

TRAVELS
IN
SOUTHERN RUSSIA
AND
THE CRIMEA.

3619.

TRAVELS
SOUTHERN RUSSIA,
THE CRIMEA ;

THROUGH HUNGARY, WALLACHIA, & MOLDAVIA,

DURING THE YEAR 1837.

BY
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OF PARIS, MUNICH, STOCKHOLM, ETC. ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY RAFFET.

DEDICATED TO H.M. NICHOLAS I., EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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EXPLANATION OF
THE GEOLOGICAL MAP
OF THE
CRIMEA,
BY M. J. N. HUOT,
ILLUSTRATIVE OF
TRAVELS IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA,
BY M. ANATOLE DE DEMIDOFF.

EXPLANATION OF THE SIGNS

• Town or City.	• Post house, or relay.
• Village of 20 or more houses.	— Post road.
• Hamlet containing from 5 to 20 houses.	— High road.
• Hamlet of fewer than 5 houses	— Bye road.
• A house.	• Light-house.
• Ancient hamlet, uninhabited	• Anchorage.
• Church.	• Wind-mill.
• Monastery	• Water-mill.
• Mosque	• Fort, or redoubt.

EXPLANATION OF THE COLOURS

12. Pseudo Volcanic	} Igneous formation.
11. Plutonic Rocks	
10. Recent formation	
9. Diluvial formation	
8. Upper beds	} Super cretaceous formation.
7. Middle beds	
6. Inferior beds	
5. Chalk	} Cretaceous formation.
4. Green sand	
3. Neocomian, or Lower Green sand	
2. Oolitic formation	} Jurassic formation.
1. Lias formation	

1
424,470

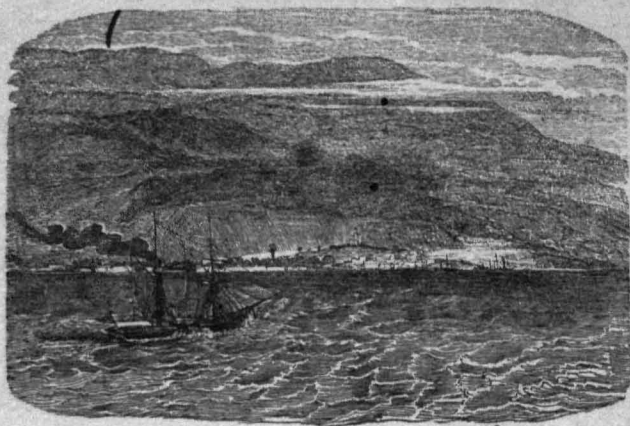
50,000 metres.

50 versts.

70 leagues, 25 to a degree.

VIII K.4

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CHAPTER I.

YALTA.—BAGHITCHEH-SARAI.



BEFORE quitting Yalta to begin our daily investigations upon the soil of the Taurida, we had to accomplish several indispensable preliminaries. This occupied two days; nor were these two days lost as regarded the researches of our naturalists, or the achievements of our painter. Our picturesque campaign could not have opened under more favourable auspices. Count Woronzoff was kind enough

to assist us himself in tracing out the plan of our expedition. We had, moreover, a skilful guide and powerful recommendations, and, thus fortified, we were now about to commence the wandering existence of sportsmen, geologists, and naturalists. The goal was before us, the only business now was to touch it with our hands.

On the 13th, we were all assembled, towards evening, on the shore at Yalta, when the steamer which had brought us, the "Peter the Great," left the bay, which still continued rough, and steered towards the east, carrying on board two persons, proceeding to rejoin M. de Demidoff and the carriages, which could be better disembarked at Kaffa, where they would be substituted for the télégues; from a height, beneath which the sea spreads out to a distance, our eyes followed, for a long time, the course of the steamer, tossed by a somewhat heavy sea. The promontory on which we stood was once occupied by the old church of Yalta, and amidst its ruined foundations we stumbled over two skulls worthy of the grave-digger in "Hamlet." We made a booty of these human remains, of proud origin doubtless, as they lay thus abandoned beneath the vaulted roof of the sanctuary.

On a height not far from hence stands the new church of Yalta, a charming edifice, of the lightest design, and filled with delicate sculptures. The entrance to the interior is through the base of an elegant tower, while

a dome in the oriental style, surrounded by four of smaller dimensions, picturesquely crowns the edifice.

On the following day, we strolled over the environs. Two small rivers, which heavy rains or the thawing of the snow, sometimes convert into torrents, flow into the bay of Yalta. The first, which has given its name to this modest town, rises at the base of a splendid barrier of mountains, intersects a valley covered with gardens and orchards, and is lost in the sea, close to the very gates of Yalta. The other river, which runs into the sea a little more to the south, near Cape Ai-Todor, bears the name of Chrimasto-Nero. In summer, a few thread-like streams of clear water straggle over the pebbles at the bottom of a bed hollowed out by a torrent. Not that the sources of the river are deficient, but as it passes at the bottom of their gardens, the Tatars, skilful in the art of irrigation, exact from the Chrimasto-Nero a tribute of limpid water. This beautiful water is drawn off by canals ingeniously disposed, and supplies moisture to the numerous plantations of tobacco and hemp. We ascended this valley, walking in the bed of the torrent, obstructed at intervals by masses of rock, and at the end of an hour we halted in the midst of a wild and grand scene. The torrent divides here at the base of an imposing heap of rocks, covered with a profusion of pines, larches, and juniper trees, in the midst of which

a number of elegant peaks rise boldly in the air, like the spires of a gothic cathedral. The air was calm, the silence profound, and the solitude unbroken.

On retracing our steps, we visited a large Tatar village, sloping beneath the shade of its walnut trees down to the edge of the torrent. In the geographical nomenclature of the east, which delights to designate places according to the picturesque characteristic of their aspect or position, this place is called Déré-Koui: the first of these words signifies a valley, and Koui is the term applied to a village. The dwellings of the Tatar peasants are erected by preference on a slope, in such a manner that the houses may be built in the form of an amphitheatre, with their backs to the rising ground. Three walls, of no great height, form the sides of these humble dwellings, the fourth being cut into the hill itself; several beams supporting a covering of turf laid upon bundles, are solidly established upon these walls, and a terrace is thus formed, which the Tatars have found the means of rendering quite impervious to the wet. On this terrace, which is kept as clean as the floors in our houses, the Tatar peasant lays out his fruit and his seeds to dry; here he breathes the cool evening air, and chats with his friends and neighbours. From this post of command, the Tatar can see what is going on around, when his faithful dogs rush barking at the stranger.

This terrace constitutes, in fact, the entire house. Among all these platforms, there is one in particular, that of the *çinbachi*, the municipal chief of the locality, which is the public place, the forum, where the news is exchanged, and the affairs of the village are discussed; here, too, the stranger is received during the preparations for that eager hospitality, which is a sort of religion with this people.

Déré-Koui, its lower extremity, is shaded by the thick foliage of a forest of large walnut trees. The public fountain, hidden beneath this gloomy canopy, was surrounded by groups of women, whom our appearance put to flight. Running thus through the shade, enveloped in their white veils, they suggested the notion of blessed spirits in Elysium. Everything helped to carry out the Virgilian comparison; the coolness, the silence, the murmur of the waters, and the light steps of the fugitives. If you meet them in some narrow pathway, they suddenly turn back on their steps rather than meet the gaze of an infidel; or if they are tranquillized by the distance which separates you, they content themselves with obstinately turning their backs towards you; even the children, a curious race, seem to participate in this horror of strangers. We were, however, followed by several pretty little boys, with lively faces, prudently keeping at a distance, and ready to make their escape at

the slightest alarm. They took especial delight in seeing us shoot doves, with which the thickly-foliaged trees of Déré-Koui abound. These Tatar children are pretty, nimble, and well-proportioned; they are clad in a narrow sack; and their heads are covered with a red bonnet, from beneath which falls an abundant crop of hair artistically plaited by the maternal hand; when the child is grown up, the red bonnet is succeeded by the black sheep-skin cap, commonly worn by these people. Unfortunately, when the cap is drawn well over the forehead, the ears are left outside, and this is why they are always seen to stick out so far from the head. The qualities of the full-grown man correspond with the promise of his childhood; he is gracefully made, quick, and courageous; with a brilliant eye, an aquiline nose, and intelligence beaming in every feature. He is naturally idle—idleness is to him an exquisite pleasure; but, nevertheless, when it is required, he can endure the greatest hardship and fatigue.

The language spoken by these men is the Tatar, but they speak it with so hoarse and veiled an accent, that it is with difficulty they can be understood, even by those acquainted with it. This guttural pronunciation arises, no doubt, from their habit of calling out to each other in the open air from the top of their terraces. The tillage in Déré-Koui, as in the rest of

the valley of Yalta, is conducted by the Tatars with great intelligence, and we have already mentioned how the skilful distribution of water contributes to increase the general fertility of the land.

We received at Aloupka, on the 15th, a plan for our expedition, embracing every spot in the Taurida worthy the attention of the inquirer. The first portion of our route formed a circuit on the map of the Crimea, the principal points of which were Baghtcheh-Sarai, the city of the Khans, and Sevastopol, the great naval arsenal, taking in the whole ancient Chersonese, so replete with historical and poetical memorials. We started upon this interesting pilgrimage, provided with all that could make the journey agreeable and instructive, and the letters kindly furnished us by the governor-general, ensured us a favourable reception everywhere. A firman in the Russian and Tatar languages, made us secure as to obtaining means of conveyance and the requisite number of horses. Our guide, sent us by Count Woronzoff, soon became our friend; his name was Michael Barba-Christi, and he was a subaltern-officer, in the company of arnaouts, of Yalta.

