

these contests for power between his rival relatives, and to submit to the unconstitutional hostilities of his father-in-law against his brother, who is invested with the legal authority in civil and military concerns. The Ras told me, however, that he would defer his march till we were safe back at Massowah, as during his absence the enemy would be anxious to get us into their power; for, hearing that we were come on some mysterious concern, they would be afraid that with other dowa (physic), we might have brought poison to extirpate the whole army. He concluded by saying, that after we had spent a few days with him, we might visit any part of Tigré, and that he should be extremely happy to shew us the whole of Abyssinia, if God pleased to give him success in the expected contest, were it possible for us to wait so long.

"I returned him my grateful thanks for the manner in which he had opened to me the situation of public affairs, stating at the same time, that I considered him the best judge of the possibility of our taking the projected journey to Gondar in safety, and after the full explanation which he had given, I could not think, however much I had it at heart, of pressing the subject any farther. I hoped however, that he would be able to shew us Waldubba; in our journey to which place, I should have an opportunity of seeing the Jews' rock and the Tacazza. The Jews' rock our interpreter could not make out; but on mentioning it to the Ras, he instantly knew it, and told me that he was the first person who ever succeeded in an attack upon it. Ras Gabriel of Samen, with whom he some time past was at war, shut up Tecla Georgis upon it, whence he was released by Ras Wellela Selassé. There are a few Jews yet remaining at this place. The Ras assented to my proposal, and promised that I

should visit Tecla Georgis at Waldubba, and Welleta Solomon at Axum; that though the former place was not indeed in his dominions, yet as it belonged to his friend Ras Gabriel, we might go thither in perfect safety. I then requested a copy in Arabic of the History of Abyssinia, from the reign of Joas to the present time; he told me in reply that the chronicles were kept at Axum, and that he would take care I should not be disappointed. On my shewing him the drawings in Bruce's volume, he said that he knew Yagoobe well; he came into Abyssinia after the battle of Fagitta, and afterwards went to the head of the Nile.

Nothing more passed at this interview, except some trifling conversation, which being ended, we left the hall, and did not again see the Ras during the day. It being a public fast, we had provisions brought up to our private apartments. No person had been permitted to come near us, and our persons were kept quite secured from the gaze of the vulgar.

"We have had rain, thunder, and lightning every afternoon since our arrival. The thermometer was 62°, and the weather very wet and cold.

## CHAPTER II.

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### MR. SALT'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

Continuation of Transactions at Antalow.—Departure of Mr. Salt on a Tour to Axum.  
—Arrival at Muculla—Visit to the Church there.—Arrival at Kasunko.—Arrival at  
the House of Barrainbarras Toklu at Gullybudda.—Visit to Fit Aurari Yasous.—  
—Arrival at Adowa—Residence there.—Introduction to Fasilydas, son of Yasous,  
formerly King of Abyssinia.—Arrival at Axum.

## CHAPTER II.

“ AUGUST 31.—WE had a message at an early hour in the morning, to enquire after our health, and an invitation to breakfast with the Ras; nothing took place except a recurrence of the scene on Thursday, only that, as a favour, we were permitted to make a bow to our good friends Subagadis and Baharnegash Yasous, who were kept at a great distance by the Ras. All the dishes were extremely good; the Ras was in high spirits, and in great good humour, and at his earnest request, we this day, for the first time, ventured on some small pieces of brinde.

“ September 1.—Our servants, not having been permitted to go beyond the walled inclosure, about twenty or thirty feet square in front of the building which we occupied, were much dissatisfied, and began to presage our detention in the country. In the morning, I complained to the Ras of this unreasonable strictness, and he said in reply, that it was only intended to prevent any harm happening to them. I notwithstanding requested, that he would allow them to go out when they pleased, and to take care of their own safety. I was going to proceed on other subjects, when his brother and several chiefs were admitted into the hall, which entirely put a stop to all business. Mules were brought in for our riding, of which Captain Rudland and myself availed ourselves to take a survey of the mountain of Antalow. We first skirted the western

extremity, and then ascended the northern side by a steep path that had seldom before been attempted by mules. We found the summit covered with verdure, and pastured by numerous herds of cattle. On passing over to the southern brow, we had a complete view of the town of Antalow, the adjacent villages, and the high mountains that divide Tigré from the country of the Galla to the south.

“Antalow consists of upwards of one thousand houses, with conical thatched roofs, erected upon an uneven rising ground in the valley below. The house of the Ras is conspicuous from its size, from the different shape of the roof, and from a wall by which it is surrounded. With this exception, the rest of the place makes a most wretched appearance, and the country around is extremely uninteresting, there not being a tree to be seen in the whole extent, except a few small ones that surround the two churches in the vicinity of the town.

“The top of this hill was formerly used as a place of defence, and, on many of the ledges of the rocks, walls yet remain formed of loose stones, for the purpose of impeding the progress of assailants. The last time that the inhabitants fled to it, was in the time of Ras Michael Suhul, when they were attacked by the Galla, under a chief of the name of Waldo.

“On our return, we were obliged to dismount from our mules, the descent being steep and broken, and well calculated by nature for defence. The upper part of this hill is composed of loose calcareous stones, of a reddish sandy colour, lying in horizontal strata, bare, and perpendicular at the edges; lower down is found a bed of breccia resting upon a mass of hard black stone (probably basalt),

of which the whole base of the mountain consists. At the bottom we passed two villages, and after crossing a few low ridges, reached Antalow, where we were received by some hundreds of the inhabitants who had assembled to view the strangers.

“ On our arrival, we found the Ras at breakfast, and were invited to join him; the dishes were the same as usual, with the addition of boiled cow-heel. The Ras was in good humour, and asked many questions about our churches, our king, &c. An old woman was standing behind him, whom he very significantly introduced as a proper person for us to become acquainted with, as she had many young ladies under her care. He had often before joked with us on the same subject, but had never gone so far as on the present occasion. After taking our usual quantity of maize, the Ras shewing an inclination to sleep, we retired.

“ In the evening we went into the hall, and found the Ras at chess in the midst of his chiefs. The chess men, which are coarsely made of ivory, are very large and clumsy; when they have occasion to take any one of their adversary's pieces, they strike it with great force and eagerness from its place. I observed that their game differs much from ours. Bishops jump over the heads of knights, and are only allowed to move three squares. The pawns move only one step forward at starting, and get no rank by reaching the end of the board; they play with much noise, every person around, even the slaves, having a voice in the game, and seizing the pieces at pleasure, to shew any advisable move. We observed, however, that they always managed with great ingenuity to let the Ras win every game.

“ A repast was afterwards served up, at which many ladies were

present, among these one, who, we were informed, was one of his brother's wives, sat on the same couch with the Ras; others were seated on the floor, and all seemed to do justice to the brinde and maize.

"We were much distressed in the evening at the loss of our interpreter, Hadjee Hamed, who withdrew himself, as he informed us, from dissatisfaction at the treatment he had experienced from some of the Ras's people, telling me, that he would, "Please God," return in the morning.

"September 2.—We did not see any thing of the Ras in the morning, our breakfast being brought to our own apartment, and from hearing less noise than usual in the large hall, we had every reason to suppose it was one of their fasts. The day passed over, and we heard nothing of Hadjee Hamed, although we sent repeated messengers after him. From this circumstance, and certain reports which our servants collected in the town, we were led to believe that there was something not very pleasant going on; but what it was, we were unfortunately not able to ascertain, being shut out from all communication, except with the Ras, to whom we sent our salaams in the evening, which were politely returned. The thermometer at noon, in our room, was 63°: much rain fell in the course of the evening.

"September 3.—Being determined to explain myself, as well as I could, through Ibrahim, who spoke imperfectly the language of the country, I sent early in the morning to the Ras, requesting to speak to him. He returned for answer, that he would see me on the morrow. I sent a second message, but with as little effect, as he excused himself on the plea of being much engaged in business.

I then pressed him to send for Hadjee Hamed ; upon which he returned back word, that our interpreter did not dare to come, being in fear of his life, which he said we had threatened to put an end to. This message gave us considerable uneasiness, as it appeared reasonable to suppose that so palpable a falsehood could only be invented by Hadjee Hamed, for the purpose of counteracting our interest with the Ras, which he might conceive detrimental to that of the Sheriffe of Mecca ; or by the Ras, for the purpose of throwing on us the blame of his departure, which, on the contrary, was occasioned by the misconduct of his own impertinent slaves ; and in either case it was likely to be the forerunner of much mischief to our views. The only circumstance that led us to impute it to Hadjee Hamed was, that we before had discovered that he endeavoured to lessen as much as possible the value of the presents which we gave to the Ras.

“ The Ras sent in the course of the day a message of enquiry after our health, accompanied by a present of oranges, limes and dried plantains. Our food was as usual brought to our apartment ; it consisted of a fowl in the morning, and a small mutton curry in the evening, which, though rather a scanty allowance, put us to no real inconvenience, as we had a plentiful supply of good bread and maize ; in addition to which we this day received from the Ras, about noon, some of his own fine wheaten bread.

“ I was engaged during the morning in penning some of my sketches, and Captain Rudland in teaching one of the Ras's principal men how to make a white-wash for the walls of the house, from a chalk stone that we found on the hill of Antalow.

“ Mr. Carter got an observation at noon, by which he fixed the latitude of this place to be in  $12^{\circ} 48' 30''$ . The latter part of the

day was extremely gloomy with much rain, thunder and lightning; the thermometer at noon was 60°.

“ September 4.—I repeated my message to the Ras by means of Ibrahim at an early hour in the morning, stating our wish to pay him a visit; which he politely put off till mid-day. Soon after, he sent a request to Captain Rudland that he would accompany his builder to the hill, in order to point out the stone that they made use of on the day before. I afterwards took this occasion to send Hamed Chamie to the Ras with the Mussulmaun builder, who spoke Arabic, to beg that another interpreter might be assigned me, and that Hadjee Hamed might be brought into his presence, that I might have an opportunity of shewing how falsely I had been accused. The latter request he evaded, by saying that Hadjee Hamed would not come any more, but that I might procure any other interpreter that I chose. Hamed Chamie then stated to him in the true Arabic style, that we were his strangers, that our lives and property were in his hands, and that he might do with them as he pleased; in return, he expressed himself in very friendly terms, and promised that all our wishes should be complied with. After our breakfast, consisting of half a fowl curried, the Ras sent us a large citron, with the usual salaams.

“ Pearce went out into the market in the morning, and found it so crowded, that he could with difficulty ascertain the articles brought for barter; corn, butter, ghee, onions, skins, and cattle, seemed to be the staple commodities; the small currency, if it may be so called, consisted of wedges of rock salt, each weighing two or three pounds, and estimated at one thirtieth of a dollar.

