haps be more to the honour of her sex, that such a tale of her death should obtain current belief,—yet all our morning party (for every one gave an opinion on the subject) thought it much more likely that her death was from the cause and in the manner which *they* had stated.

Those who have travelled extensively themselves need not be told how important the most trifling traditions appear when related and canvassed on the spot to which they refer: to those who have not, however, this explanation is perhaps necessary: and it may be added, that it is just in proportion to the remoteness of the scene and the rudeness of the people that these local tales have charms, for him who treads upon the spot itself, which it would be difficult to convey to one who reads the narrative of a journey in his library or his closet.

CHAPTER III.

FROM HELLOWLA, BY THE PLAIN OF BAJILAN, TO ZOHAUB AND SERPOOL.

In about three hours after leaving the khan at Kassr-Shirine, and going east-north-east over a rocky and hilly ground, we saw on our left an extensive plain, covered with verdure and encircled on all sides by mountains. This was called the Plain of Bajilān, being the northern termination of the district of Ghilan, which was on the south of us, and the southern point, or commencement of Koordistan to the north. It was from this plain that the celebrated horse of Ferhad was said to have been brought, to which there was no equal; and it is probable enough that the Nisæan pastures, so renowned in antiquity for the breed of horses there produced, was also on this spot itself.

The road from hence led directly to Serpool, our next stage, in an easterly direction, and was just three hours more. The town of Zohaub, the seat of the Koordish Pasha of Bajilān, was pointed out to the northward of us, just discernible by a white dome amid a cluster of trees, as it stood at the other extremity of the plain, at a distance of at least nine miles. There were two persons of our party destined for this, who intended leaving us here; and as the day was yet early, and we were assured that we could reach Serpool sufficiently in time to continue our way with the caravan of asses on the following morning, we determined to profit by so favourable an occasion of going up to Zohaub. In doing this, we were careful, however, to assign a proper motive, by insisting that we had business there with a certain Mohammed Aga, of which name there were no doubt twenty in the place (the name being as common as John Smith or William Jones in England), and should push on to Serpool to arrive there before night.

We accordingly quitted the direct road, and pursued our way across the plain, on a course of north-north-east, passing several Koord villages of straw huts, and having on each side of us fields of rice, cotton, tobacco, melons, &c. all now verdant, and watered by running streams flowing northerly through the plain, and leading off from the Alwund, which we had left to the southward of our road.

The Koords of the plain all live in dwellings of a description that might be called either huts or tents, for they are composed of the materials generally used in both, and are not altogether stationary. Like the tents of the Turcomans, the awning or roof is often of black hair-cloth, and the sides and partitions of straw matting, crossed by diagonal lines of black thread. The occupations of the people as pastors and cultivators, as well as their whole domestic economy, resemble those of the half Bedouin Arabs, on the eastern frontier of Syria. Their dresses, however, are different. Short coats or long jackets of a thick white woollen-cloth, with overhanging sleeves like the Albanian soldiers, narrow

trowsers, large shoes made of plaited woollen-yarns sewn together, and a conical cap of the same thick white cloth as their jackets, with the bottom part cut into several divisions, which are either turned up or let down at the pleasure of the wearer, form the more striking peculiarities of their costume. Most of them wear their hair long, which is often brown, and hangs in curls upon their shoulders. Their persons are stout and well made, though rather shorter and thicker than the ordinary standard. Their features are decidedly different from either Arabs, Turks, or Persians, and are rounder and flatter than either, approaching nearer to the Tartar face than to those named. Their language has a nearer affinity to Persian than to any other, which may have been caused by proximity of situation, for in their persons they are evidently a different race of men.

As we approached the town of Zohaub, we were frequently deceived into a belief of seeing the minarets of mosques in different directions, but these proved on nearer approach to be tall white obelisks in the burying-grounds of this people. Some of these were seen for several miles off, and must have been at least twenty or thirty feet high. Such as we saw were rudely built of stone, and coated over with a white plaster. They were all of the form used in ancient Egypt, and are here placed only over the graves of the dead, the size and height being proportioned to the wealth and consequence of the occupier. This was a kind of monument that I had not noticed before, though we were assured that it was in use among all the Koords, but was peculiar to them.

We reached the town of Zohaub about noon, entering it by the southern gate; and passing through the greater part of the interior, we alighted at a small and crowded khan, near the market-place, at its northern extremity.

As this town is out of the common route between Turkey and Persia, and, properly speaking, belongs to neither, since it is as often independent as otherwise, our arrival here caused very general enquiry as to what had brought us this way. A message

even came from the Pasha of the district, ordering us into his presence; and it was said that since news of the designs of Daood Effendi on Bagdad had reached his ears, great vigilance and strict enquiry was exercised on all who might arrive from thence, as few wars happened in these quarters without the Koords taking part with one or other of the belligerents.*

We repeated the story of our having business to transact with a certain Mohammed Aga of Zohaub, since from this we could not retreat, as our companions had circulated the same tale; and no less than four of that name and title came to us within the space of an hour, but we persisted in it that neither of these was the man.

My Dervish, who was a proficient in the art of dissimulation, at last exclaimed, "God knows! I have a suspicion that all is not right. It may not be so!—God forbid, indeed, that it should. But I firmly believe this said Mohammed Aga, to whom you lent the hundred piastres at Bagdad, to be some scoundrel who merely assumed the name for his wicked purpose, and, abusing your piety and generosity, cheated you under the semblance of a Zohaubi, without ever having been near Zohaub in his life."