The Greek troops, who are called arnaouts, consist of one battalioh, whose special duty is to guard the coast of Crimea. The head-quarters are in the little port of Balaklava, and the troops are stationed out at the various points of the coast where their presence is

deemed necessary. The origin of these arnaouts dates from the war between Russia and the Ottoman empire, in 1769. A naval force, composed entirely of Greeks from the Archipelago, powerfully contributed at that time to the success of the Russian arms; at the termination of the campaign, the remnant of this valiant squadron were received on the Russian territory, and formed into a regiment, which subsequently rendered repeated and signal services against the insurrections of the Tatars. At a later period, this military corps received, together with the name of Greek battalion of Balaklava, a grant of land; they thus formed a complete military colony, the members of which, called out at intervals to serve, devote themselves during two-thirds of the year to the peaceful cultivation of their possessions. It is difficult to account for the surname of arnaouts, applied to these Greeks. Perhaps, should we look for the origin of this designation in the Greek words *arnos*, a sheep, or *arnaki*, a ewe, which would lead to the supposition that this small tribe, now settled upon the rocks of Balaklava, is descended from a people of shepherds.* But to proceed: our worthy guide, Michael Barba-Christi, was no sooner in possession of the order from Aloupka, than he zealously busied himself concerning the means of conveyance which we should require to reach Baghtcheh-Sarai.

On the 16th, before six in the morning, we were all

on horseback, and our joyous troop was ascending the valley of Yalta, following in single file the pathway along the bank of the little river. Nine mounted men, and five Tatars on foot, composed our tolerably picturesque cavalcade; for our costumes had undergone a considerable change since the day when our uniforms attracted the attention of the passengers on board the Danube steamer. We had already yielded to Tatar influence, and our persons and garments exhibited a decidedly oriental character. We were ourselves struck with the strange appearance presented by our party, as they stood out in relief against the first declivities of the Yaila. The horses which we rode were of low stature and slight appearance; but we soon learned to esteem their excellent qualities. Indefatigable, and never discouraged, the least repose, and the most meagre pasturage sufficed to restore their strength; they are as sure of foot on the most rugged paths, and on the edge of precipices, as on the broadest and most level road. Slow and cautious in descending a steep, they clamber up hill at a gallop. The saddle used by the Tatars consists of a light but hard wooden frame, covered with a thick leather cushion; the rider, thus raised aloft, and resting on very short stirrups, is so elevated above his steed that he cannot press his flanks. The Tatars, accustomed to this strange mode of riding, have a very firm seat; but a

person unaccustomed to it, requires a certain amount of practice before he feels entirely at his ease. In this fashion we wended our way, each flanked with his baggage; one with his artist's sketch-book and havresack, another with the more formidable hammers of the geologist, and some with herbals, fowling-pieces, and the gauze pockets fatal to the butterfly. On our pack-horses were heaped up provisions, fishing-nets, cloaks, cooking and camp utensils, kegs of spirits of wine, and the light portmanteaus containing our town habiliments. Such was our grotesque procession, as it left the neighbourhood of Yalta.

We were soon slowly ascending large round hills, along the sides of which the path slants at a gentle inclination; for it would be impossible to attempt a direct path over these gigantic cones. It was wonderful to see our little horses clambering over the loose rolling stones, the clatter of which still echoed through the valleys, even after the cavalcade had reached the summit. In a more elevated region, we met with a fine growth of pines, as elegant as those of Italy: they flourish marvellously in the immense ravines of the Yaila, but on the highest peaks they become stunted and irregular. This fine tree, the *pinus taurica*, is the natural dispenser of shade in these countries; it protects beneath its gloomy foliage the inferior hills of the chain of Crimea. After halting on a plateau carpeted with moss, beneath

the shade of these splendid pines, we began once more to climb the heights.

You first ascend, in a slanting direction, the steep sides of an immense conical mountain, thickly covered with wood, following a path which seems to have been torn open by the lightning; you proceed along the edge of a precipice, which winds now to the right and now to the left, and sometimes you have to cross the ravine on the trunks of trees. As you ascend further, the prospect stretches out in the distance, while the vaulted foliage of the old pines grows thicker. When you have thus climbed the sides of this cone, clothed with such a vigorous vegetation, you find a naked plateau, whence, by an easy slope, you reach the summit of the mountain; and having attained this elevation, which is not less than nine hundred metres, you perceive, to your great delight, the sweetest little stream of murmuring water that ever quenched a traveller's thirst.

At the topmost crown of the Yaila, at a place called Stille Bogas, we enjoyed the most magnificent panorama in the Crimea. The picture is bounded to the south by the sea, and this blue horizon blends with the transparent tints of the atmosphere. At the furthest extremity of a magnificent sheet of verdure appeared Yalta, with its azure bay, and its ships sparkling in the midst of the waters. To the north and to the west

the scene bears a different aspect, and the eye gazes upon a succession of little mountains,* reminding one of the *montes exultaverunt sicut arietes*, until it rests on the Tcha-dir-Dagh, the giant of the Tauric Alps.

Descending the reverse slope of Stille-Bogas, the foliage appears less thick; the trees, less straight in their growth, bend beneath the northern blast; and it is not until we come to the deep ravines, that we find once more the warm tints and rich tones in the landscape, coloured by the light of the setting sun. It was not without extreme fatigue that we reached a large village, situated at the bottom of a valley, accessible by paths which only goats, or the horses of the Tatars can follow. *Several times, when we came to frightful declivities, our intrepid steeds allowed themselves to slide down on their four feet. It will be easily imagined, therefore, that the village of Bouyouck Ouzen-Batch was hailed with delight by our weary troop. Hospitality was offered us; and while coffee was being prepared, our attentive guide, the brave Michael, set about procuring us fresh horses, in lieu of the over-weary steeds which had brought us.

To a spring in the neighbourhood, Ouzen-Batch owes its name; Batch signifying head, and Ouzen a rivulet. As two villages in this canton derived their names from the same circumstance, the Tatars have distinguished

them by the terms, little (*Koutchouk*), and great (*Bouyouk*); it was in the latter, Ouzen-Batch, that we changed our horses. The room in which we were received was fitted with remarkable taste; the walls and ceiling were lined with wood, divided into panels skilfully finished. The ground was covered with a carpet of brilliant colours, and along three sides of the wall was a broad and very low couch; a small chimney, in the form of a niche, hollowed out in the wall at about three feet from the ground, contained the remnants of a fire. It must be confessed that this hospitable abode was simply a coffee-house for the reception of the idle; but which, at this hour of the day, usually devoted to sleep, was deserted. The inhabitants of Bouyouk-Ouzen-Batch are active and industrious, above all other Tatars. Their principal occupation is that of wheelwrights, the quantity of wheels made by them being very considerable; long trains of twenty pairs of wheels and more, made fast together by a long pole, are drawn from Ouzen-Batch to Central Crimea, where the continual employment of cars ensures them a ready sale.

On leaving the village, with its gardens and orchards, a long portion of road is traversed, where the vegetation is scanty and the soil stony; the progress along this road is extremely difficult, as it lies in the bed of a dried-up torrent, the breadth of which indicates that at the

periods of its height, it must be extremely impetuous; at last, you reach a vale bristling with little conical elevations of schist and clay, upon which the effects of the rain has left a number of furrows and curious indentations. M. de Nordmann, to whom the country was familiar, had strongly urged us to penetrate into a large valley, which he said would greatly shorten the journey to Baghtchch-Sarai; but here the memory of our savant failed him; and our guides, with their habits of submission, were not the people to set us right. After passing through a succession of meadows irrigated by the limpid waters of a pretty river, we were obliged at last to turn in the direction of the mountains, plainly visible to us, surrounding the great Tatar city. All these mountains are alike; they are crowned with natural walls, which give them the appearance, from a distance, of so many fortresses.

The sun was already sinking towards the horizon, and the caravan, fatigued by a long day's journey, was becoming more and more dispirited, some of our party wandering in pursuit of curious birds, several of which fell victims to this unexpected invasion of their solitude. Whenever we met with any inhabitant of these regions, our perplexity was rather increased than otherwise. Baghtchch-Sarai, one would say, is now not more than four versts hence; with the next, we had eight versts

to travel. Meanwhile, the moon was rising, and showed her disc above the mountains, reddened by the vapours of the evening. Michael and two of our colleagues, whose horses still exhibited some freshness, galloped a-head, in order to obtain lodgings; the rest of our jaded party following in their track as best they could.

We soon arrived in the midst of the aforesaid rocks, fantastically heaped in the semblance of ramparts, as though by the hand of some Vauban of the supernatural world, hoping shortly to find, under any circumstances, at least shelter and a night's rest: but imagine our cruel disappointment on reaching the plateau, to find a barren solitude; no city, no lights; a vast, echoless plain, on which the hoofs of our horses sounded as on the pavement of those large public squares in Italy. An hour passed away in crossing this deceitful desert, when at last the barking of dogs reached us, and a few lights were seen glimmering in the depths of a sort of gulf which lay at our feet; then only were we enabled to distinguish through the haze the glittering spires of the minarets. A steep slope, turning as it descends, brought us to the edge of a small river, banked up by a stone quay. We alighted at the threshold of a large oriental archway, surmounted by a square pavilion; a sentinel recognised us, and we were admitted into an immense court-yard, surrounded by light and elegant

buildings of unequal sizes, the moon lighting up their brilliant façades. We were in the palace of the Khans of the Crimea, that historical abode—the *Palace of Gardens*—to which Baghtcheh-Sarai owes its significant appellation.

There was no illusion this time—we had now really attained the goal. We were not now in Vienna, the gay capital, nor Pesth, the proud queen of young Hungary; nor on the Danube, with its inundated shores, its foaming eddies bearing down tranquil steam-boats: no, nor Bukharest or Yassy, cities discoloured by the pallid institutions of the east. We were in a perfect eastern Sarai, a palace of the Arabian nights; we were on thoroughly Asiatic ground. What voice is that singing above our heads? It is the Musslim. Close to us, there, in the silent cemetery, sleep sixty khans, who have made this palace their abode; just, or wicked, they have lived and stirred within these walls. To-morrow, we shall look upon their narrow sepulchres; a stream, hidden by the grass, murmurs at their feet a monotonous chaunt dear to the inhabitants of the grave.