“ Weekly markets are held in many parts of the country, at a

distance from all habitations; one we passed on our way from the residence of the amiable Ozoro-Mantwaub, and another on our way to the mansion of Debib, chief of Negashé. In all these many hundred men were assembled, who therefore do not consider it infamous (as Bruce asserts) for them to attend a market.

“ At twelve o'clock I sent Hamed Chamie to the Ras to solicit the promised audience, but hearing that he stood unnoticed in the hall, I determined at once to go without ceremony into the presence, attended by Captain Rudland; thinking it absolutely necessary to come to an immediate explanation concerning the absence of Hadjee Hamed, and other unpleasant circumstances, which had reached our ears; more especially as all the persons with me had expressed great uneasiness about our situation, being in considerable alarm lest we should be detained in the country. We found the Ras engaged at chess with one of his chiefs; on seeing us he offered his hand, seating me by his side, and Captain Rudland next to me. Our patience however was nearly exhausted before the game was completed, not a single word during this time being spoken to us. Some of his people who had been waiting for a considerable time presented him cakes of bread, honey, a sheep, and fire-wood. He now dismissed the whole party, and after a few minutes conversation with a priest, who was to give us intelligence concerning the latter portion of the Abyssinian history, the room was cleared.

“ I proceeded to express my regret at the conduct of Hadjee Hamed, whom I most solemnly declared I had always treated with the greatest attention, as being sent to me by the Ras; I stated also, that this man, on leaving me, had given an entirely different reason

for his going away, and that I was fearful that he had been saying something prejudicial of us, and had altogether been acting an underhand part; in consequence of which I had been extremely anxious for a personal conference, wherein the whole might be explained. The Ras was gloomy for some time, and at last said that he did not as yet clearly understand the motive of our coming into his country. This I immediately ascribed to the fault of his interpreter; and then proceeded to enter fully into a repetition of what had passed on my laying the presents before him, and concluded with saying, that by his invitation we had come up to his presence through barbarous districts, where nothing but his name could have protected us, and had entrusted him with our lives and property, which were all at his disposal; and that now our only desire, during the remainder of our stay in his country, was to act in strict conformity to all his wishes; but that we expected to be treated as friends, and at least to have the full liberty to go out whenever we pleased, and to move about wherever we might choose in his territories, as above all things, confinement was particularly irksome to us. On this he began to relax a little; said that there had been a mistake made by Currum Chund in inviting us; but that, as we were here, it was all well; that it was his anxiety about our persons which made him wish we should have no communication with the inhabitants, who were little to be depended upon; and that he would rather lose two thousand of his own subjects than that any one of our people should come to harm.

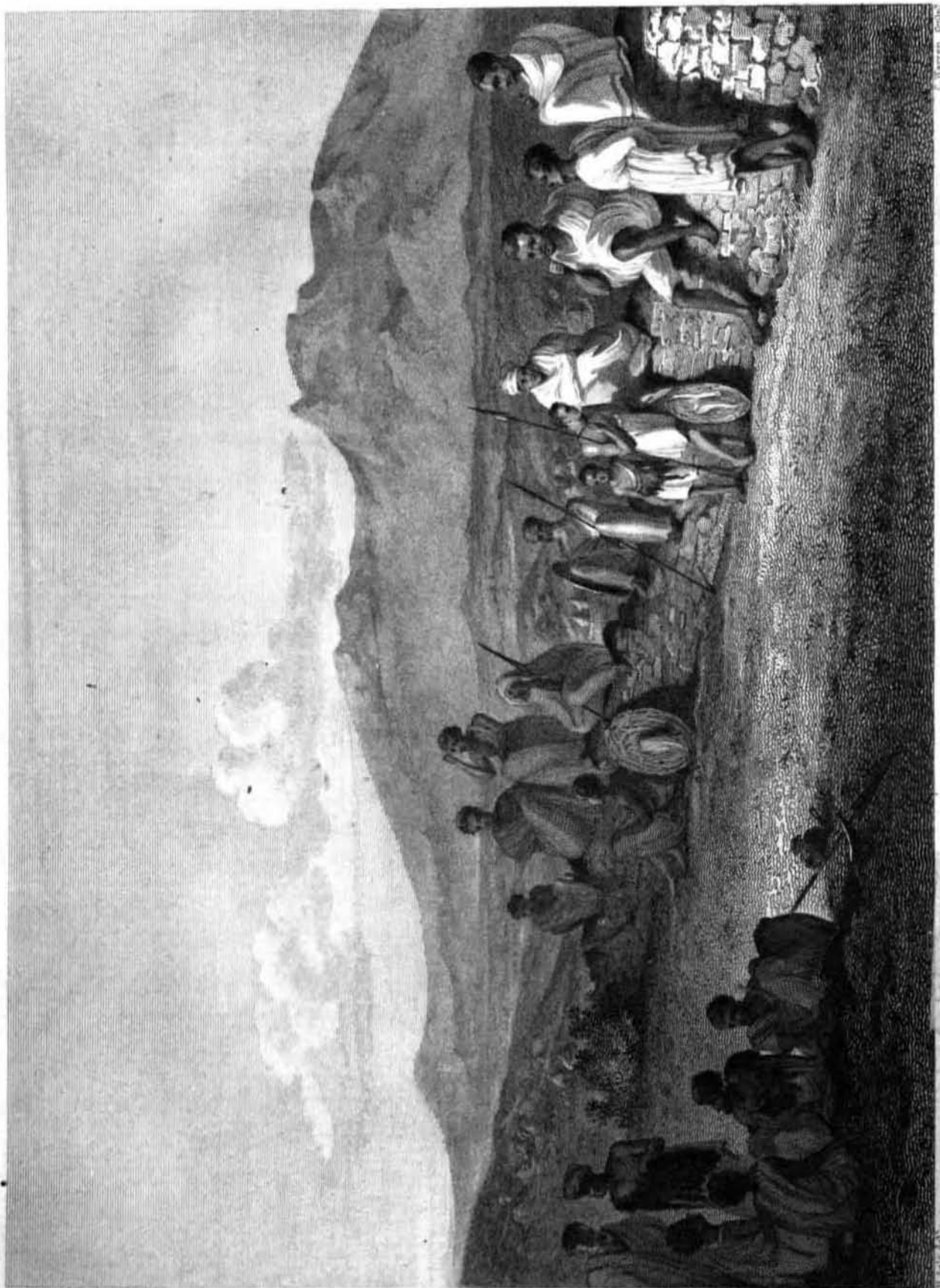
“I made a proper return to this unexpected sally of friendship, and then proceeded to remark, that as I could not now depend upon

any thing that Hadjee Hamed had interpreted, I could no longer be certain whether the mules were sent down by the Ras for our conveyance and accommodation; that, if they were, I begged to return him our most grateful acknowledgments; but, if they belonged to any other person, I should be obliged to him to permit me to make the owner of them a proper recompense. By this I hoped to alarm his pride, if he had any, and prevent any further complaints or demands on that account. He was, as I expected, hurt at the remark, and begged that I would not mention any thing of the kind again, as they were "bad words;" that my wishes, whatever they were, should be complied with; and that I had only to make them known to have them immediately carried into effect. I proceeded directly to urge Mr. Carter's going down to Buré, as an affair of the greatest importance. The Ras told me that he had sent two messengers thither for the chief of that place, who would certainly arrive by Saturday next, and that Mr. Carter might then return with him as I desired.

"Our journey to Axum and Adowa was the next topic; the Ras said, that it would be my best plan to set out as soon as possible, since his army was, in a short time, to assemble from all quarters, and I might return to Antalow with the detachment from Adowa; he added, that as he could not trust our persons on the road between Adowa and Dixan (without stating some reason for it), he wished us to return to Massowah by the road which we came, as being perfectly secure.

"I entirely assented to these points, adding, that he was, no doubt, the best judge of what was practicable. After which, I informed him that I should wish to set out for Axum the day after

the morrow, and that as he thought, from the state of the roads, that it would be better for me to go with as few attendants as possible, it was my intention to take with me only two servants, and during my absence I would leave Captain Rudland under his protection at Antalow, and Mr. Carter might at the same time execute the plan of paying a visit to Buré. He was perfectly satisfied with this arrangement, and said, that two mules should be in readiness for me, and men to carry what baggage I might want. I then returned to the subject of the Jews' rock, and expressed my anxiety to see it, as being desirous of giving my countrymen some idea of a place that, till he took it, had been always considered as impregnable, and which Ras Michael Suhul had not dared to attack when Ayto Tesfos, governor of Samen, had fled thither for refuge. He expressed much surprise at my knowledge of this circumstance; but was evidently highly pleased with the compliment, and promised to arrange the expedition for me on my return from Axum, as by that time the waters of the Taccazza would have subsided. He added, that there was not such another fortress in the whole country; that it was extremely high, and the water upon the top was often covered with a substance like glass, and as hard as stone, (by which he undoubtedly meant ice) and moreover that a plant was found there, which would kill any person treading upon it, if he happened to have the least sore upon his foot. He concluded by telling me that he would order Hadjee Hamed to come to me in the morning, who, notwithstanding what had passed, would be the best person to attend me to Axum and Adowa, as he was well acquainted with both those places. He then shook us cordially by the hand, and we returned to our apartment, to the great satisfaction



of a number of his chiefs, who had been long waiting at the door for an audience. The happy turn which this conference had effected in our favour, was likewise very gratifying to our whole party.

“September 5.—We passed this day in our apartment, the Ras being assiduously engaged in deciding causes of considerable importance. He indeed gives up the greater part of every morning to hearing the complaints of his subjects, over whom he rules with most absolute sway, as their lives and property depend entirely upon his nod. The parties who appear before him are very vociferous, and, when provoked by their opponents, often employ such violent gesticulations, that one would suppose, that at times, even the presence of the Ras would scarcely withhold them from proceeding to blows.

“Baharnegash Yasous paid us a visit in the morning with permission from the Ras, and was treated by us with all the attention in our power. He was about to return to Dixan, not daring to stay any longer at Antalow without the consent of the Ras, of whom he stood greatly in awe. I made him a present of ten dollars for his expenses on the road, informing him that I was afraid of parting with more, lest I should be unable to supply my own wants. He was very grateful for this trifle, and made many professions of friendship, the sincerity of which I had no reason to question. It is a remarkable circumstance, that two of our best friends, Yasous, and Subagadis, were bitter enemies. We had some reason to fear that poor Yasous, during his stay at Antalow, had been but slenderly provided, even with food; for he sent to us several times for bread; a fact which indicates in how abject a state all ranks are kept by the present governor of Tigre. Hadjee Hamed paid us a short visit, and

positively denied having told the Ras that he had been induced to absent himself for fear of his life.

