look !” said the Director, pointing to the rider ; but I was too busy in watching the variety of animated nature to waste a moment on the performances of art.

From the Circus we went to the Theatre. The performance was Kotzebue’s play of “Pizarro, or The Death of Rolla,” as it is here

called. The acting was respectable, and the play differed but little from Sheridan's translation. Rolla was in the hands of a young man whose violent declamations in favour of liberty induced me to ask who he was. I was informed that he and the rest of the troop were "the slaves" of a neighbouring prince, who had let them out at so much a-head to a strolling Impresario!

The amusements closed with the national Russian dance. It was very entertaining; and, like most exhibitions of this nature, described the usual process of a courtship;—a proper degree of importunity on the one hand, resistance and ultimate consent on the other. The female dancer here, a pretty lively coquette, suddenly attracted by my scarlet coat, transferred her attentions from her partner on the stage to me in the pit, to the no small amusement of the spectators, myself not excepted.

CHAPTER XXV.

Arrival at Moscow—Messrs. Hart and Lamb—Governor General—Military Honours—Gallitsin Hospital—Burning of Moscow—The Kremlin—The Diligence—State Prisoner—Arrival in England.

August 12.—Mr. Mitchell and I left Nishney Novogorod on the evening of the 12th, and travelled night and day till we reached Moscow, a distance of four hundred and forty-three versts, on the morning of the 15th.

August 15.—It is hardly possible to imagine any thing more beautiful than the first appearance of this city, combining, as it does, the architecture of almost every age and every country: the gilded dome of the Mahometan era in Asia, the Gothic walls and towers of the rude ages of Europe, and the Grecian structures of a more cultivated period.

I had not been long settled in my hotel, when I heard that two English travellers had just arrived from Persia. I immediately sent my name to them, and soon after in walked Messrs. Hart and Lamb, by whom, it will be remembered, I had sent letters for my family from Tabriz, in the expectation that they would have arrived in

England six weeks before me. We were all mutually gratified at this rencontre, and agreed not to separate again until we should reach home.

August 17.—This morning we paid our respects to Prince Demetrio Gallitsin, the Governor-General of Moscow. Captain Hart wore the uniform of the 4th Light Dragoons, and I that of an aide-de-camp. As both our dresses were similar to those worn by Russian general officers, all the guards of the city turned out, and received us with military honours. In the anti-room of the Governor-General, I saw the Commander of the forces, informed him of our having received such unmerited compliments, and begged, that to prevent a recurrence of them, he would be good enough to explain to the guards our actual rank in the army. He answered with much politeness, that no attentions were too great for English gentlemen, who were pleased to honour his country with a visit; and that so far from giving directions to the guards to discontinue the compliment, he should be much displeased if they did not always pay those distinctions which he considered our due.

When we came in, there were several officers of high rank waiting for an audience; but the moment we were announced, the Governor-General desired that we might be admitted. His Excellency is a highly polished and agreeable man. He behaved to us with the greatest affability, and kept us in conversation for a considerable time. He asked us several questions relative to our numerical force in India, and our expedition against the Burmese, of which he seemed to have received very recent accounts. As there was no idea of a war when we left Bombay, and as we had had no means of gaining intelligence during our journey, we treated the

matter very lightly, assuring him that Burmah would never dare to make a stand against us. His Excellency looked incredulous at this observation, evidently attributing to deep diplomacy, what was, in fact, mere ignorance.

We returned in the evening to dine with his Excellency ; a large company was assembled to meet his Royal Highness the Duke of Wurtemberg. Before we could make our bows to the Governor-General, we had to force our way through crowds of star-adorned nobility, to many of whom we were presented.

His Excellency behaved to us with the most marked attention. At dinner, he placed me opposite him, and desired two noblemen, who had been in England, to sit on each side of me. In compliment to us, his Excellency spoke nothing but English during the repast, and whenever he was not occupied in attentions to his royal guest, he addressed himself entirely to my fellow-travellers and myself.