The Crimea belongs to Russia, and Russia has faithfully preserved the traditions of this poetical corner of its immense empire. The palace of Baghtcheh-Sarai is open to visitors as before; and a hospitality worthy the past ages is offered to them in the buildings which,

from all time, have been reserved for the reception of the daily guest. A large wing of the palace, that which faces the river, contains the private apartments. Standing at the archway, and looking towards the interior of the enclosed buildings, to the right are seen, besides the dwelling of the khans, the harem, the baths, the private gardens, and a lofty tower, terminated by a terrace enclosed with thick railings. To the left, a large mosque is identified by its slender minarets; the cemetery surrounds two large funereal pavilions, and the whole is encircled with buildings occupied by servants and officials. The extremity of the court-yard immediately opposite is occupied by a kiosk, forming an entrance to the stables, and by a modern fountain in the oriental style, shaded by willows, and bearing the initials of the Emperor Alexander; an amphitheatre of gardens forms the back-ground of this picture, the furthest plane being the large wall of rocks, so curiously regular, within which the city is enclosed.

We were assigned, for our lodgings, two chambers of clean appearance, furnished with two couches, covered with morocco leather; an amount of accommodation altogether insufficient for our numerous party. This was, however, of little consequence, for after sixteen hours' riding, the matting on the floor made the softest of beds. At the same time, in order to repair the loss

sustained during a long fast, we sent for provisions—a thing not easily obtained at so late an hour. To our complete surprise, it was not long before two enormous dishes were triumphantly placed on the table by our guides. One of these dishes contained a mountain of sheep's trotters, boiled, and on the other was heaped a hecatomb of heads, corresponding with the aforesaid feet; the latter dish, somewhat too oriental in appearance, was resigned to our Tatars. .

We were still asleep when the sun shone upon us, but we lost no time in seeing and judging, by daylight, all that had so charmed us under the soft beams of the moon. The fine palace lost nothing by the change: all those coquettish, unequal, contrasting edifices, overshadowed by large red roofs, and covered with paintings, mingled with mottoes and devices, appeared to us full of charming grace and freshness: the numerous court-yards—the gardens, somewhat too denuded of shade, but refreshed by the ceaseless flow of fountains—the discreet and jealous walls of the harem;—all these scenes, so novel to us, at once rivetted our attention; but we deferred a more detailed survey to another occasion. After being politely received by M. Bobovitch, the steward of the palace, for whom the governor-general had given us a letter of introduction, we dispersed in different directions over the city, each bent on the special

object of his studies: one visited the mountains, whose singular formation, observed on the previous night, presented a fine geological problem; another, little caring for khans, those monarchs of yesterday, proceeded to interrogate the past in its most venerable sanctuary, loading himself with large fossils—gigantic oysters, relics of an age to which the human mind can assign no date; the plants of the desert attracted a third; while the beautiful faces, and the picturesquely dilapidated houses encountered in every direction, furnished a fourth with subjects for his pencil. With these varied motives did we ramble over the city and its environs

Baghtchch-Sarai lies in the bosom of a narrow valley, bristling with large cube-shaped rocks, which seem ready to fall down and crush it. A small river, the Djourouk-Sou, flows at the bottom of a ravine: this rivulet, whose name, signifying fetid water, by no means implies a calumny, bears no analogy with the beautiful springs in which the natives delight. For a long space this city was the residence of the khans of Crimea, who took a pride in embellishing its palace, the abode of their power; it was from hence, while lapt in the softest luxury, that they manifested themselves to their subjects. Baghtchch-Sarai, which has been several times sacked, and eventually fell a conquest to the Empress Catherine, has since more become a purely Tatar city, and the only one

in Crimea which has preserved, without admixture, the characteristics of this interesting nation.

A long street, stretching along the Djourouk-Sou, constitutes in itself almost the entire city. The houses and gardens rise up on either side, on the steep sides of the narrow valley. Several mosques are grouped in the midst of trees, and raise their minarets above the dwellings. As to the general style of architecture, it presents nothing remarkable, unless it be in the construction of the chimnies, which are in the form of little pointed turrets, admitting the light through a number of openings. The principal street is lined throughout with the shops of tradesmen and artificers, in which Tatar industry is exhibited in all its primitive simplicity, producing daily the same articles as it furnished two centuries ago; neither fashion nor caprice have altered these unchangeable productions one tittle. The coarsest kind of pottery, the commonest cutlery, a great variety of articles in morocco leather, babouches, saddles, belts, purses, &c.—such are the wares exhibited in their shops, which are a sort of raised stall, in which the shopkeeper sits tailor-fashion.

In the workshops, cart and wheel-making goes on; the shoeing of oxen, and carding and winding cotton. Then come the pastry-cooks, butchers, and barbers—important personages; poets, censors and politicians, to

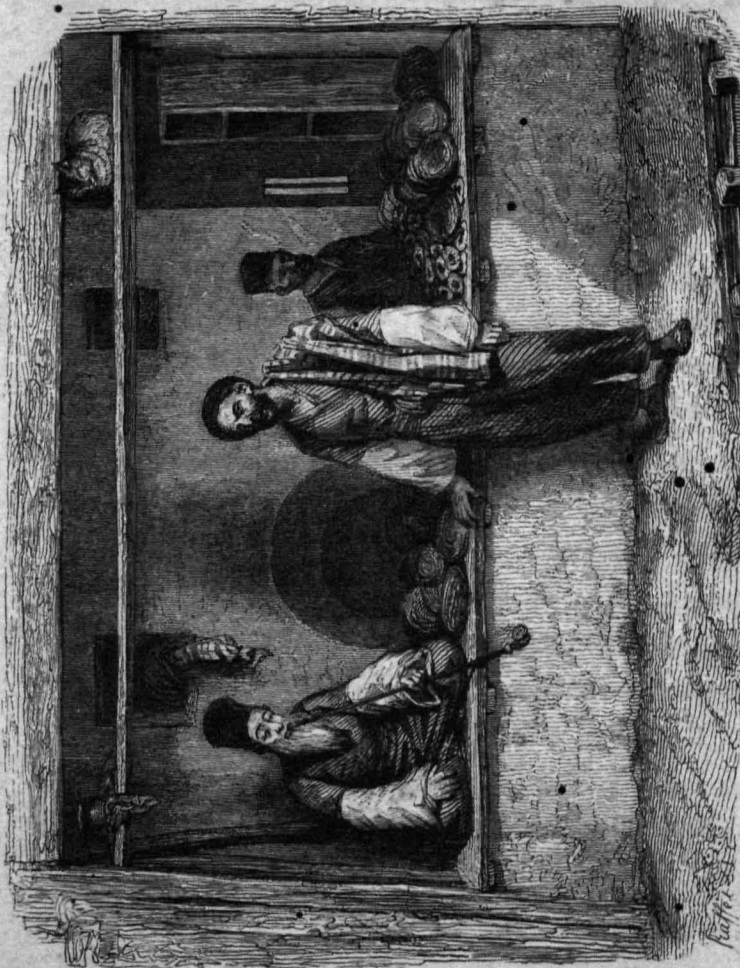


FIG. 2. CLAY.

TATAR BAKER AT BICHTCHEH SARAI.

whom a large pair of spectacles sometimes imparts a peculiar air of gravity; then the turners, patiently boring cherry or jessamine sticks into the long pipes so much in request in the western world. All these people exhibit an air of calmness at their work, and buy and sell with dignity. The Jew karams, members of a peculiar sect of the Israelites, of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter, reserve to themselves the trade in stuffs, mercery, and colonial produce. From the top of a high rock in the neighbourhood, where they have established their abode, these sectarians come down every morning, and entice the customer into their private warehouses. We cannot omit mentioning the enormous heap of pastecs with which this long street is filled. At this season, the pastec is an article of consumption in momentary request—an ever-recurring necessity—and constitutes almost the sole food of an entire people, notwithstanding those rules of diet which should be observed in warm climates. To conclude on the subject of this street, which is a city in itself, let us add that it is irregularly paved, and that during the day it is continually traversed by a multitude of those cars with creaking axles, already described by us. A few branch streets terminate upon this central and animated trunk of the city; these are like so many suburbs, inhabited by the lower class, and contain only

a number of houses, hermetically closed, without any look out, like so many private prisons on the public way. In the very centre of the long radii formed by the city and its approaches, are spread the buildings and gardens of the palace. It is entered over a stone bridge, and through the elegant archway which was so timely opened the evening before, to our wearied and scattered caravan. Numberless inscriptions adorn the exterior of this royal abode. Scarcely a door but has its sentence or talismanic cypher mingled with the paintings with which every panel in the building is invariably decorated; such as groups of flowers and fruit, rare and fanciful birds, and graceful scrolls, whose crude colouring boldly contrasts with the white ground of the walls. At the time of our visit, however, the palace of the khans was fresh from the restoring hands of the architect.

M. Elson, a skilful artist, had just completed his tasteful labours, and had restored these dilapidated abodes to all their pristine splendour. Rich furniture, and decorations full of the minute detail so characteristic of the ornamental art of the east, had completed this kingly work of restoration. All the apartments are now hung with precious tissues, and furnished with divans, carpets, and matting recently brought from Constantinople. Halls, closets, apartments of all dimensions, scarcely ever

on the same level, succeed each other, and connect themselves with the most curious absence of any regular design. Feebly lighted by painted windows, these elegant retreats are all shining with varnish, sparkling with mother-o'-pearl, crystals, gold and silver brocade, adorned with costly furniture, and perfumed with balmy odours. Such is this palace of wonders, in which all the dreams of the most teeming imagination are found realised. But who could enumerate all the windings of this labyrinth, its numerous and secret passages, its marble baths, the discreet witnesses of those sensual pleasures of the east, which Europe invents, but knows not! We have already mentioned a large tower in the garden, surmounted by a gilt trellice; here, we are told, one of the khans bred his falcons; another converted it to a platform, on which his women came in the cool of the evening to cast a curious and furtive glance at the surrounding country. Within the high walls of the harem, that second palace, which also has its baths of spouting water, and its cool vestibules of marble, we peered inquisitively into the women's apartments, but they are now deserted, and barely such few traces can be seen of their former furniture and appurtenances as a few latticed windows brilliantly stained, and one or two Venetian looking-glasses, which once reflected the rounded features, pencilled eyebrows, and vermillion lips of the listless favourites. Within these

walls languished in captivity the fair Marie Pototska, the gentle christian; Marie, the pure and poetical idol of the most indomitable and the most generous of all the lords of this palace. Pouschkine, the noble and unfortunate poet whose cruel death was wept over by his European brethren, by whom his name, his glory and his verses are venerated, has immortalised the mournful history of their loves in harmonious strains, such as he alone could find.