"I sent to the Ras in the evening, to remind him of my intended journey to Axum. He informed me in return, that he had fixed Monday next for our departure, on which day he intended to accompany me as far as Muccullah, where a celebrated church stands, at which solemn prayers were to be put up for the success of the ensuing campaign. I told him that I had not before so understood him, but that it was the more agreeable to me, as I was anxious to see the chief from Buré before I left Antalow, which I should now probably have an opportunity of doing.

"I this day prepared a letter for Lord Valentia, to be sent by Mr. Carter, and finished some more of my sketches. Much rain fell, which made the air cold. The thermometer at noon was only 61°.

"September 6.—It being fast-day with the inhabitants, we received a citron and a quantity of wheaten bread from the Ras. I dispatched a message this morning, requesting that the priest might be sent for, from whom I was anxious to procure information concerning the history of this country. The Ras replied, that he was at present much engaged, but that he would send for the priest, and as soon as the hall was cleared, would give me an audience. After some time I took the liberty of sending in another message; but notwithstanding all my requests and remonstrances, I was unable to get a sight either of the Ras, or the priest, during the whole day.

"At five o'clock Hadjee Hamed again visited me, and after a preamble, in which he denied having before refused to accompany

me to Axum, he at length told me, that he intended to quit my service, having hitherto received no compensation for his trouble. I told him, that it had always been my intention to make him a suitable present; but that with the English, there was also a great distinction between making presents, and paying. I begged, therefore, to know whether he had received any thing from the Ras. He replied, that he was indeed in the yearly pay of the Ras, and had attended upon us in consequence of his orders; but that at the same time, he had been informed that he would receive from us handsome presents. Upon this I said, that if I could procure any money upon a bill in my possession, drawn upon the Ras by Currum Chund, I would immediately give him what I had at first intended; but, that if I should be deceived in this expectation, it would be much more convenient if he would go with me to Adowa, where I probably might, by negotiating the bill, raise a fresh supply of money, as the stock that I had brought into the country was nearly exhausted. To this he replied, that the Ras had no money, nor should I be able to get any at Adowa, nobody in this country knowing any thing about bills of exchange. On which I answered, that if such were the case, it was the more necessary for me to be careful of the little I had left; and so ended our argument. This information proved extremely unpleasant, as our stock was then reduced to less than three hundred dollars. The conference, however, in some degree let me into their secrets, and I had no doubt but that Hadjee Hamed had been acting a double part throughout. There was rain in the middle of the day, and the air was cold, the thermometer being 60 and 61° in our room at mid-day.

“September 7.—The Ras again evaded seeing us till evening,

on the plea of business, which I believe was the truth. At the time appointed I went down into the hall, and found him engaged in a conference with Subagadis. In the court-yard beyond, was Thadoo, who, after the departure of his brother, was also called into the Ras's presence. By this time it was so late that our meeting was again postponed till night, for which purpose I was ordered to keep awake. Captain Rudland, however, saw the Ras, and found him in his usual good humour. There was rain in the afternoon, but the evening was very fine. The thermometer was 62°.

"September 8.—At four in the morning I was called to attend the Ras: he was in the hall crouching by a large fire, with his brother Manassé; Hadjee Hamed and the builder were in waiting as interpreters. I proceeded to express my regret at not having seen him for some days, which he politely excused on the plea of business. After some desultory conversation about our intended journey, he once more put the question, "what are you come for?" adding, "I have much in my heart to say to you, if I could explain myself without speaking through so many mouths, and I judge from this, that you have much to say to me." I was proceeding to explain again the purport of our mission, when he stopped me, desiring that I would commit to writing what I might have to communicate; promising in that case, after giving it full consideration, to reply in a similar way, by which means he thought that we should more fully understand each other. Nothing could be more agreeable than this proposal, to which I immediately assented.

"Foreseeing the probability of wanting a supply of cash, I thought the present a favourable opportunity to present my letter of credit from Currum Chund; yet I was somewhat loth to do this.

after having understood the sense of it, (for I had in conference with Hadjee Hamed, examined its contents) as it appeared to me rather a petition for presents, than a proper letter of business. Not knowing, however, the way in which these matters were transacted between Currum Chund and the Ras, and there being no other sufficient cause for my keeping it back, I determined to deliver it. On opening the subject to the Ras, his first question was, "what did I want money for?" as it was his intention to supply us with every thing requisite till we should again arrive at Massowah. I then gave him to understand, that it was rather from the necessity of satisfying the demands of his own servants, than from any want of money for my own use. After my reply, he thus continued: "this is a town of cattle, bread and honey; why do you want money? there is none to be had here; and besides, Currum Chund has with me neither money nor credit; and it appears to me that he has been playing tricks with you." He added; "however, it is of no consequence; we are friends; and every thing that you may want, you shall have, till you are safe at Massowah." After this I could not say more on the subject, except explaining, as well as I was able, the nature of money transactions among the English, and that the present letter was merely a matter of business. We then took leave.

"After this, being obliged to consult rather my ability than my inclination, I presented to Hadjee Hamed ten dollars, and as many pieces of blue cloth, and the same to Negada Moosa; both of whom received the donation with a very ill grace. I had an intimation from the Ras, that when I arrived at Dixan he was informed all our boxes were filled with gold. I took pretty good care to undeceive.

him on this head, and I should think that he has since been pretty well satisfied of the truth of my representation.

“ September 9.—At four o'clock in the morning I was awakened by Pearce, who brought me word that the Ras was gone, and had left only three mules for our accommodation. As there was no person able to explain to me the arrangements made by the Ras for our expedition to Axum, I was for some time greatly at a loss what to do, especially as it had before been determined that Captain Rudland and Mr. Carter should go with the Ras, as far as he intended to accompany us on the way to Adowa ; a plan which was now entirely frustrated. After much anxiety on the subject, I was at length in some measure relieved by the presence of Guebra Selassé, who had received orders to attend me on my journey. He said that the Ras was waiting for me at no great distance from Antalow, and that, as no directions had been given respecting our baggage, it would be my best way to lose no time in overtaking him, as I might then procure an order to have the baggage sent after me.

“ Having parted with our friends, about seven o'clock, I set out on my journey, attended by Pearce and Andrew, mounted on mules, and Ibrahim, my interpreter of the country language, on foot ; and in order to provide against accidents, I made Pearce conceal fifty dollars about his person ; for at this time it was not very clear what were the intentions of the Ras.

“ After passing a small brook in the valley, we began to ascend the north-eastern side of the hill of Antalow, the brow of which was steep, rugged, and bare. On our left, at the bottom, were lying large fragments of rock, that at some distant period had fallen from the

summit. The ridges over which our road lay were partly cultivated, and by no means difficult of ascent. On the highest point over which we passed were the ruins of a village, and beyond, almost concealed by high trees of luxuriant growth, was a picturesque village called Haraqué. Our guide, Guebra Selassé, and a chief who was going by, both dismounted from their mules as they passed the church, a mark of respect which is generally paid by the Christians of this country. Our descent was rapid from one hill to another, the tops of all which were well clothed with plants of various kinds. On a rising ground to our right was a village of considerable extent called Lahaina, from which place our road turning a little more to the west, led through a more cultivated country, thickly set with Acacia and brushwood and flowering shrubs; at the bottom of one of the hills was a brook, the banks of which were shaded by the kantuffa, which I here met with for the first time. It runs among other low trees, and being then in blossom, made by no means an unpicturesque appearance. After passing several more hills we came in sight of Muccullah, in the vicinity of which, on the top of a hill, is a large church, that forms a very conspicuous object across the plain. The land about the town is in a high state of cultivation; the soil consists of a rich black loam. We found the Ras at this place. He had just finished his morning's repast; but after receiving me very cordially, and having seated me on the couch beside him, he ordered some beef to be grilled, which, though brought to me nearly raw, I eat with great satisfaction, the journey having given me a very keen appetite. After drinking four brulhes of maize, (without which the Ras would not permit me to depart), I begged leave to retire, and was led to a small

but comfortable hut in appearance, within the first wall surrounding the church. I recognized in my conductor, Debib, chief of Negashé, who was come up to attend the Ras.

"I computed our course this day to have been nine miles, in a direction nearly N. N. E. The stone, of which some of the uncultivated hills that we to day passed over is formed, lies in horizontal strata, and is divided by vertical fissures into square blocks, when exposed on the sides of the hill, which often gives it the appearance of ancient ruins.

"September 10.—After passing an uncomfortable night from the swarms of vermin with which the hut was infested, and a continual noise kept up by the priests, I arose and paid a visit to the church, where I understood the Ras had been in the course of the night. I was received with much attention by the priests, the greatest part of whom were engaged in singing, and jingling keys, one of which was in the right hand of each; they accompanied this with most violent gestures and grimaces, performing rather the part of antics on a stage, than of persons employed in devotion. After complying with the custom of the country in kissing the threshold of the door, I was admitted into the inner circle. The church, however, presents nothing particularly worthy of observation: it is ornamented with paintings, like those at Chelicut; and the only difference that I observed was, that on a cross was written I N R I. in Roman characters, the meaning of which the priests seemed perfectly to understand. I afterwards proceeded to the Ras's house, where I found a long table set out, and a great quantity of bread cakes piled up: I was seated on the couch beside him, and had the honour of being fed from his own hands. There were present the

Ballambarras, or master of the bread department, the Baharnegash of Dixan, the Chief of Debib, who was in waiting, and many others of equal authority. There were four changes of guests at the table, and three large jars of maize were emptied, each of which contained at least half a hogshead. I was prevailed upon by the Ras to eat a small portion of brinde, and am satisfied that it is merely prejudice which deters us from this food. The priests of the neighbouring churches were fed first, and all did justice to the brinde and maize.

"The Ras pointed out to me two Falasha, or Jews, who came in during the feast, and afterwards politely sent them to the house where I lodged, that I might ask them what questions ~~I pleased~~. I procured from them, however, but little information. They acknowledge no king, except the sovereign of the country, the line of Gideon being extinct. They told me that they were very numerous at Gondar, and in the provinces of Knara and Samen, and that their chief employment consisted in building and thatching houses. They have not any books of consequence except at Gondar, and those are of no great antiquity. They pretend to have entered the country in the time of Memileh.