On Sunday we attended divine service at the Gallitsin Hospital, a charitable institution founded in 1802 by Prince Gallitsin. The Chapel is an elegant building, surmounted by a dome. The service was very impressively performed, and there was a great appearance of devotion in the congregation, many of whom frequently threw themselves on their faces in the Oriental manner. The singing, the only music allowed in Greek churches, was the most melodious I ever heard. The priest chanted in a loud sonorous tone, and the responses were made by a choir of concealed singers, whose voices were so delightfully harmonized, that I had difficulty in persuading myself they were not the notes of an organ. Scott mentions, in one of his novels,* the effect on the senses of music, when the per-

* *Bride of Lammermoor.*

formers are concealed; and I was struck this morning with the truth of the observation.

During our stay at Moscow, we heard various versions of the burning of Moscow in 1812. We were told that Count Rastopchin, at that time Governor-General of Moscow, had published three separate accounts: one for the Russians, attributing the burning to the French; a second for the English, avowing the burning himself; and a third for the French, leaving it in doubt who was the incendiary. He was in disgrace when we were here, and we did not see him. My old friend and schoolfellow Mr. Carr Glyn speaks of him as an amiable, agreeable, and clever person, and thinks with myself that his character has been much abused. Rastopchin burnt his own country-house before the entry of the French into Moscow. The Russian army is said to have been drunk at the time, and to have pillaged the city to a great extent. The Muscovites tell you, that if Napoleon, after the battle of Smolensko, had taken up his quarters in Poland, had given the Poles a free constitution, and had freed the peasants in Russia and the Tartars in the Crimea, success would have attended him the following year.

On our arrival here, orders had been issued to close the Palace of the Kremlin, for the purpose of making some repairs; but the Governor-General, hearing us express a wish to visit it, with the greatest politeness sent to suspend the projected operations till after we had seen the curiosities. We were met at the door of the palace by a general officer, who very civilly pointed out to us every thing worthy of interest.

The jewel-chamber contains a number of gold and silver vases, goblets, and other vessels, of which I have neither time nor inclina-

tion to make particular mention. Round the walls are the thrones of different monarchs, and standing on separate pedestals are numerous crowns, including those of Kazan, Astrakhan, Siberia, Georgia, and Poland, the sight of which brought to mind the gradual increase of this vast empire. We were shown the large boots of Peter the Great, and the coronation coat of the Emperor Alexander. This last is of a green colour, perfectly plain, and the cloth of as coarse a texture as that worn by sergeants of our army.

A public diligence is established between the two capitals, and leaves Moscow every Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday morning at nine o'clock. It stops each day half an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner or supper. The traveller is allowed twenty pounds' weight of luggage, and pays twenty copecks for every pound above that weight. The inside places are one hundred and twenty roubles, and those in the cabriolet sixty. In winter the charges are considerably less.

As our party amounted to four, we engaged a diligence for our private accommodation, and agreed to leave Moscow on the Wednesday; but an ague, an old Indian acquaintance, having paid me a visit, our departure was protracted. By the rules of the post, if travellers are unable to proceed the day on which they have engaged the diligence, they forfeit their places; but as another instance of the Governor General's attention, he desired that the diligence should wait our convenience. Luckily for the party, I was sufficiently well to commence the journey the following afternoon.

A man with a tertian ague upon him is not a likely person to appreciate the charms of any journey, still less of such a fatiguing one as that from Moscow to Saint Petersburg.

One morning, as we were changing horses, a state prisoner, guarded and heavily manacled, drove up to the inn door. He looked pale and dispirited ; no one appeared to be acquainted with the nature of his accusation. He had been suddenly taken from his family at Vladimir, had been travelling night and day, and was not to be allowed to stop till he arrived at St. Petersburg. It was with a shudder I heard that he was, in all probability, likely to perish under the dreadful lash of the knout.

From Novogorod to St. Petersburg, the last forty versts of the journey, we travelled over a macadamized road. After a detention of three weeks at the Russian capital, we sailed for England. At the dawn of a dull, misty, but to me delightful morning of November, we made the Suffolk coast ; nearly at the same moment we hailed a herring-smack, which landed me at Lowestoft, thirty-five miles from my own home, and I had the gratification of dining with my family the same evening.

THE END.

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