This palace of gardens, the abode of the sovereigns of the Crimea, might, with equal propriety, have been called the Palace of Fountains: the living stream flows in all directions; it winds beneath the walls, through the gardens, in the vestibules, like the blood in the veins of healthy youth. Among all these pleasant fountains must be mentioned those adorning the grand vestibule, twins of the most beautiful construction. All the delicacy of oriental taste, all the genius and grace of eastern architecture are epitomised in these two fountains, covered with light arabesques sculptured in relief, the gilt portions of which harmonised most felicitously with the bright colours of the rest. It is one of these monuments, that on the left, which inspired the verses of Pouschkine. A crowd of inscriptions are interwoven with the rich ornaments of the fountains, which we found translated in a work as useful as it is creditable, published by

M. Montandon, a foreign savant inhabiting this country, and modestly entitled, "A Guide to the Crimea." On the latter fountain, which goes by the name of the Fountain of Marie, are inscribed the following phrases, so instinct with the peculiar emphasis of the east.

"The face of Baghtcheh-Sarai is made joyful by the beneficent care of Krim-Gherai, the radiant. His fostering hand hath quenched the thirst of the land.

"If there be another fountain like unto this, let it come forth and show itself.

"Damascus and Bagdad have witnessed many things, but so beautiful a fountain have they not beheld." Then follows the date, 1176.

On the other fountain, Kaplan-Gherai-Khan, the founder implores the divine mercy in his own behalf, and that of the sinners of his race.

Next to these gems of architecture, these enchanting monuments of Damascene ornament, the most poetical of the fountains of Baghtcheh-Sarai, is decidedly that constructed over the spring which trickles through the plants and shrubs of the narrow cemetery, and runs at the feet of the tombs of the khans. We have already described the situation of the cemetery, and of the two rotundas, each surmounted by a vast cupola. Beneath these large domes, ranged in a line, are the sepulchres of a certain number of sovereigns; and here, too, their wives have found a resting-place. All these tombs

are in the form of a bier, the upper side of which is of an angular shape: at the head is placed a high stone, the top of which is sculptured in the shape of a turban; in some of them, the veritable turban of the khan is deposited, crowning the funeral monument with its tattered folds. The tombs of the women are distinguished by the peculiarly shaped cap sculptured at their head, the form of which bears a great resemblance to the *toque* worn in France by the members of the bar. Behind these sepulchral edifices extends a small enclosure, thickly covered with verdure, growing in irregular tufts; within it are contained a number of monuments in white marble, sculptured with a variety of ornaments in relief. At the time when war desolated the soil of Crimea, Baghtchch-Sarai was sacked, and a number of these tombs were profanely violated; but these acts of sacrilege were repressed; respect for the dead triumphed over the fury of the conqueror, and this last refuge of the rulers of the Crimea was once more enveloped in silence and peace.

Towards the evening of the 17th of August, a fresh company of visitors came to inhabit the palace; they were four in number, one being a young lady, and they had come at the same time with us from Odessa, to perform a short pilgrimage to these localities, so attractive to travellers. They greeted us with politeness,

and we joined company to visit the grand mosque of the palace. We entered by the side, fronting the public road: our attention was first engaged by a fountain placed in the midst of a vaulted apartment; the water falls in clustering jets into a large basin, from which it escapes by a great number of little spouts, thus allowing twenty of the faithful to perform their religious ablutions at the same time. You then pass into a spacious vestibule, and thence into the mosque. This interior is very vast; a few painted windows, of a beautiful blue, admit a dim light. The ground is covered with carpets and matting. Opposite the door, a circular niche filled with pieces of sculpture in stone, sinks into the wall; this is the sanctuary; the holy of holies. In the middle of the nave hangs a large chandelier, the wooden branches of which form a star with twelve points; at each point is suspended a small lamp from which long silken loops descend. There are no seats, few ornaments, a small number of books, and a large quantity of tapers, enormously thick, painted in bright colours. While we were contemplating this simple yet imposing interior (for what religious monument is not imposing?) the shrill voice of the Moslem was heard calling the faithful to prayers. The minarets contain within their narrow compass a dark staircase into which the crier slips, and reappears at an opening upon a raised platform. As soon as the chaunting

had resounded towards the four cardinal points, and called together the faithful, we saw the good Mussulmans appear, headed by the moullah. The thick tapers were lighted, and without noticing our profane presence, the true believers, drawn up in a row, from which the moullah alone stood apart, and, facing the niche, commenced the prayer of the Nhamaz.*

The congregation, among whom we observed several hadjis, with their white turbans, the distinctive badge of the pious pilgrims to Mecca, after raising both hands to their ears, began a series of genuflexions and prostrations, executed with the regularity of machinery. The moullah alone muttered a few prayers, interrupted from time to time with the formula—Allah ek bess! Allah kherim! God is great! God is merciful!—which he pronounced in an intelligible voice. We need not observe that the pious assembly had left upon the carpet of the vestibule an imposing row of babouches, among which our European shoes had respectfully taken their places.

The following day, the entire morning was devoted to an interesting excursion. Our horses, which we had ordered at an early hour, did not make their appearance till eight o'clock, according to invariable custom, against which it would be vain to contend. The interval of delay was filled up by another visit to the palace,

when we were introduced into the apartments on the first-floor. The same dazzling luxury, the same sensual refinement in all the minutæ of life, were exhibited here also. The rooms prepared for the reception of the emperor and empress on their next journey, displayed an especial degree of elegance and costliness. Everywhere the eye dwelt upon precious vases filled with flowers, and crystal bowls containing gold fish. The rich carpets and finely-woven mattings with which the floors are covered have nothing to fear from the contact of leather; for here, as at the mosque, the visitors leave their shoes at the door. We must not forget, ere concluding the description of this elegant palace, to observe that it would be a mistake to imagine that the residences of eastern sovereigns can bear any comparison with the grandeur of our royal palaces in Europe. The apartments in Baghtcheh-Sarai, like those of all the Sarai in the east, are built on the most narrow scale. But what distinguishes this palace above all similar edifices, is the exquisite taste and perfection of the innumerable details with which it is filled, and which would still charm the eye, though seen for the hundredth time.

At last, the Tatar steeds were heard neighing in the court-yard. A pretty horse, elegantly caparisoned, and carrying a red saddle, was provided for the foreign

lady whom we had met on the previous evening. Our cavalcade, thus augmented, took the road towards Tchioufout-Galeh, the Fort of the Jews, as the little town of the karams is called, the only city in the world exclusively inhabited by Jews; a meagre parody of Sion, a city banished to the summit of a rock, and appropriate to a people to whom the entire earth is a land of exile.

To emerge from the defile of Baghtcheh-Sarai, you pass through a long street, whose appearance is miserable enough. On reaching the extremity of the city, a new city is entered; but it is one without a name, like the people who dwell in it. Imagine the most extraordinary assembly of half-clad savages, living in caves instead of houses,—filthy dens, hollowed out by the hand of nature, or the grudging labour of sloth, in the sides of the large rocks which surround the valley. A numerous tribe of gipsies found these abodes ready-made, and accommodated themselves, with their natural indolence, to this troglodyte existence. Such is the chosen capital of this miserable race, and here do they delight to spread their squalor beneath the sun. In all directions, filthy rags are seen hanging from the rocks; the blue smoke, curling along the lofty sides of the mountain, and a number of battered utensils scattered out, complete the picture presented by this

wretched community of outcasts. At the sound of our horses' hoofs, it was wonderful to see these swarthy, emaciated children, and scraggy women, spring from their kennels like monkeys, stretching forth their hands with a thousand contortions and inarticulate cries,—a sad spectacle of human degradation; and yet, even here, one is astonished to find occasionally a physiognomy, though certainly in a great minority, presenting the type of Asiatic beauty; fine young women, walking in their scanty rags with the dignity of stage queens; young men, with a bold determined deportment, an eagle's glance, and black glistening hair falling about the graceful and pure outlines of their countenances. But these beautiful remains of a race now degraded are daily vanishing; and the traveller who passes through this valley bears away with him little more than a feeling of disgust at so much degradation.

Further on, the scene changes; the moment you have left behind you the stream of Djourouk-Sou, and you begin to ascend out of the valley of Baghtcheh-Sarai, you observe on your right a mass of rocks symmetrically arranged by the hand of nature, like all those seen in the neighbourhood. At a certain elevation, and in the rock itself, numerous excavations, communicating with each other by light external galleries, extend to a considerable distance along the

perpendicular face of the mountain. This is the Monastery of the Assumption. The approach to it is through a deep ravine, and a number of stone steps cut out of the rock lead to this ærial abode. A little chapel, within which the chisels of the monks have carved out a few rude pillars, forms the most remarkable apartment in the whole suite of caverns. The convent is inhabited by a Greek priest, and every year, on the 15th of August, he is visited by the whole Christian population of the Crimea, who on that day perform a pilgrimage to the holy place. If we are to believe our guides, these grottoes were excavated at a period when the Greek religion was the object of inveterate persecution on the part of the Mussulmans.