"I was afterwards visited by Debib of Negashé, who came to solicit presents for his attention to us on the road. Captain Rudland had just arrived from Antalow, and was eating some mutton that had been provided by our guide; Debib joined him with much satisfaction in the consumption of the joint, during which I gained from him the following intelligence. He commanded a very considerable extent of country, containing at least thirty villages, for which he paid to the Ras one hundred and fifty wakeas of gold, twenty oxen, and as many skins of honey, besides one matchlock;

but for this latter, if difficult to procure, he compromised for fifty pieces of cloth, valued at about one dollar each. He owned that his father had paid a tribute double the amount of this in the time of Ras Michael.

"I sent to the Ras in the evening, and mentioned Captain Rudland's arrival, saying, that we would pay our compliments to him whenever he might appoint. He fixed upon seven o'clock, but afterwards put it off till the morning. The thermometer was 64° in the evening. There fell a little rain in the afternoon.

"September 11.—On rising in the morning, we were much surprised to receive salaams from the Ras, and information that he was gone; nor was it, till after much enquiry, that I could ascertain that he had gone on a hunting party, and would not be back until evening. It was not without much regret that I left Captain Rudland without an interpreter; but every preparation being made in Muccullah for our departure, I was unwilling to lose any more time, and accordingly set out with my attendants for Adowa. The view of the village of Muccullah from the bottom of the hill is extremely picturesque; but as we had a long journey before us, I was not able to spare time for a sketch. We first went over the plain of Jambela, in a N. N. W. direction. The whole of this plain, extending about eight miles in length, and from two to four in breadth, was in a high state of cultivation, or rather of preparation for it, as the inhabitants were busily employed in ploughing. It contains at least forty inhabited villages, besides several in ruins. Afterwards we turned off to the westward over a barren hill, where the road was much incommoded by loose stones and shrubby bushes and trees, which, as we advanced, were so closely set as to form a

thick and shady covert. Before us was a house belonging to the Ras, in a small valley through which runs the river Gibbeh, from which the mansion takes its name. Our guide here desired us to halt, and produced for our refreshment some cold mutton, of which we made a very hearty meal. Pursuing our road, we passed along a narrow and rather deep valley, part of which had been lately cleared for cultivation; the rest was thickly set with brushwood, and afforded a fine cover for grouse, guinea fowls, and partridges, all of which were in great abundance; but we did not see a single deer, though the country appeared of a description highly favourable to these animals. This gully, as it may be called, is about five miles in length, and at the end of it we mounted a lofty hill, ~~on which is~~ the village of Hasemko, by the Chief of which we were received with much attention. Our course I reckoned to be about fifteen miles in a north-west direction. The thermometer on our arrival was 86°.

"September 12.—We left the village at an early hour, after making the lady of the mansion, who was a very agreeable and pretty woman, a trifling present; it having been intimated to me that she had been put to much inconvenience to make room for us yesterday evening.

"Our road lay over the hill to the south-west, the inhabitants, who seem ever desirous of turning the road from cultivated plains, having led it in this direction to a gap in the side of the hill made by the falling down of a great mass of rock. We now wound round the summit of the hill, chiefly in a western course, till we reached the village of Admára, about three miles distant, above which is a church dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen. We here

inclined more to the north, passing a sloping plain, some part of which the inhabitants were ploughing for the first time, in spite of the stones and shrubs that impeded the progress of the bullocks, whose unnecessary toil we could not but pity, especially when we saw them lashed unmercifully by the drivers, who carry in the right hand a whip that leaves a mark wherever it strikes. We now came to the lower part of a mountainous ridge called Atbara, where we were joined by our guide, who had before gone off another way, and had appointed to meet us. I had just killed a small bird, much like the humming bird, and had with great difficulty dug up a few bulbs. The descent hence is extremely steep, and so much ~~incommo-~~ded with loose stones, that we were obliged to dismount from our mules, and before we reached the bottom, had reason to exclaim that it was as bad as the descent of Taranta. About half way down a few houses and a church are built under the shelter of projecting rocks, in a very picturesque situation. We met a kafila on its way to Antalow preparing to go up the steep that we had just descended. After we had with much toil reached the bottom, it was not a little provoking to find that, on passing the brook, it became necessary to climb another ascent before we could get out of the valley. Afterwards, the vegetation began to vary considerably, the country being much more thickly set with trees, some of which were of a large size. The soil was poor, and of a sandy nature; and we passed one entire bed of loose sand nearly a mile in extent. Proceeding about three miles to the north, we halted by a running stream, and took our usual repast; and being soon after overtaken by rain, we pursued our journey with all expedition for another stage of about six miles, when we arrived, just as

it grew dark, at the mansion of Barrambarras Toklu. We were received kindly by the master of the house, and treated most hospitably with a banquet of brinde and maize. In the course of it he introduced to us his wife, who is the sister of Subagadis, to whom I presented beads and a looking glass. Our host was chief of the district of Tembla, and a man of consequence, having many soldiers with matchlocks in his service. He was in high spirits, was very jovial, and wished me to stay in the country, promising to give me his daughter in marriage. Much jocular conversation ensued, the maize was handed briskly around, and we all took our full portion, about sixteen brulhes being drank by each person present, ladies as well as gentlemen.

“ September 13. — At a very early hour in the morning we quitted the village of Gullybudda, where we had been so hospitably entertained, and which appeared to be a place of considerable extent and population. We travelled about three miles N. N. W. through a picturesque and tolerably well-wooded country; but the trees were of a small size, and scarcely timber. Birds of many different kinds were singing among the branches of all the lower trees, the extremities of which were hung with numerous nests. Our first halt was by the side of the river Warie,\* which was running with great rapidity to the westward. Though at present a small stream, there were evident marks of its magnitude in the rainy season; for on both sides were seen sticks and weeds among the branches of the trees at least fifteen feet above the surface of its present bed, which had been lodged there by the floods. Our people soon made a fire, killed a sheep which had been presented

\* Warie means merely a torrent.

to me on the day before, and grilled a part of it for our breakfast. From this place our road turned more to the westward, over lofty and rugged hills, all of which, however, were for the most part cultivated. We passed the villages of Tsai; which, with their territory, form a free district under one of the Ras's nephews. It is however but a wretched domain, the soil being very sandy, and entirely occupied in many parts by kolquall; the surface is farther incumbered by rocks of slate in nearly vertical strata. After having journeyed about six miles north north-west from our last station, we made another halt at about two o'clock by the side of a stream, where we saw several birds, one of which I have no doubt was the Black eagle of Bruce. His drawing of it appears to be very correct; but in its habits, this bird more resembles an hawk than an eagle, for it perches on the tops of trees, and on being driven from one, flies to another. We again resumed our march, passing over wild hills covered with brushwood, part of which was clearing for cultivation, till we gained the top of a hill about four miles and a half from our last halting place, where we were to be accommodated for the night. Fit Aurari Yasous, the master of the mansion, was absent; we were however ushered into the hall, and on his return were presented with a goat and other eatables. There being no maize for drink, we were obliged to put up with booza, which is made from the crumbs of all sorts of bread, and greatly resembles bad, sour, small beer with a toast in it. Our present host was advanced in years, very tall, fierce and ugly; he is said to behave very tyrannically towards his people, and we ourselves could bear testimony to the roughness of his manners.

"September 14.—We found our host much more civil and

attentive in the morning than on the preceding evening, bread and hot milk being prepared for us at a very early hour; and he himself insisting on accompanying us to some distance from his house. Our road lay over a plain, skirting along the side of a lofty conical mountain, at the top of which is the church or convent of Abou Sama. On our right we saw a house formerly belonging to the Ras, and presented by him to Barrambarras Toklu. After travelling about three miles and a half, we arrived at the mansion of Bashaw Guebra Eyat, a man of much consequence in the country, who is able to bring into the field a large body of soldiers armed with matchlocks, a circumstance on which the importance of the Chiefs much depends. He was a middle-aged man of pleasing manners, and treated us with much hospitality. We proceeded, in about an hour, on our journey, winding round rugged hills covered with brushwood, and along the ledges of steep precipices, a fall from which, into the plain below, would have been certain death. The kolquall abounds in this part of the country, which, though cultivated wherever circumstances would admit, is not very productive, on account of its dry and sandy nature. We met a poor woman, on the hill, who accosted me in a supplicatory tone, and begged that I would give her some physic for a child which she carried at her back, and who, according to her report, was afflicted with an evil spirit. I could only recommend her to the protection of God, assuring her that the nature of such dreadful maladies was far beyond my skill.

“ The hills that we had been passing over consist almost entirely of a brown calcareous stone, being for the most part in perpendicular strata; hence, instead of flat tabular elevations, as is the case

where the strata lie horizontally, the forms presented by these hills are generally inclining to pyramidal. The whole country is well watered, springs being found on almost every mountain.

“As we advanced, the country bore a better appearance; the plains were covered with richer soil, but for want of draining were much swamped from the springs above. We had advanced about nine miles, ascending and descending, when we mounted a ridge that brought us in sight of the church of Abba Garima, which, though not in the straight road to Adowa, I determined to visit. In order to reach this building, we had to cross a nearly circular ~~valley~~, closed in on all sides with high but irregular hills. A stream of water runs through this valley, and wild date trees, at that time covered with fruit, were scattered over its surface. From having found this tree only in the neighbourhood of religious houses of unknown antiquity, I am led to conjecture that it was introduced by the Christian fathers who came hither from Egypt.

“The church of Abba Garima is said to have been built in the reign of Guebra Mascal, about the year 560; it is situated on a low projection of the circular ridge, by which the valley is bounded on the north-west, and is not very difficult of access. It is surrounded by oxy-cedars and daroo trees of luxuriant growth, and wild date trees of so great a height as to have the appearance of cocoa-nut trees.

“The road, winding to the church, is much incommoded with large and rugged masses of rocks, among the crevices of which runs a trickling stream; from the head of this path, thirty rough steps lead up to a wretched shed, forming the porch of the church. We passed through this into an open area walled round; in the

center of which is the main building, of a square form, and divided by a passage that runs through it into two unequal compartments. It is built of solid masses of stone and timber, which have in some places been strengthened by bars of iron, and the but-ends of all the beams and planks have been rounded and left projecting, as ornaments. Within are some miserable paintings, of which one represents Abbou Garima, with a long white beard and mustachios, wearing a turban, and seated according to the Turkish fashion. He is attended by many others dressed like himself, among whom is one with mustachios only. Several priests were present, and were very attentive in shewing us the whole of the building. The only account that they could give of the place, was the fabulous one, that Abbou Garima, 1500 years ago, was brought from Secundria hither in one night by the angel Gabriel, and after residing here a long time, was carried away in as mysterious a manner, and has never since been heard of; in commemoration of whom this church was erected by Guebra Mascal, who then reigned in Abyssinia. This, according to the Abyssinian annals, would bring his coming down to 500 anno Domini instead of 300, as Guebra Mascal was the successor of Elesbaas, who was cotemporary with the Roman Emperor Justin.