We ascended by a narrow path along the bare and slippery rock. Two fountains on the slope of the mountain furnish the necessary supply of water to Tchioufout-Galeh, and accordingly a continual procession of mules and donkeys, laden with long narrow casks, is seen ascending and descending this path during the whole day. Tchioufout-Galeh was several hundred feet perpendicularly above our heads, and its houses, built on the very edge of the rock, overhang the barren precipice in a fearful manner. All around is white, dry and burnt up in this ravine: one last steep, resembling a precipice rather than a path, conducted us at last

to a platform, upon which open the gates of the town.

More than twenty Tsigans, formidably armed with fiddles, awaited here to give us not a very harmonious greeting, a number of tambourines forming the second rank of this discordant troop. Surrounded by this escort, we had to proceed at a walking pace, as though in triumphal procession, through the narrow streets of the town, whose only pavement is the unequal surface of the rock itself. An assemblage of hovels, and a few women's faces peeping furtively at us, constituted all the attractions of this promenade, which terminated on an open space almost entirely isolated by its inaccessible situation, overlooking the valley of the Djourouk-Sou from a vertical height of 500 feet. It was here, we were informed, that the khans were accustomed to keep stags for the chase. Having visited this curiosity, the next sight is the romantic tomb of a daughter of one of the khans, whose life is said to have been a tissue of the most marvellous and intricate adventures, worthy the tales of the Arabian Nights. After exhausting all that was to be seen, we bent our steps towards the house of the rabbi, who performs all the duties of hospitality with uncommon politeness. Meanwhile, the music had never ceased for an instant, each of the performers struggling continually through a labyrinth of harmonies and counter harmonies.

These good people played us a succession of marches, waltzes, and perhaps ballads, all in the same measure. Not but it was possible, amidst this bewildering din, to distinguish certain singular effects of harmony, as well as a few movements of the mazurka and the Viennoise, and even snatches of French airs, a somewhat halting compliment addressed to some of our party. On arriving at the residence of the worthy rabbi, we alighted; he came to the threshold of the door, saluting us graciously after the fashion of the country, placing his right hand on his heart, then to his lips, and slightly bowing the head. In a small and somewhat low room, lined with carpets and cushions, was placed a table about a foot high, covered with a profusion of light viands, cakes, preserves, coffee, and different sorts of wine; nothing was wanting in this courteous entertainment, to which the master of the house invited us with politeness, but without touching anything himself. We seated ourselves accordingly on cushions placed round the tables, complying with customs entirely new to us, but our host took no notice of our blunders, which were numerous, no doubt, and completely shocking. He extended his courtesy so far as to introduce us into the women's apartments, a favour which we owed to the presence of a female among our party. This condescension, however, appeared to cause some confusion in the rabbi's harem, and we were asked to

suspend our curiosity a moment. Who would not guess the motive? Accordingly, when we were admitted, the women were all under arms; one of them, apparently about twenty, whose toilet pointed her out as the favourite, appeared extremely abashed at our visit, and retreated amidst the most charming blushes to the recess of a window, where she appeared to place herself under the protection of two pretty little children. Two other women, crouching in a corner behind some curtains, would not allow themselves to be looked at, except by stealthy glimpses. The costume of the young woman was of an extremely elegant design, a silk gown, with blue and red stripes, displayed a well-proportioned form, which no foreign artifices had disfigured, fitting closely to the back and the loins, of which it betrayed rather than showed the rounded outline. A broad belt, resting on the hips, was fastened in front by a buckle in the form of two large plates of silver, delicately ornamented. A black scarf with a red figure was folded into a turban about her fine black hair, woven into plaits; a necklace of gold-pieces hung about her neck, round which was folded a silk handkerchief, and a light doliman of yellow silk, edged with black, with the addition of the yellow babouches of the country, completed this picturesque costume.

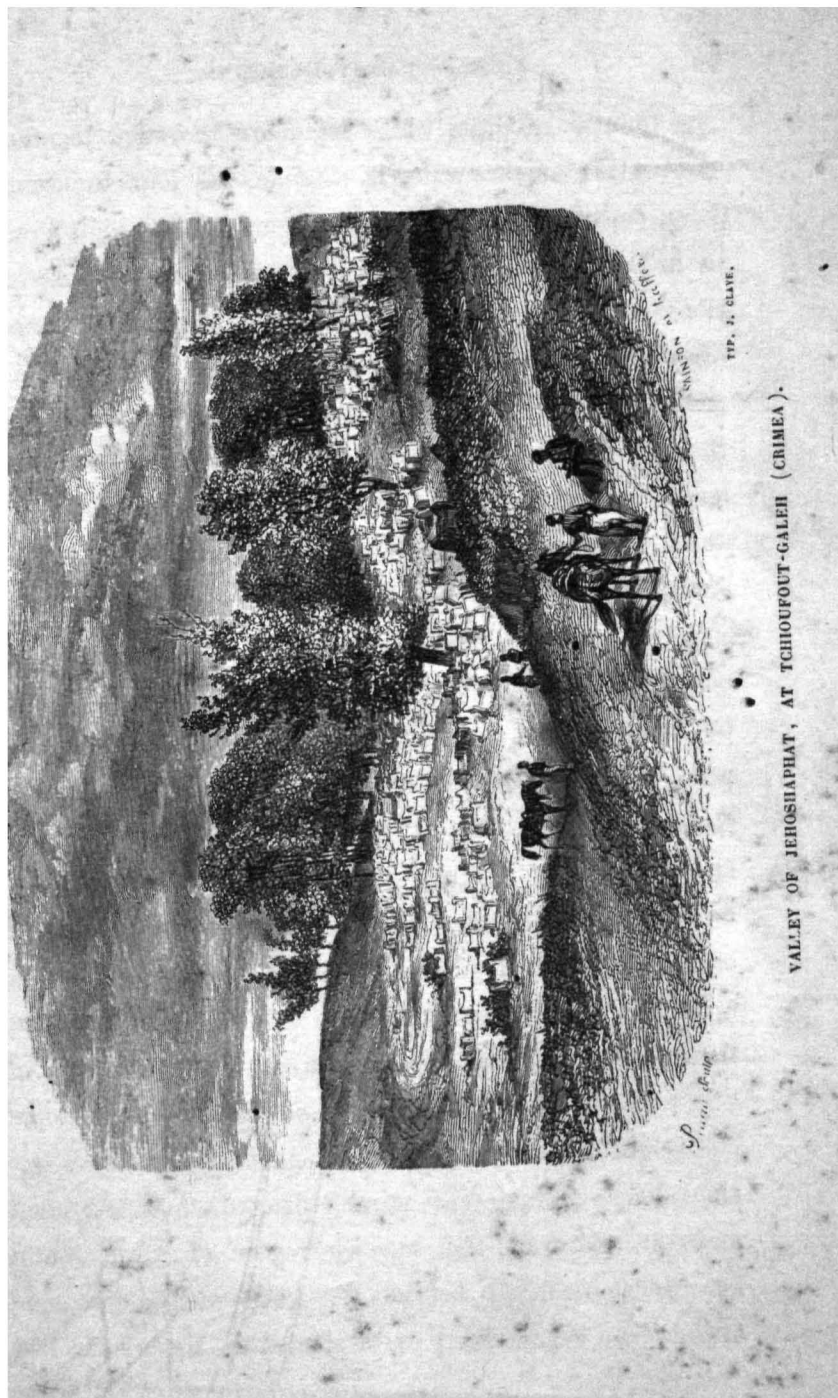
This gentle form, slightly bent forward, from a

modest confusion, and leaning upon her two children, formed a subject for a picture too striking for Raffet to let slip; nor did the courtesy of the rabbi desert him on this occasion, for he supplied our painter with all that was requisite to commence his charming sketch. Meanwhile, we visited two synagogues; they were two simple edifices, offering nothing worthy of remark save two copies of the Old Testament, precious manuscripts on vellum, rolled up in magnificent velvet cases, covered with brilliant ornaments of chased silver. The religious dogmas of the Karaims are based strictly upon the sacred writings. They repudiate the Talmud, and the rabbinical commentaries, hence their name, derived from the word *kara*, signifying writing. This fundamental principle of their belief is not, however, the only point of difference which separates the Karaims from the purely rabbinical sect. There are certain variations in the liturgy, in the mode of circumcision, in the rules relative to diet, and lastly, in the degrees of relationship within which marriages are allowed or forbidden, which constitute a broad line of separation between these two adverse sects. To point out another remarkable distinction between these two sections of the Jewish race, let us add that the Karaims have established in the countries where they are settled, a solid reputation for right dealing, which has been sullied but in few instances. This favourable

character was emphatically confirmed by one of our travelling companions,* formerly judge of the Tribunal of Commerce at Odessa, whose long exercise of that office had afforded him opportunities of appreciating the characteristic morality of this people.* The expression of countenance in the Karaïms is in general open and prepossessing, and the minute attention with which they perform all acts of external cleanliness distinguish them from their numerous opponents, the rabbinical Jews. Polite and obliging without cringing, but at the same time accomplished men of business, they have preserved under more honourable forms all the commercial genius of their race. The members of this small sect are dispersed at wide distances; they are found in Egypt, in Volhymnia, and in Lithuania. If to the Jews of Tchioufout-Galeh, we add the families established at Odessa, or in the environs of Kherson, and the colonies of Kozloff and Theodosia, it will be found that there are little more than two thousand inhabiting Southern Russia.

Advancing from Tchioufout-Galeh towards the south, we arrive at the commencement of a valley, which gradually sinks lower and lower beneath the level of the plateaux. This valley, distinguished by the imposing name of Jehoshaphat, is the cemetery of the Karaïms, where the closely and irregularly ranged gravestones lie beneath the solemn shade of a forest of large oaks.

The number of these white sepulchres crowded together within this sombre vale, is as many as four thousand. They consist simply of a sarcophagus, with a high stone to indicate the head; and all are covered with inscriptions in Hebrew characters, sculptured in relief, some of them bearing so remote a date as three or four centuries since. We strayed with reverential feelings through this silent forest, filled with the remains of so many generations of Karaïms, singling out the most ancient monuments, which we could distinguish by their deviation from the perpendicular. On inquiring the cause of this irregularity, we were informed that the peaceful shades of Jehoshaphat were occasionally disturbed by earthquakes, as though in accomplishment of the prophecy: *Conquassabit capita in terrâ multorum!* The result has been, an extraordinary mass of confusion amongst these irregular tombs. While treading the tortuous paths through the cemetery, we caught sight of a little old man, hidden among the brushwood, intent upon the task of carving out, on a recent monument, the letters of a Hebrew inscription. The costume of this white-bearded sculptor was of the most grotesque character: on his head was an enormous blue balloon-shaped cap; his eyes were protected from the dust and the glare of the sun by a pair of large round spectacles, fastened behind his head with a piece of string; and a painter's parasol shaded the little shrivelled



TIP. J. CLAY.

VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT, AT TCHOUFOUT-GALEH (CRIMEA).

Sp. 1848

individual, crouched at the foot of the monument upon which he was exercising his art. We interrogated this artist of death, as he sat there, surrounded by his handiwork. "For forty years," he said, "there has not been a gravestone set up here, but my chisel has carved the epitaph upon it. All those to whom I have rendered this last honour, have been either friends or relations; so that I do not work only for the glory of my art: there is in the art I have exercised, and lived by for forty years, something more than mechanical labour; there are the pleasures and pains of memory. I knew, and loved, the greater part of those who sleep here, ere I engraved their names in the great stone book of Jehoshaphat, whose characters this hand alone has traced. I, too, am approaching the spot I have reserved myself beneath the trees, yonder; and I know not what unskilful hand may be employed to perform that task for me, which I have performed for so many." During this conversation—or rather, this philosophical monologue—of the old sculptor, interpreted to us by fragments, Raffet was occupied in tracing in his album the features of this venerable character. The old man perceived it, and lent himself with a good grace to the intention of his brother artist, as he was pleased to call our painter; and when the sketch was finished, he added his name and description to it with his own hand.

One more evening was spent in viewing the palace and its humble cemetery, and on the morning of the 19th we bade adieu to the Tatar capital, leaving behind us, however, MM. Huot and Raffet, both of whom were loth to quit the place of their predilection. The remainder of our party disposed themselves in four télégues, and proceeded towards the naval port of the Black Sea, said to be one of the finest in the world.

Thus did we take leave of this singular city, in which three days had so rapidly fled, in the midst of emotions unceasingly excited, and the industrious collection of a store of notes of every description: we bade a last farewell to the elegant Palace of Gardens—to the high street, with all its shops, and started off, at a gallop, across the barren plain which separated us from Balbec, our sole resting-place, till we should reach our final destination.

Baghtcheh-Sarai contains, it is said, a population of 14,000 inhabitants, of whom the Tatars form the majority, the number of Russians and foreigners being only 2,250. It is stated—though we believe the number to be far less—that the city contains 3,000 houses. It possesses a Greek church and a synagogue, and boasts, moreover, of thirty-two mosques. There are, for the reception of travellers, ten khans or caravanserais, to which the simplicity of the fare, and the nakedness of

the lodgings, attract scarcely any other class than the traders and carriers of the country. Two fine establishments, in which Turkish baths are administered in the highest perfection, are not the least attraction in this place, so replete with subjects of surprise. We have already enumerated almost all the branches of industry to which the inhabitants devote themselves. They export all their manufactures, while they are themselves deficient in all the necessary commodities of life. With the exception of cultivating orchards, the Tatars of Baghtcheh-Sarai employ themselves but little in the labours of the field. An abundance of fruit, consumed by them in large quantities during the summer, affords almost all the sustenance they require. The grain which is brought into Baghtcheh-Sarai is made into flour by mills, set in motion by the Djourouk-Sou. We have already called attention to the number of public fountains: the good order of the conduits supplying the city with water, and their ingenious disposition, affords a fresh proof of the pious regard professed by Mussulmans for springs of water, with which they delight to surround themselves.

We have only now to speak of the educational establishments. There are several schools for children; and as regards instruction in the sciences, the city numbers three *médressés*. These institutions are open to young Tatars, destined to employment in public offices, or to

the service of the mosques. The dogmas of their religion are taught to the scholars by *effendis*, joined with instruction in history, arithmetic, and, according to the statement of M. Montandon, astrology. About three hundred students are received in the *medresses*, where they are provided with lodging. These scholastic establishments have been founded at various epochs by the khans; and they appeared to take great glory to themselves for their foundation, two of these sovereigns, Ahmet-Aga and Mengli-Gherai, founders of the two larger *medresses*, having desired their remains to be deposited within them, in sepulchres constructed by their orders.

We crossed, with all the speed our equipages could command, the white and parched up plain through which lay the road to Balbec, only interrupting our journey to shoot at a pretty species of falcon, as plentiful in this locality as they are rare everywhere else: we were fortunate enough to bring down one or two. After passing through Balbec—a half Russian, half Tatar village—we entered the narrow valley through which flows the river of that name. This pretty valley presents an uninterrupted succession of gardens and orchards, the freshness and fertility of which bring to mind the most favoured cultivation of western countries. This agreeable country was soon left in the rear, and we ascended upon the plateaux of the steppe, whence we could per-

ceive the sea in the distance. We had now reached the western coast of the Crimea. At this point we struck into a road leading down to the harbour of Sevastopol, and we could already distinguish its imposing array of masts. Such was the bewildering speed at which we were travelling, that one of our *têlègues*, having lost a wheel, was carried along with one side ploughing up the dust, to a considerable distance. The driver—whose only distress was at the distance he had to go back to fetch the wheel—repaired the damage without allowing the travellers to leave the little carriage; and having driven in a peg in lieu of the lost *hitch-pin*, started off again at a headlong gallop, to make up the lost time. We arrived, without further delay, at the edge of the bay, from which, while a boat was being prepared to take us over to the city, we gazed with unceasing admiration at ten ships and fifteen other vessels of war, ranged in one noble line, in one of the finest basins that can possibly be seen. Having embarked from a little inlet filled with coasting vessels, we crossed the bay, passing under the stern of the three-decker “The Warsaw,” carrying 120 guns; and at the end of a quarter of an hour we arrived at the quay of Sevastopol, where we found a vast crowd in active motion, attracted thither by the recent arrival of a cargo of pastecs, over which the retail sellers were noisily disputing.

The city of Sevastopol covers a height rising between two bays; its broad streets, filled with distressing clouds of dust, present no edifices of any importance; the houses are small and low, and are separated by wide intervals. After the loss of more than an hour in vainly seeking that which did not exist — namely, a hostelry — we were directed to an Italian confectioner, who placed two empty rooms at our disposal, the windows of which had suffered severely from the winds. Having taken possession of the rooms, the next thing was to provide furniture. Our host, honest Cabalzar, undertook to supply us, without delay, at the most reasonable prices, with twenty trusses of hay, which reminded us of the litters on which the students in the middle ages used to sleep. Once more our memories travelled back to the palace of Baghtcheh-Sarai and its clean mattings, inviting one to slumber; and again we prepared ourselves, by the repose we so much required, to visit a fresh succession of sights.





CHAPTER II.

SEVASTOPOL.—ODESSA.—VOSNESENSK.



THE situation of Sevastopol, as a naval port, is justly esteemed, and indeed, Europe presents few harbours so completely suited to the necessities of a large fleet. An arm of the sea, of an imposing breadth, has made itself a deep bed in the western coast of Taurida, and advances inland to a distance of two leagues. Within this magnificent basin are neither rocks nor dangerous reefs; its entrance

is convenient, and is defended by two formidable fortifications, whose powerful batteries could sweep with ease across the broad mouth of the harbour. Having entered within the bay, on looking towards the southern coast, four spacious inlets are observed, offering so safe a shelter and so easy an access, that in one of them, the *bay of ships* (*carabelnaya boukhta*), three-deckers may moor within a few yards of the land. Exactly between two of these inlets stands the city of Sevastopol, whose name in Greek signifies the august city; this name will soon have effaced that of Ak-Tiar, still given to it by the Tatars, in memory of an ancient city, on the north side of the bay, not far from the barren hillock at the entrance of the port.

Sevastopol covers with its houses the ground occupied at a remote period of antiquity by the extreme suburbs of Chersone, the city of the Heracleotes, long since vanished from the soil of Taurida, leaving its ruins to be swept away, as the city was before, by the hand of time.

The lofty hills which protect the roadstead, present, as far as the eye can reach, a prospect of endless desolation; the coast is naked and barren; and well deserves the name of Ak-Tiar (white rock) given to it by the Tatars. The city itself, in the construction of whose streets no attempt has been made to avoid the irregularities of the soil, seems to wind with difficulty over

the jutting and steep rocks of the promontory. When the traveller, on disembarking at the custom-house, first beholds this city perched upon its white and burning rocks, he is tempted to retreat before so many obstacles, and his eye anxiously wanders in search of some more easy and less fiery mode of approach. One street rather more endurable than the rest, stretches at a considerable height, in a parallel direction with the great quay, and on either side of it are assembled whatever remarkable buildings the modern Sevastopol may boast of. Here the cathedral, built in the most elegant style of architecture, concentrates the humble devotion of the population. Further on, rises the tower of the Admiralty, displaying somewhat too ostentatiously a number of pillars out of proportion with the remainder of the building. Several rather handsome hotels, protected from the sun by numerous blinds, and a number of small gardens, in which all attempts at verdure are smothered by the dust, constitute the sum of all that is to be seen in this, the fine quarter of Sevastopol. If you bend your steps towards the summit of the city, you again meet with these gardens, discreetly screening little houses of tolerably clean appearance, but this portion of the city is exposed to violent winds, sweeping periodically over the naked soil, and raising a perfect storm of dust and sand.