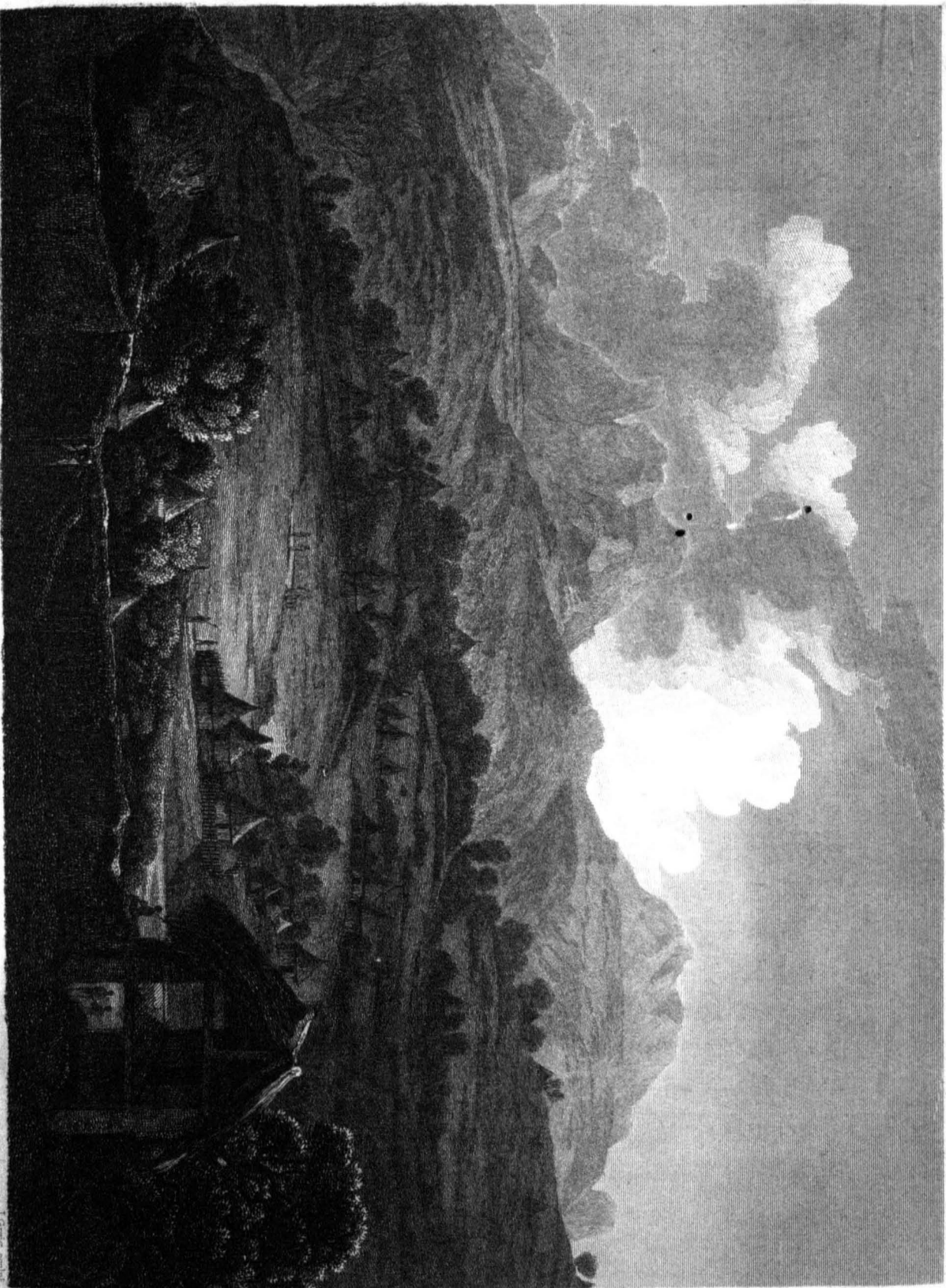
“ We were obliged to hasten away as speedily as possible, in order to reach Adowa before night; and after toiling over a road perpetually ascending and descending, sometimes swampy, sometimes rocky, and at all times much incumbered with loose stones, we at length came in sight of the town, enveloped in smoke. The market was just over, and the people, who were returning to their respective villages, were all curious enough to see the strangers;

but they uniformly behaved with much respect and civility. We arrived by sunset at the end of our journey, and were immediately conducted to the Ras's house, and introduced to Nebrida Aram and Basha Abdallah, who were waiting to receive me. A nephew of Nebrida Aram soon after came in, accompanied by a great number of his people. The evening was spent with great conviviality; many chiefs of considerable rank were present, among whom was a nephew of Ras Michael, with whom I had much conversation about his uncle; nor shall I soon forget the astonishment excited in the whole company by my knowledge of the public transactions in Abyssinia during the last fifty years. Nebrida Aram appeared very old and infirm, having lost the use of his left arm; he is said to be very rich, and doubtless possessed much power, being left here in charge by the Ras, whose horses were still fastened up in the hall. An upper apartment was prepared for me, but I found it so cold that I returned into the hall. The old gentleman politely made an excuse for not giving up to me the whole of the hall; he ordered it, however, to be divided by a screen, and we all slept in this apartment, Nebrida Aram and his suite, the Ras's horses, myself, and servants.

" September 18.—I retired to the room prepared for me, that I might finish some rough drawings of plants. After breakfast the mules were brought, and I proceeded to examine whatever was interesting in the town and neighbourhood, accompanied by Pearce and Andrew, who fortunately had completely established their character as Christians, in consequence of which I was enabled to get over many difficulties which would otherwise have been insurmountable.

" We were first taken to the church of St. Mariam, and on our

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way saw a hyæna lying dead in the road, of the same species as the one Captain Rudland killed at Dixan, but much larger ; it had been killed by spears.

“ St. Mariam affords nothing worthy of remark ; it is built exactly in the same style as the churches already described, but is inferior in every respect. We were attended by a crowd of the inhabitants, who pressed forward to get a sight of us, shouting and laughing, and the women making a clapping noise peculiar to themselves, all expressive of their pleasure and astonishment.

“ We now proceeded westward out of the town, crossing the plain, and a stream called Assa, till we arrived at another called the Mai Gogua, which runs northward with great rapidity down the valley. After riding along the bank of this stream about three quarters of a mile, we crossed it, and ascended a hill immediately beyond, on which stand the remains of the convent of Fremona, as it was called by the Jesuits, by whom it was founded ; but this name, if ever adopted by the inhabitants, is now wholly unknown. Within the walls, which are at present in ruins, stands the church of St. George, a poor and wretched edifice in the form of a parallelogram, with the internal walls painted in the usual style. The roof is an awkward and imperfect attempt at a dome. On the north side of the church is the appearance of a large tank or pool, and upon a small and higher eminence at the extremity of the northern brow of the hill, is a square building, with an open door-way on each side, in which is hung a large bell marked with Ethiopic characters. The outer wall, and all the inclosed buildings, are composed of small stones, laid very inartificially, and cemented with mud. Some parts of the wall are still thirty feet high, and at the

angles are round abutments; yet it does not appear to have ever been a place of strength, though Bruce has thought proper to represent the buttresses as flanking towers, and the belfry as a citadel.

“ On our way back we turned off to the church of St. Michael, which is placed on a rising ground on the east side of the valley. It is surrounded on all sides by trees, and is by much the most respectable in appearance, of any at Adowa. We had by this time been joined by our attending crowd; and on my coming out of the church a woman fell at my feet, and implored me to heal her son, who was deaf and dumb; nor was it without great difficulty that I was able to get rid of her importunity, by representing to her that the performance of such a cure was a miracle, and only capable of being effected by the immediate power of God. I found in waiting a mule, belonging to the Ras, which Nebrida Aram had sent for my use; accordingly I mounted, and proceeded amidst the acclamations of an immense throng into the city,

“ Adowa, situated on the eastern side of a valley, about a mile across, is a place of considerable extent, and has a striking appearance on account of the multitude of Wanza trees, which are thickly planted in the inclosures around the houses. I this day procured the flower and fruit, the latter of which is said by the inhabitants to be good eating when ripe; and I found Bruce's drawing of this tree, so far as it goes, correct.

“ Adowa supplies great quantities of cloth, principally of a coarse quality, which circulates as money through the country, and is the principal currency in which the chiefs pay their annual tribute. Each piece is about sixteen cubits long, and one and three-quarters wide; its value is thirty pieces of salt, or one dollar. Some of the

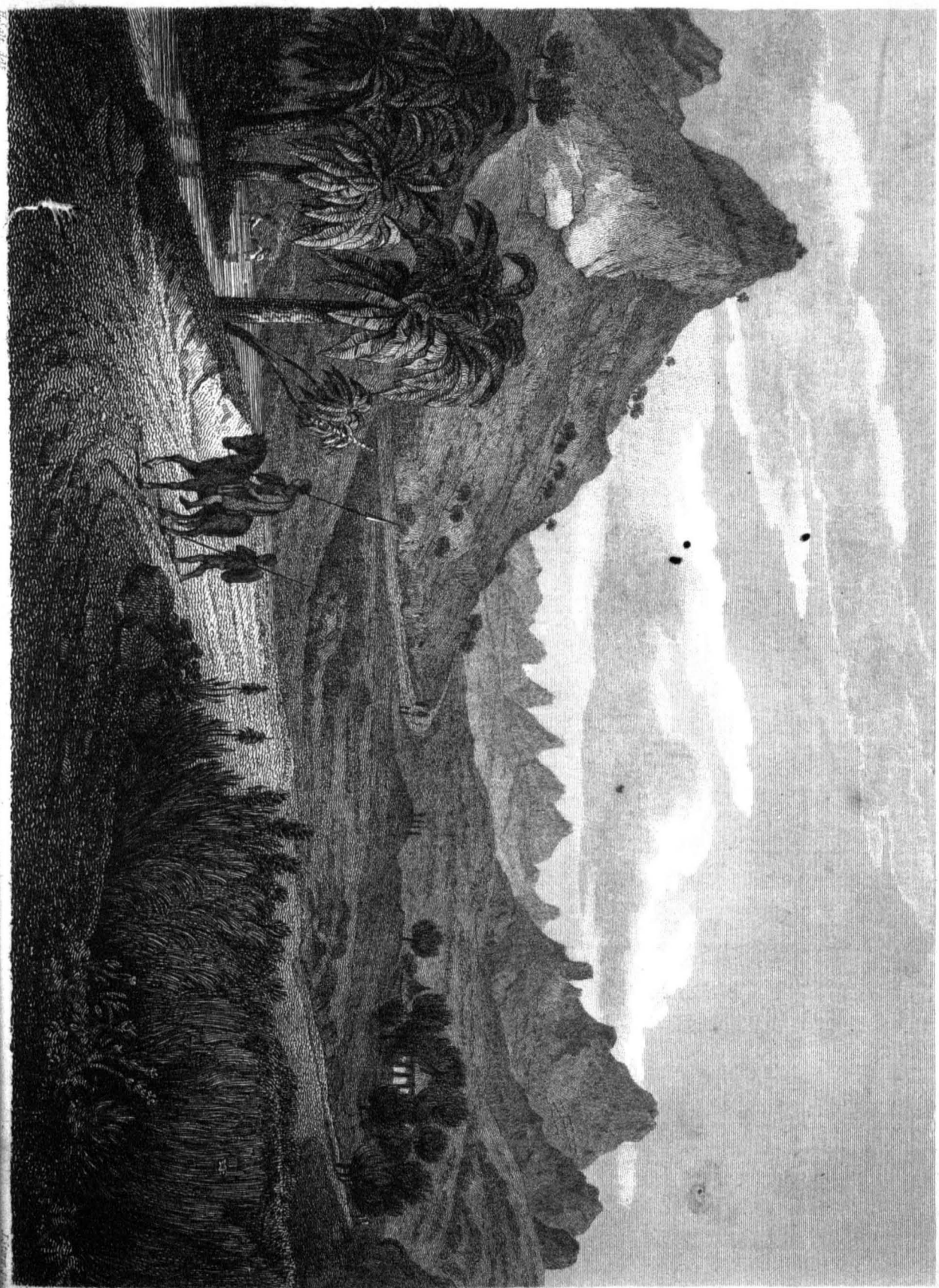
finer cloths are valued as high as twelve dollars for a dress, each dress being fifty cubits in length: these are worn only by the principal men of the country. The native Christian manufacturer will make only three dresses of the fine cloth in a year: the Mussulmauns will make more, but of an inferior quality, and therefore bearing a less price. I received from Nebrida Aram a bullock and two sheep, and another from his nephew; also two sheep and two jars of maize from the head men of the place, and one sheep from Basha Abdallah.

"September 16.—We did not leave Adowa until ten o'clock, having been detained by some difficulty about our baggage, occasioned by our having bought a few samples of fine and coarse cloths manufactured here, which we found it impossible to leave in safety at Adowa, as Nebrida Aram and Basha Abdallah were both going to Antalow to the muster of the troops before the Ras.

"On going down into the hall to pay my compliments to Nebrida Aram, I was unexpectedly introduced to one of the royal family, who was sitting with him on the couch. This was no less a person than Fasilydas, son of Yasous, who was placed on the throne by Ras Guxo. He gave me an extremely polite reception, and was very curious in examining every thing belonging to my dress. He asked me whether I intended to go to Gondar; and on my saying that I wished it, but was prevented by the unsettled state of public affairs, he asked me to go with him; which I was obliged to decline. I soon took my leave, as it was impossible for me to ask any questions, owing to my ignorance of his present situation in Tigré, and from knowing that my guide, who was present, was extremely suspicious of every thing that I said. After I had mounted my mule,

the Prince came out with his slender retinue, and requested me to dismount, seeming extremely anxious to speak with me in private. On my complying, and going apart with my interpreter to hear what he had to communicate, Guebra Selassé called out most vociferously to him in an angry tone, which compelled us very reluctantly to part in silence. His complexion was extremely dark, but his features were good: he was living at this time under the protection of the Ras; by whom, under the guise of respect, he was kept in a state of honourable restraint.

“ Our road from Adowa lay along the valley in nearly a westward direction: we crossed the Mai Gogua, and another stream, which I suppose may be the Riberani of Bruce; and after travelling about five miles, arrived at the extremity of the valley, marked by a peaked hill, green up to the top, on which stands the church of Hannes; and immediately opposite, on a smaller rising ground, the church of Anna Mariam. Hither the Ras, as governor of Tigré, when residing at Adowa, used to come out to meet any message from the King. The direct road to Axum passes by the side of this hill; but our guide informing me there was a curious place called Calam Negus, in the neighbourhood, we turned off a little to the northward for the purpose of visiting it. On our way we met with a grandson of Ras Michael, mounted on a mule; he stopped to ask me for some medicine for a well known disorder said to be very prevalent here, which I was obliged to evade on the true plea of having left it at Antalow. Notwithstanding this application, from all the enquiries we made during my stay in the country, I am of opinion, that the venereal disease does not exist in Abyssinia: debility, and a bad sort of itch, common in the country, are generally



mistaken for it. This last disease always yielded to an application of gunpowder and lemon juice. The descendant of Michael the Great was living on a scanty allowance drawn from the province which his grandfather ruled with such absolute power. He had twenty fields allowed him by the Ras Welleta Selassé, who also had the condescension to make him the same annual present as he bestows on his soldiers. This small possession was probably not far distant, for we soon after passed an old woman who was formerly an attendant on the old Ras. We continued journeying nearly due west, and passed over a hill, the top of which was one continued bed of iron ore. The next hill was covered with spar. Beyond this we crossed a plain fully six miles in extent, which brought us at length to the place of our destination. Its appearance promised but little; but on examination it proved, to our great satisfaction, to be of far more consequence than we had expected.

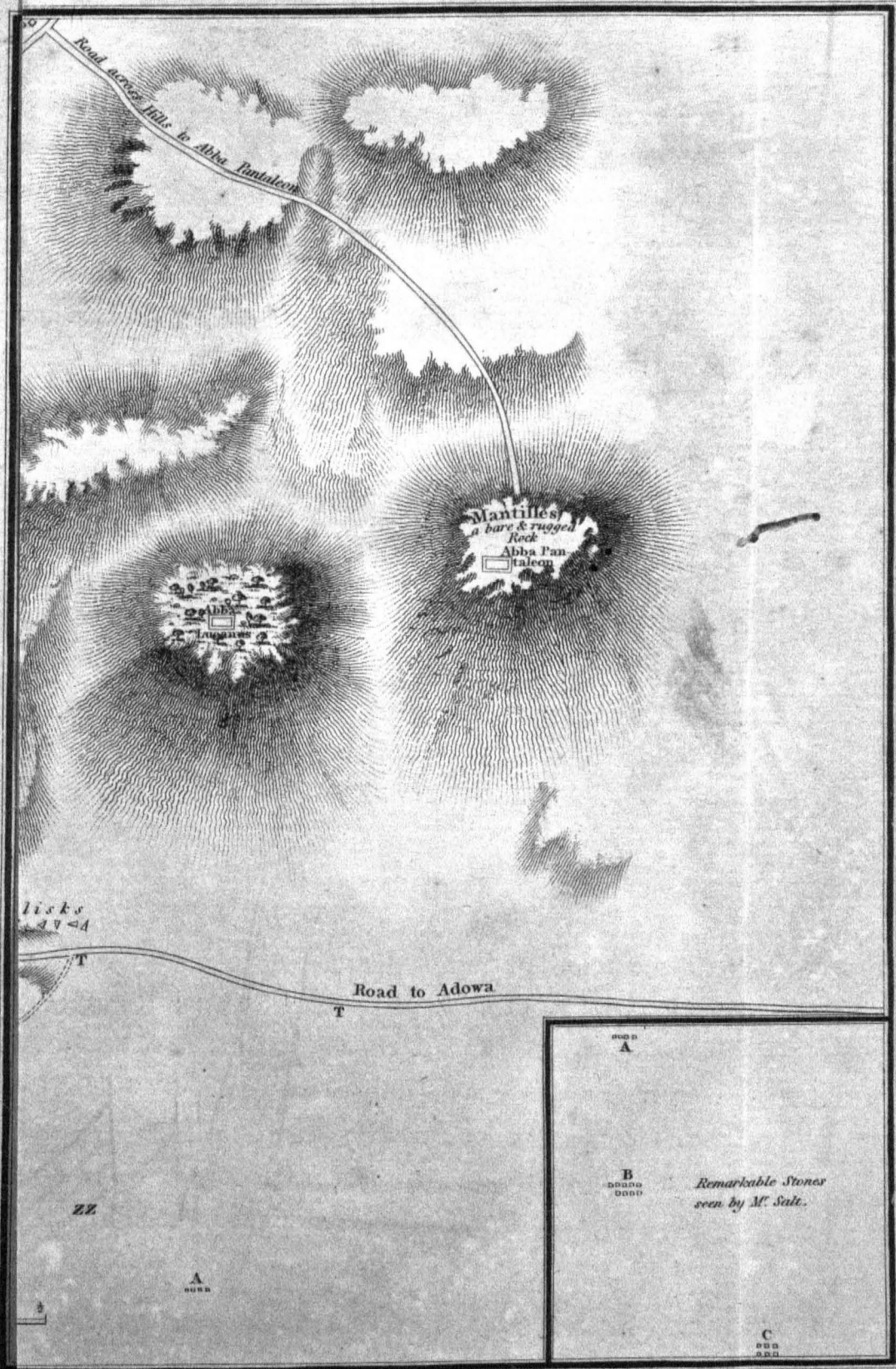
"It consists of two excavations formed in the hill, and cased and covered with large blocks of brown granite, one of which, serving as a cover to one of the cells, measured eleven feet and a quarter by eight and a quarter. An idea of the whole will be best obtained by inspecting the plan drawn on an accurate scale from a measurement made on the spot.\* These caves are, with respect to each other, in a direction very nearly north and south; the workmanship is good, but rough; the stone having all the marks of the chissel. The first, (marked B, vide plan), our guides informed us was the road by which Calam Negus went to Ierusalem, and "if any person should take a candle into it at night, he would distinctly see the whole of the way to that holy city." This personage I sup-

\* This is lost, but one is supplied from memory,

pose to be Caleb Negas, a king who reigned in the country about the year 522, and who was cotemporary with the Emperor Justin: he was celebrated for a successful incursion into Arabia against the Homerites, and on his return sent his crown to Jerusalem to be suspended in the temple.\* We managed to find the entire extent of this cave, at which our guides were not a little astonished. The second cave, (marked C,) is very nearly closed up by earth that has fallen in; but as there was a glimpse of something like pillars, I determined not to be deterred by any trifling difficulties. Accordingly Pearce and myself crept down into it on our knees, and when we had once passed the entrance, found it to be much more curious than the first. The door way, leading into the outer cell, is extremely well fashioned; the capitals of the supporting pillars are formed with the butt ends of the cross stones projecting over the erect ones. Within are three plain tombs standing at right angles to the walls of the cell, in a direction nearly east and west, on a pavement raised about four inches from the floor. The cover of the center one is displaced, and lying partly broken on one of the others; the two side tombs are entire.