When you have reached the summit of the ascent, however, the trouble and fatigue are compensated by the beauty of the prospect. The eye embraces the entire port and its various establishments, forming a magnificent spectacle, especially when the whole of the Black Sea fleet spreads out its imposing array in the basin of the roadstead

The variety and animation which the movement of the shipping gives to this otherwise severe prospect, may be judged by mentally passing in review* the following fleet ploughing the surface of this sea —

The Warsaw	120 guns	Marchmont	90 guns
Silistria	90 „	Catherine	90 „
Tchesma	90 „	Andromole	90 „
Maria	90 „	Staloust	90 „
Anapa	90 „	Pimen	90 „
Pamuk Istaphu	30 „		

Then the frigates :—

Bourgas	60 guns	Bruloff	10 guns
Enos	60 „	Agathopol	60 „
Varna	60 „	Tenedos	60 „
Anna	40 „		

The corvettes :—

Sizopoli	14 guns	Orestes	24 guns
Iphigenia	24 „		

The brig Mercury	20 guns
Schooners { Ganetz (the Courier)	14 „
{ Vestavoi	14 „
The cutter Spechn (Rapid)	
The tender Struia (Wave)	

Just as we were completing the simple arrangements for establishing our quarters, an unusual stir in the city and in the port attracted our attention. It was caused by the arrival of a government steamer, "The Gromonocets" (Thunder-bearer), with Prince Menzicoff, Minister of the Imperial Marine, on board, who had been expected to review the fleet. The minister remained on board his vessel, and as soon as "The Gromonocets" had cast anchor, received visits from the various official bodies in the public service. Admiral Slavanicff, in command of the port of Sevastopol, was at that time suffering from severe illness, and we were deprived of the honour of being presented to him, contenting ourselves with forwarding our letter of introduction from Count Woronzoff. We were more fortunate in the case of Mr. Hupton, the skilful engineer, who designed and directs the useful and important works of the port. His active and intelligent sons assist their father in conducting the immense undertakings executed with the aid of an army of military labourers. In every direction round Sevastopol, and to whichever shore you turn, long ranges of barracks are

seen for the reception of an important garrison; even this abundance of military quarters,^o however, was at that time insufficient for the accommodation of the numerous soldiers employed on the costly constructions, and laborious earth-works, which are to change the aspect of this coast. In a short time, vast workshops, spacious esplanades, and deep basins will stand in the place of the chalk hills, which formerly overlooked the bays; and already, by the effects of patient labour, these hills have been brought down to their level.

Thirty thousand men encamped in tents supply the hands by which these gigantic metamorphoses are accomplished, and it is a spectacle full of interest to see this army of labourers, all dressed in white linen, busily passing and repassing, amidst clouds of the dust which they are carrying away by sackfulls, it might almost be said by handfulls, from the former site of the levelled hillocks; a perfect ant-hill, in which the infinite division of labour arrives at length at the same result as the motive power and machinery. Unfortunately, a fearful visitation had manifested itself amidst this active and persevering body; intense ophthalmia, the ophthalmia of Egypt, contagious according to some, epidemic, as others believe, was committing ravages, evidences of which were but too painfully manifest. It was commonly attributed to the prodigious quantity of dust whirled about by the

winds along these hill sides, entirely bare since the commencement of the works. But whatever the cause, the evil is indeed a terrible one. Twenty-four hours are sufficient for the eye to become so entirely corrupt as to leave its socket.

We had already admired the bay of ships, and the unusual spectacle of large three-decked vessels communicating with the shore by a plank laid across from the rock; but we were far more astonished, on visiting the careening bay. The importance of Sevastopol, and the happy peculiarities of its position, having been once recognised, the next step was to form basins and docks for refitting; these objects have been admirably accomplished by Mr. Hupton. A spacious basin has been sunk at some distance from the sea, and on a higher level. On the sides of this basin are five dry docks; three of these are for first class-vessels, the remaining two for frigates. With a sea almost without tides, the draining of these docks was a difficult problem to solve; it was accomplished in the following manner:—At a distance of about eighteen versts, at the bottom of the great valley forming the roadstead, flowed, on a level of suitable height, a small river abundantly supplied with water. This river was taken possession of by the engineers, turned into another bed excavated in the rock, and passing at one time through a tunnel, at another over an

aqueduct, the Tchornaa-Retchha (black rivulet) was made to furnish the necessary supply of water to the docks. As all this water came from a considerable height, it was easy, by means of an ingenious combination of locks, to bring into the large basin, three hundred feet by four hundred, then being lined with splendid masonry, one vessel of 120 guns, two of eighty, and two frigates of sixty, to be placed into the five dry docks, which could be drained or sluiced at pleasure. Undoubtedly these are vast and noble works, and those which render a reign illustrious, and hand down to posterity the fame of an engineer. What struck us more particularly was, to see these same soldiers employed by turns in earth work, carpentering, forging and masons' work, and acquitting themselves in all these various departments to admiration. Mr. Hupton, an Englishman by birth, accustomed as he had been in his own country to these industrial wonders, was in continual admiration at the facility with which these Russian people became successively, and in so short a time, skilled workmen in any craft to which they applied themselves. Let us add, that the Russian soldier is not only a skilful artisan, but naturally a docile workman, respectful without meanness, expert and active without boastfulness. The building docks of the Imperial navy are established at Nikolaieff, a favourable situation, not only on account

of the nature of the position itself, but its convenience as regards the supply of timber floating down from central Russia. All that was required at Sevastopol, therefore, was a fitting dock, which purpose will be admirably answered by the recent constructions. Who could believe that the great enemy, the great destroyer of the ships in the beautiful waters of Sevastopol, is an imperceptible worm called the *teredo navalis*. The ravages of this little animal reduce the time which a Russian ship of war may be reckoned to last, to a period of eight years, an unfavourable condition for the Russian navy to labour under, as the ships of the English and French navy are reckoned to last an average period of fifteen years. Whatever experiments have been tried to preserve the ships from this cause of premature decay, have not apparently been followed by the success anticipated. It is truly afflicting to think that so contemptible an enemy should thus attack with impunity these large and stately structures, so nobly resting on the waters of one of the finest ports in the universe.

When we had visited all these interesting works, we set out on a sea trip to Inkermann. On leaving the docks, we remarked a beautiful fountain in course of construction, and destined to furnish an abundant supply of water to the fleet. A filtering apparatus constantly at work will supply this water for the demands of the

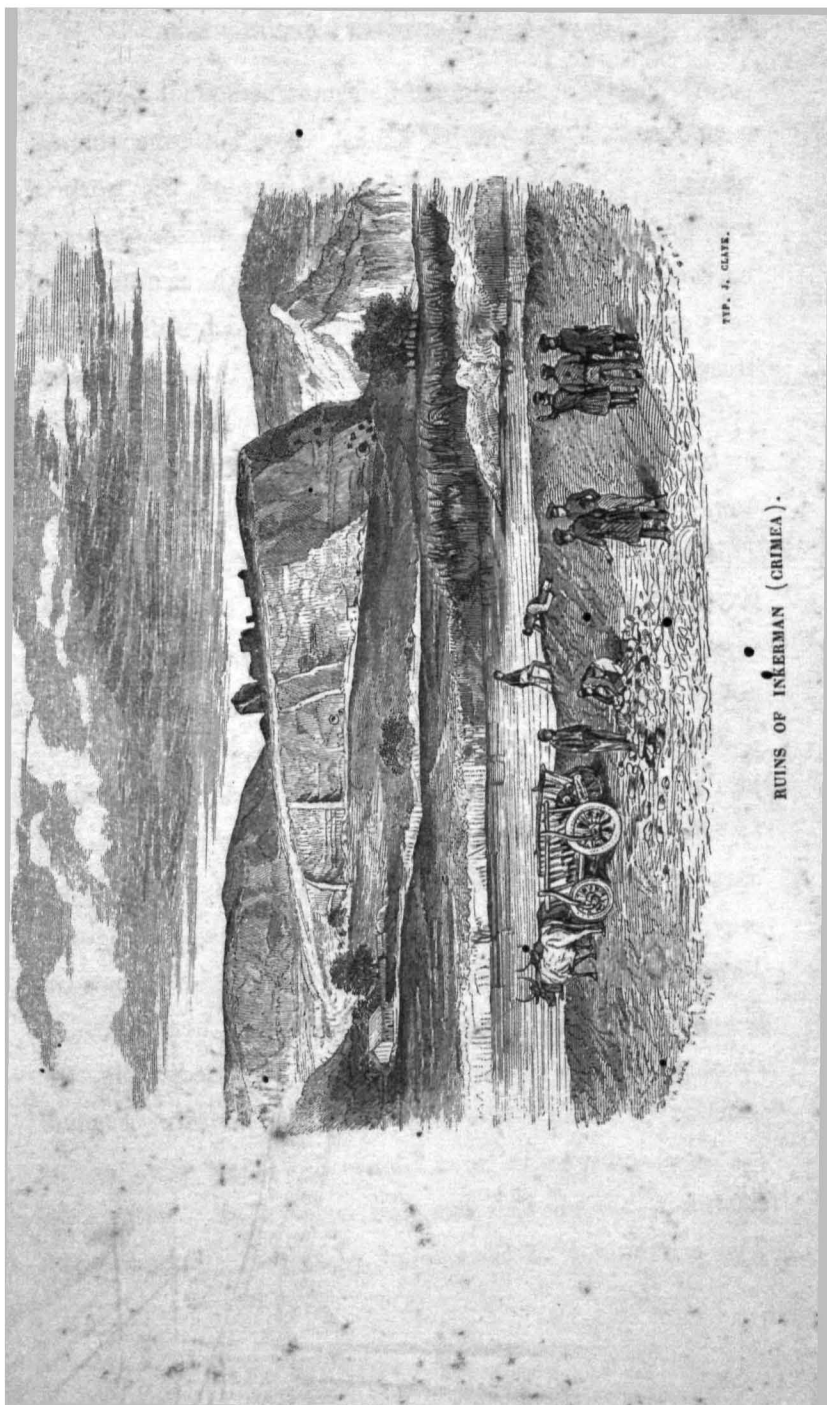
shipping in a perfectly pure state. When we had made our way through the midst of this busy and intelligent assemblage, we steered peacefully between the barren rocks and the last range of frigates extending to the farthest extremity of the port. Passing before a narrow valley, we observed, through the elegant arches of an aqueduct, an isolated house, somewhat in the form of a mosque, rising from the midst of a clump of small oaks. This was the public garden, the rendezvous of the holiday makers from the city, which day by day is building itself, and while raising its ramparts, has already taken care to provide itself with this place of relaxation and repose. The first of May is the day when this remote spot chiefly resounds with noisy rejoicings. While we were examining the rather elegant pavilion forming the centre of these festive scenes, a number of workmen were finishing the ornaments and decorations of the interior, in anticipation of an event when they would be needed more than ever. It was not expected, but it was hoped, that the imperial family, after throwing a glance of encouragement at all these new creations, might perhaps deign to visit this spot devoted to amusement.