“The side cells of this excavation are of much greater depth than the middle one. We satisfactorily ascertained the whole extent of the place, by following the walls till they brought us again to the entrance, not being able to procure lights. The only living creatures that we perceived within, were bats. At a little distance were some large loose stones, ready squared for building; but to what purpose they had been applied it was impossible to ascertain. A ridiculous circumstance occurred on our being about to leave

\* Ludolf. lib. 2. chap. 44.



this place: I had left my whip in the first cave; all our Habesh attendants supposed it to be in the other, to which they sent one of the boys to fetch it; in the mean time I myself descended into the first, and brought it up; nor was it possible to persuade them that Calam Negus had not brought it to me out of the other, which absurd story they often afterwards seriously repeated. These curious remains of antiquity lie nearly west of the hills above Adowa, which were at this time in sight, and about a mile from the skirts of Axum, to which we descended in a south-western direction.

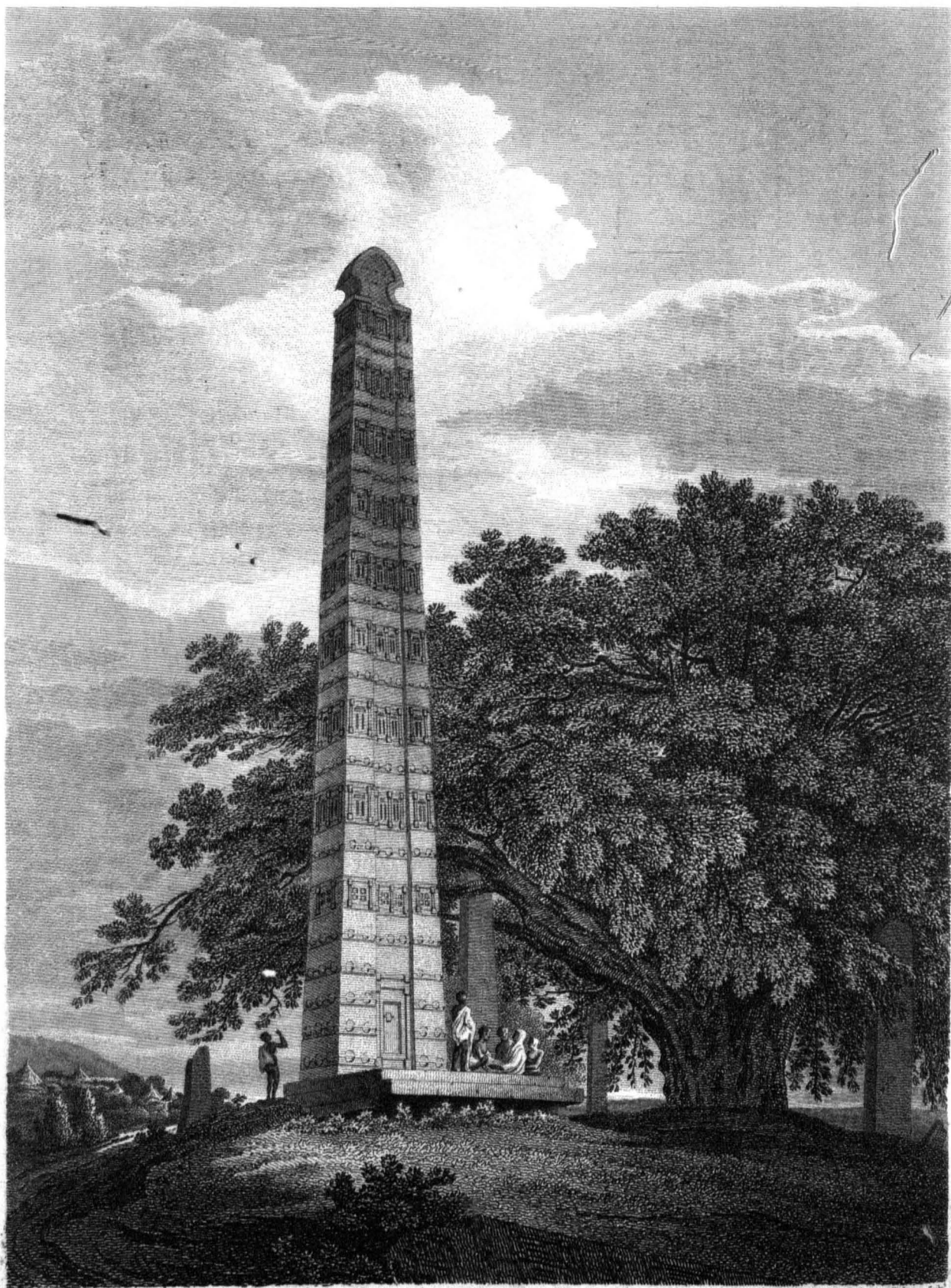


## CHAPTER III.

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### MR. SALT'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED.

Account of Axum.—The Obelisk,—the Church,—the Priests,—the King's Chair.—  
An Ethiopic Inscription, and conjectural Explanation of it.—A Greek Inscription.  
—General State of the Ruins.—Observations on Mr. Bruce's Account of Axum.—  
—Departure from Axum.—Arrival at Adowa.—Visit to Ozoro Tishai.—Return to  
Antalow.—Captain Rudland's Account of his Proceedings during Mr. Salt's absence.



OBELISK AT AXUM.



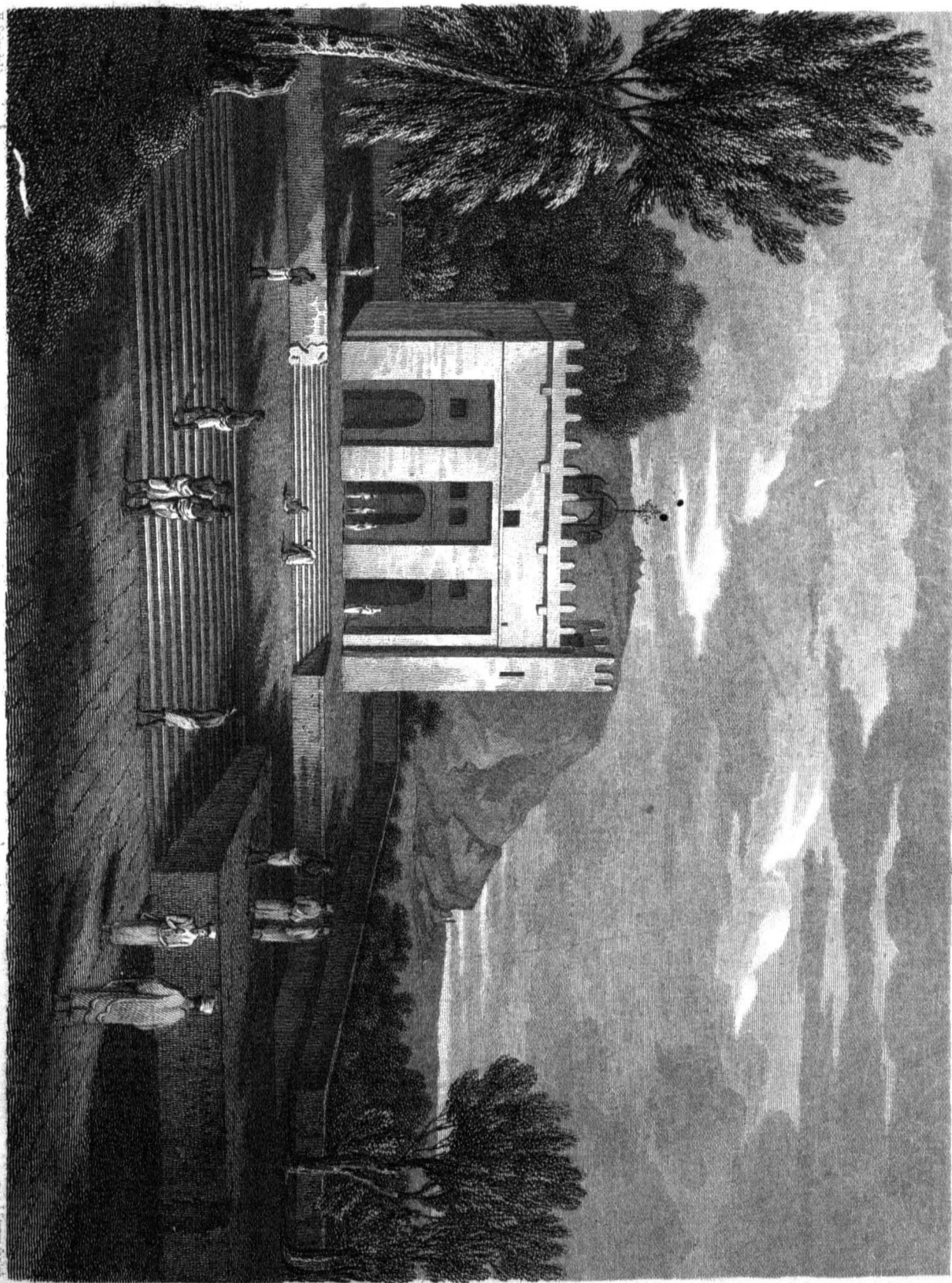
### CHAPTER III.

THE first impression on beholding Axum church, is its great resemblance to the Gothic seats of noblemen in England. As we came nearer, we passed the fallen ruins of a great number of obelisks, some of which present no appearance of having been ever decorated with sculpture, while others seem to have had much attention paid to them in this respect; at length, after passing a large reservoir of water on our left, we were much gratified with a view of an obelisk still erect, which had been hitherto concealed by a large Daroo tree, and is undoubtedly the one mentioned by Poncet, and afterwards described and drawn by Bruce. It is about eighty feet high, and formed out of a single block of granite, curiously carved, and in excellent proportion. My attention was for a long time rivetted on this beautiful and extraordinary monument, of which, however, the elevation published by the traveller last mentioned, can furnish no idea. It is difficult to conceive the method by which such a solid mass of granite was raised; and the astonishment excited at the magnitude of the work was more particularly striking, after passing through a country now reduced to so rude a state as Abyssinia. A little way below this only obelisk that has withstood the effects of time, and which appears so perfect that it might be supposed to have been lately erected, we came opposite to the church, which Bruce has most unjustly depreciated, since, when

compared with all others in Tigré, it has no rival (except Chelicut) with respect to size, richness, nor sanctity. The priests were very unwilling at first to admit us; but the name and authority of the Ras, at length brought them to a compliance. The only cause of their reluctance, as we afterwards discovered, arose from their not having prepared all their finery to enhance the dignity of our reception. The principal circumstance worthy of notice in the external appearance of the church, is its height, which cannot be less than forty feet. The colonnade in front is supported by four massive square pillars about five feet in diameter, composed of small stones, and covered with plaister. On requesting to see the inside of the building, the farther folding door was thrown open, and singing was heard in a distant apartment; some of the priests then came forward reciting prayers, and burning incense. All the books, and rich dresses belonging to the church, were afterwards brought for my examination: the former are of a large size, and covered with gilding and figures in relief; the latter are so like those which we saw at Chelicut, as not to need a particular description.