In the very extremity of the bay, the predominance of the soft over the sea-water is shown by an abundance of tall reeds, through which we easily made our way, urged by a pleasant breeze; we then found ourselves in

the narrow but deep bed of the Tchornaia-Retelika. Here the rocks grow wider apart, and the valley becomes broader; little meadows intersected by the windings of the stream, shaded by a few clumps of fine ash trees and lentisks (*pistachia lentiscus*), with their elegant foliage, afford a relief to the eye, wearied by the uniform grey tint of the coast. We disembarked on the right, beneath the trees, and commenced climbing up the adjoining rock, in which the new bed of the river has been excavated, and through which it will have to flow down to the docks. A flight of steps conveniently cut out, rendered our ascent easy; this useful work had been inaugurated on the same day that an illustrious foreigner, Marshal Marmont, had visited the valley. On reaching the banks of the canal, it was not long ere we came to the tunnel, which pierces through a formidable mass of rocks. This aperture, which is entirely the work of the chisel, and required not less than fifteen months for its completion, is one hundred and thirty-three metres in length; the height of the vault is ten feet, French measure; on the left side, a footway has been left of sufficient breadth to allow free passage. The excavation was commenced at the same time at both extremities, the workmen meeting in the middle without any sensible deviation. To conclude our observations on this beautiful canal, destined to so useful an end, let us add that eleven

guard-houses, in the shape of elegant octagonal pavilions, have been erected on its banks. Not far from thence, we entered a number of spacious grottoes, the work of a religious sect seeking a shelter from persecution. A narrow door and a tortuous staircase, with a number of cells opening upon it, lead to a chapel, which still presents traces of ogives. From this chapel, through a large opening, may be seen throughout its entire length the pretty valley of Inkerman, and at the extreme end the immense stone block on which the ancient city stood. This pious abode, widowed of its austere denizens, now gives shelter to the soldiers employed on the canal works, who there enjoy a well-earned repose, upon couches not a whit softer than those of the departed monks.

The history of the Crimea furnishes but very uncertain information on the subject of Inkerman. According to some learned chroniclers, it was known in the ancient days of Greece as a flourishing town, called Théodosia; others claim it as the Stenos of the Greek geographers. Pallas, on the contrary, is disposed to believe that the Genoese were the first who established themselves on these precipitous rocks. A number of ruined walls, the remains of a few towers, and a great quantity of small grottoes, grouped in rows along the steep sides of the mountain, are all that can now be seen on a hasty visit. The inhabitants of Sevastopol, when they accompany you



TYPE. 2. CLAY.

RUINS OF INKERMAN (CRIMEA).

on this excursion, generally advise as short a stay as possible, so evil is the renown of the surrounding marshes.

Accordingly, we returned towards Sevastopol, and on our way were allowed to go on board a fine frigate, called the "Bourgas." The perfect order of this vessel, and its beautiful lines, were worthy the remainder of the fleet; but our admiration was entirely absorbed by the fine proportions and magnificent appearance of the "Warsaw," a three-decked vessel. It stood like a rock, overlooking the imposing array of naval force, embracing not less than twelve thousand men, and fifteen hundred guns.

The life of the inhabitants of Sevastopol is entirely domestic: so many obstacles, as we have pointed out, opposing themselves to out-door relaxation and parties of pleasure which elsewhere so agreeably charm away the evening. At the close of day scarcely did we see more than one or two boat parties at the same time with us enjoying the last rays of the setting sun. But though the inhabitants abstain from out-door life, they are, on the other hand, fond of society and the tranquil pleasures of home life. Those of my companions who were strangers to the citizen life of Russia, had an opportunity of observing it at Sevastopol in all its most amiable peculiarities. The polite, welcome, and obsequious attention to their guests is practised here to quite as high a degree as in the centre of the empire, and in no particular

is the proverbial hospitality of the Russians behest. A few customs are still preserved in certain families altogether patriarchal in their simplicity. Thus, in more than one house, your host will taste the wine which is in your glass; and the custom of kissing ladies' hands still exists, for which kiss on the hand you receive one on the cheek. Every evening the family and the friends of the family assemble round a tea-table, where the conversation is far from languishing, but before ten o'clock every one has retired. At ten o'clock, Sevastopol enjoys the most complete calm, and the silence is unbroken, save by the distant tinkling of the bells in the vessels, striking the watches, and the challenges of the sentinels in the harbour, answered by the mournful baying of the dogs.

In ordinary times, Sevastopol reckons a population of thirty thousand souls—civilians, soldiers, or sailors serving in the port. Our arrival was at a fortunate moment, for the presence of the fleet, and the active army of workmen, more than doubled the number of inhabitants. It was principally in the approaches to the well-stocked market that an adequate idea of the population was obtained. The consumption of pastecs here was prodigious; whole mountains of this refreshing fruit, heaped up in the eve, disappeared every morning. An immense variety of fish was also sold at daybreak.

greatly to the satisfaction of our naturalists, who, by gaining the advance of the ordinary consumers, were enabled to make a selection for scientific purposes, out of the abundant take of the night.

All the necessaries of life are cheap enough here: wood and provender only sustain high prices, on account of the barren condition of all this part of the Crimea. Situated on a calcareous hill, Sevastopol is in no want of materials for building, of a sufficiently good quality; but on account of the porous nature of the stone, it requires to be covered with a coating of composition, in order that the exterior of the buildings may have a neat and cleanly appearance. The splendid blocks of stone used in the construction of the docks are brought from a distant spot, which contributes not a little to increase the expense of these imperishable works. The cost already incurred amounted to five millions of roubles, and to all appearance it was likely to amount, eventually, to double that sum.

Not a single Tatar dwelling is to be found in the city; nor is any to be seen at Severnaya, a harbour for coasting vessels, facing Sevastopol, on the northern coast of the bay, as is indicated by its name, signifying northern village. Here may be seen a large number of government store-houses, built in a row, and protected by batteries. It should be noted, that few individuals of the Mussulman

order pass beyond the harbour; they generally content themselves with taking up their stations, with their laden waggons, on the shore of Severnaya. Here, from morning till night, a noisy crowd of petty traders is busily assembled, purchasing provisions, fire-wood, and other wares, brought by Tatar caravans to this little port.

In the meantime, our two companions, whom we had left at Baghtchch-Sarai, had joined the body of the expedition, though not without encountering some adventures. Arriving in the midst of a dark night on the quay of Sevastopol, without a guide to direct them through this city of precipitous streets, and possessing no other clue than the name of our host Cabalzar, a name of a somewhat cabalistic sound, our friends made their debut by stumbling among the piles of pastecs, and causing a general downfall of the fruit, which began rolling towards the sea. Hence an alarm was given, and the merchants, awakened at the noise, ran off in a panic, some after the fugitive pastecs, others in search of the authors of this disastrous rout, amidst a chorus of abusive epithets, which may be left to the imagination.

Fortunately, a custom-house officer interposed his authority for the protection of the strangers, who were sadly bewildered at their position; peace was restored, and

after an hour's weary search and anxiety, our colleagues reached our door. Their disappointment may well be imagined, at the sight of the furniture in our gipsy lodging: on the faith of the great renown in which Sevastopol is held, they had cherished expectations of a very different character, and experienced a deception not uncommon in a traveller's life. Matters were shortly made up, and our cohort, now once more complete, serried its ranks to do the honours of our rough bivouac to the new comers.

Not far from Sevastopol, in a south-easterly direction, stands a lighthouse, at the extremity of a long tongue of land, scarcely raised above the level of the waves; this point is what the ancients called the Chersonese: it was the site of a powerful Greek colony, the last traces of which had disappeared long before the commencement of our era, leaving only a doubtful tradition as the sole relic of all its splendour. Mythology has, in this instance, associated itself to history, in order to mislead the records of man amidst the fabulous paths of the imagination. On a portion of this territory, and as far as the gates of Sevastopol, ruins of ancient walls are scattered over the soil, at equal intervals, forming lines, the regularity of which fail not to strike the attentive observer. Some persons have conjectured these parallelograms to be the ruins of the ancient Chersone—

that city which, it is said, was founded on the coast of Taurida by the Greek emigrants from Heraclea.

Some antiquaries, however, more scrupulous in their conclusions, would infer these symmetrical compartments to be nothing more than the traces of a division of lands, at an exceedingly remote period. The small depth of the foundations of these walls, now almost entirely swept away from the soil, will not allow of the supposition that any constructions of importance were ever based upon them. These ruins are to be found almost throughout the extent of the peninsula, which was once the Heracleotic Chersonese. At various intervals, the remains of monumental towers may also be seen, remarkable from the enormous size of the blocks of stone placed one upon the other, without cement. If from the extremity of the peninsula, on which stands the lighthouse, we follow the shore of the Black Sea towards the east, we shall be brought, along a sensible inclination, to the first plateaux of the chain of mountains of the Crimea, and hence, from the height of a majestic promontory—the Cape Parthenion of the Greeks—the glance dives down in astonishment upon the Chersonese, so small for its immortal renown; and one is tempted to ask how this poor little nook of land could have given birth to such a treasure of traditions, fables, and poetry, which have acquired greater force than history.