"I learned from the books in this place, that the first Christian church at Axum was built eleven hundred and forty years ago, at the same time as that of Abrahasubah, and was destroyed by Mohamed Gragné in the year 1526; the present church was built by Sultan Ayto Fasil, son of Ayto Socinios, in the year 1657.

"In the evening I had a visit from the chief priest and others, who came with their books to try me in the scripture. My knowledge, though not very great, was fortunately fully equal to enable me to answer or evade all their questions, so that I came off with great credit; and the High Priest kissed my hand in rapture at my inti-



mate acquaintance with the sacred book. Before he left me, I took the opportunity of presenting to him, for the church, a piece of red satin stuff, as I found that no information was to be gained without some kind of bribery. The priests were all highly pleased with my offering, but begged that I would keep it till morning, and then deliver it in public at the church. The clerical establishment at this place seems to be on a far superior scale to any I have seen in Abyssinia, except Chelicut, which, from being the favourite church of the Ras, and close to the vicinity of his principal residence, is of course more particularly attended to, and enriched, during the continuance of his power. Axum is, however, looked up to with great deference, as having been for so long a period the seat of royalty; and the Chief Priest claims a very high precedence over all the churches to the eastward of the Tacazza. Even at present, on great occasions, as after a victory, the Ras thinks it necessary to pay his devotions at this place, to conciliate the priesthood, the influence of which still continues to be considerable.

“ The dress of this order of men differs in some degree from that of all the other ranks. They wear a close vest of white linen next the skin, which covers every part of their body to the knees, in addition to the large folding mantle and close drawers, which constitute the simple dress of the Abyssinians. They also wrap neatly round their heads a thin shawl of cotton, leaving the top of their heads exposed. This difference in dress gives great respectability to their appearance, and as far as I could learn, their conduct and manners are equally becoming.

“ September 17.—I went to the church at a very early hour, and was received with great attention by the priests, and on my

requesting it, was admitted into the inmost apartment. The whole body of the church, consisting of four apartments or rooms, was covered with handsome carpets. On my presenting the piece of satin, I was desired to kneel down with my face to the ground, in which position I continued about two minutes, during which time the High Priest recited a prayer over me. This ceremony being over, I was led up some square steps of granite to the top of the building, which is flatly roofed, covered with mortar and stucco, and surrounded with Gothic ornaments. We here measured the size of the church, and found it to be one hundred and eleven feet in length and fifty-one in breadth. The view hence gives a good idea of the situation of the obelisks and of the reservoir, I therefore took a sketch of it, which is given among my larger views.

“Hence I was conducted to see two walls lined with stone, which are at some little distance from the church, as also a small square inclosure surrounded by pillars; on a seat within which the ancient kings used to be crowned (*vide B in plan*), as is shewn in the Vignette of this volume. In the inclosure behind the king's seat, other remains are scattered about in different directions; but on none of these, after a careful and repeated examination, was I able to perceive the least appearance of any inscription, excepting one, which is very short, in Ethiopic characters, of which the following is an exact copy.



The characters 18, 19, 20, 21, are A-ga-zi-y, or the Lord.

I can make nothing satisfactory of the four last letters, and possibly there may be some error in them as in the former letters, for the whole inscription is very rudely cut. The sense of the latter part may be conjectured from the beginning: "The Aboona David removed and broke to pieces here; he thought within himself the Lord was pleased that he so should do." If this explanation be just, it accounts satisfactorily for the destruction of the temple and obelisks; but I feel too conscious of my ignorance of the original language, to give it to the public otherwise than as a conjecture.

"Those ruins which were in any degree worthy of notice, I sketched, assisted by Pearce. I also took a front view of the church. I was taken hence to an upright stone (vide R in ground plan) about half a mile from the church in a north-east direction, on which was said to be some ancient writing. As I approached it, my curiosity was so highly raised, that I could scarcely refrain from running with eagerness to the spot. The first side of it that I examined, disappointed me much, there being only some slight remains of unknown characters; I was however soon repaid by a view of the opposite side, as I found it covered with Greek characters, fairly and deeply cut in the stone, each letter being nearly two inches in length. For the preservation of this inscription in so perfect a state, it is greatly indebted to a fortunate inclination to the northward, which the nature of the ground has given to the stone, by which that side of it is entirely sheltered from the rain. This monument is about eight feet high, three and an half broad, and one thick. As it was getting late I returned to breakfast, and was afterwards detained some time with the priests, who brought me a book of Ras Welleta

Selassé's wars. I then returned with Pearce to the inscription. My first care was to trace every letter with white chalk, and then to copy it on paper, correcting the whole by going over it a second time. We had been several hours thus engaged, and had not proceeded half through before the rain came on, and obliged us to desist. In the evening I wrote down the best account I could get from the books of Axum, of Ras Michael, and his rebellion in Tigré against the Emperor Yasous; his standing a siege on the mountain of Samayut; and his subsequent concession and pardon; to which the Emperor with difficulty acceded; all which confirm the historical account of the same transactions as related by Bruce.

"This day a circumstance occurred of trivial moment, but which I shall narrate, as it throws some light on the state of mental cultivation among those people. I was sitting alone where a fire of wood had been lighted, when a man of very wild demeanor, taking the opportunity of the absence of my servants, rushed in and began to remove the lighted branches. I in vain ordered him to desist, till at length, provoked by his insolence, and desirous of dismissing him at once, I threw at his head the drinking bottle which was standing before me on the table. The man was not touched, but immediately ran out in a great fright, making a most vociferous outcry, which immediately brought Guebra Selassé and others into the room. On being informed of what had passed, they searched for the bottle, and to their great surprise found that it had received no injury (doubtless on account of its lightness and globular figure). They turned it round and round with increasing astonishment; and from that time it was one of the anecdotes concerning me that they had most pleasure in repeating, declaring that such a man

could never be in want of a weapon; a conclusion, which it may be supposed I was at no pains to controvert.

“ September 18.—I rose at an early hour and hastened to the inscription. After I had completed and corrected with the greatest attention the copy of every letter that was in sight, we began to dig up the earth, in order to get at that part of it which was under ground. We fortunately cleared away nearly a foot and a half, without bringing the stone on our heads, and at last, to my great satisfaction, came, as I supposed, to the end of the inscription. This being done, I went to take a drawing of the obelisk still erect (vide L in ground plan). I found it to be extremely different from the representation given of it by Bruce; the ornaments, which he is pleased to call triglyphs and metopes, and guttæ, being most regularly, instead of irregularly disposed, as will be seen in my representation of it. I am now perfectly satisfied that all Bruce's pretended knowledge of drawing is not to be depended upon, the present instance affording a striking example both of his want of veracity and uncommon assurance, in giving, with a view to correct others, “ as a geometrical elevation,” so very false a sketch of this monument. The broad sides of it front north and south, of which only the south is sculptured. It is inferior in size to one that has fallen down, which also differs from this in the form of its ornaments, and in its having been carved on both sides, or else on the opposite side to the corresponding one of that which is now standing. It is a noble monument, but of its antiquity, who can judge? For Bruce's theory on the subject is, I fear, so ill supported by facts, as to deserve little credit.

“ After finishing my sketch, I went to the top of the hill to the

eastward (marked P in ground plan), in hopes of finding some more remains. There is the appearance of a double door-way excavated in the rock on the western side of this hill, and on the northern side are steps leading to the top, but on the summit itself there is not the least appearance of any work of ancient art. My labour however was not entirely fruitless, as hence I took bearings of all the principal objects, and thus completed my idea of the situation of Axum.

“ The town of Axum stands partly in and partly at the mouth of a nook (y y y in the ground plan) formed by two hills on the north-west end of an extensive valley (z z), the soil of which is very fertile, and interspersed with small pieces of spar and agates. North of the plain stands the church of Abba Lucanus on a lofty hill, the summit of which is covered with trees; to the north-east is the church Abba Pantaleon, built on the point of a bare and rugged rock called Mantillees; on the south-east are the towering hills of Adowa; and on the south-west the convent or church of Tecla Haimanont. The road from Adowa (T T in ground plan) lies directly west across the plain, and winds round the bottom of the hill that stands to the east of Axum, which hill is entirely composed of a brown coarse granite. Upon the first rising of this hill, and about two hundred yards north north-east from the stone with the inscription, stands a plain obelisk (S in ground plan) about twenty feet high, and in a line eastward are fourteen more that are fallen. The one that is now standing, I suppose to be that mentioned by Bruce on his entering Axum, as the high road from Adowa leads close under it; though by the way in which Bruce has described it, the reader would be led to look for it above the convent of Abboo

or Abba Pantaleon, which is impossible, that place being on the very summit of an high eminence on the left hand side of the great road. After passing this obelisk on the right, there is a line of regular rock, in part resembling a rough wall, which is probably the same that Bruce has described as a wall of red marble surmounted by pedestals, (vide V in ground plan). We were not however able in any portion of it to trace the workmanship of art. It seemed to be a regular stratum of rock left by nature, as I have often before seen, forming the very base of the hill. It is of a loose, soft, chalky nature; but the influence of the air, and the mosses growing upon it, have formed a reddish coat on the surface. It is very irregular in its measurement, in some places being twelve feet high, and in others not two, and is from ten to five feet across. There is no appearance of pedestals upon it, but a little to the south are lying five pedestals or altars (C in ground plan) which are at present evidently removed from their proper situations.

“ The chief modern building is the church, which stands at the northern extremity of the present town, and seems in part to occupy the situation of an ancient temple. It has in front of it two flights of steps (O in ground plan); the lower flights consist of twelve steps, one hundred and eighty-feet in length, and the upper one of eight steps, thirty-six feet in length, with an interval of sixteen feet between the two flights: from the uppermost step to the church porch is thirty-eight feet. A row of broken pedestals still remaining before the church (C in ground plan), indicates the principal entrance.

“ The situation of the monument called the King's seat, has been already described, and the only additional circumstances that I have