The people of the place protested that there was no other Mohammed Aga among them whom they knew of, except the four here assembled; and when I had acquitted these of all claim, we were suffered to rest awhile, and our tale gained general credit,

* Diodorus, as well as all the ancient writers, bears testimony to the warlike disposition of the Carduchians. The ten thousand Greeks, in their retreat to their own country after the defeat of the younger Cyrus at Cunaxa, had to pass through their mountains, as they had determined to avoid the barren deserts by which they had approached from Issus, through Thapsacus on the Euphrates, to Babylon. These Carducians, or Carduchi, are described as a free and warlike people, enemies to the King, and very good soldiers, especially skilful and experienced in hurling great stones out of slings, and shooting in bows of a vast bigness and more than ordinary strength. These people galled the Grecians from the rising grounds, killing and miserably wounding many of them; for their arrows, being above two cubits long, pierced both their shields and breast-plates, so that no armour could repel their force; and it is said that these sort of weapons were so extraordinary big, that the Grecians used to cast these as *Saurians*, instead of their thong darts.—See *Diodorus Siculus*, B. 14. c. 5.

though it excited much more blame for our misplaced confidence than pity for our supposed distress.

The town of Zohaub is thought to contain about a thousand dwellings, which is an estimate certainly not much beyond the truth. These are all small; but as they have each a garden or court adjoining, they spread over a large space of ground. We did not perceive any dwelling more than one story high; and the khans, of which there were two or three, as well as the bazaars, were all comparatively diminutive.

The town is enclosed by a wall, turreted and flanked by bastions, or round towers, in the Turkish style: it has no ditch, but the wall itself, without this, is a sufficient defence from cavalry and foot soldiers, the only forces known here, artillery being seldom or never employed.

The Governor, Futteh Pasha, was himself a Koord, and commanded the whole of the district of Bajelan, the most southern part of Koordistan. All the Koords in this neighbourhood were subject to his authority, and he himself was tributary at this moment to Bagdad, though the place has been often subject to Persia, and as often defied *all* its masters.

The people are represented as of a ferocious and bad character, as all who have to deal with tyrants, and who struggle for liberty, are sure to be considered in the estimation of those who think passive obedience the highest virtue. To us they behaved civilly and hospitably enough, though it might have been unsafe, perhaps, for us to have trusted their virtues too far.

The men of the lower orders were dressed as the peasants already described; those of the higher class wore turbans of deep red, with fringed edges striped with blue; the women went generally uncovered, and were of better features and complexions than Arabs usually are. In the town we saw bullocks used for burden more frequently than any other animals; and we observed that the market was well supplied with food. The inhabitants are all

Moslems of the Soonnee sect, and have one mosque with a large white dome, but no minaret.

Among the various materials which I had collected to direct my enquiries regarding the site of the Palace of Dastagherd, was a note furnished me by Dr. Hine of the British Residency at Bagdad, which said, "About three fursungs to the eastward of Zohaub is a place well known to the Koords by the name of Khallet-el-Yezdegherd. It is strongly seated on the mountains; it presents the appearance of considerable ruins, has extensive caverns, and is about two or three fursungs in circumference. In the plain, at the bottom of Yezdegherd, are pieces of brick spread thickly over the country, giving the idea of the remains of an extensive city. These are called the ruins of Zarda or Garda, and may probably be those of Dastagherd; but no information is to be obtained from books about them."

I was most anxious to make some enquiries about this reported castle of Yezdegherd in the neighbourhood, and even to go there, if it lay at all in our way; and therefore I requested my Dervish to enquire openly in one direction, while I ventured on indirect questions in another.

We learnt, from our united labours, that at the distance of two hours and a half's ride to the northward of Zohaub, in the mountains, was a deserted fort or castle called "Duzgurra," or Duzkurra, and sometimes "Duzkurra-el-Melik;" but no place of the name of Yezdegherd was known of, any where in the neighbourhood.

This castle was said to be much smaller than the Kassr-Shirine at Hellowla, to be built of stone on the peak of a steep hill, and to be exceedingly difficult of access. It was represented to have been deserted rather than destroyed; since such as it originally was it still appeared to be, namely, a mere enclosure of defence, deriving its strength from situation rather than from construction.

At the foot of the hill on which the castle stands, there is said to be a small modern settlement of a few dwellings only, but I

could hear of no extensive ruins of a city as there reported, though it is quite possible that such might exist, and yet not be recognised by our informers. All, however, agreed that the castle itself was small and nearly in a perfect state, as it is resorted to by the Pasha of Zohaub as a retreat in time of trouble, and was used for this purpose very lately, when Abd-el-Rakheem was trying his fortune against the late Abdallah Pasha of Bagdad.* It was particularly insisted on, that there was no river or branch of a river near it, and that the country there was rocky and generally barren, the few shepherds on the hills getting their water from springs.

In the name of this place it is easy to recognise the Dascara-el-Melik of D'Anville. The name, my Dervish insisted, signifies in *old* Persian, "the small castle of the Prince," from "Deiz," a castle, "gurra," small, and "el-Melek," the Prince; but I know not whether this etymology is indisputable. There are many reasons. however, for not admitting it to be the Dastagherd of antiquity;—first, that no deep river covers its approach; next, that it is a barren wild, and in no sense a delicious spot; and, lastly, that it is more than even *five* days' march from the river before Ctesiphon. Again, the castle is too small for that described

* The ancient inhabitants of these parts were very nearly the same kind of people as the present race. The Cossæans, against whom Alexander undertook an expedition from Ecbatana, after the mourning for the death of Hephestion, were a warlike nation, bordering upon the Uxians. "Their country," says Arrian, "is mountainous, and their towns not fortified; for when they perceive their land invaded by a strong army, they immediately betake themselves to the tops of the mountains (either in a body or in separate parties, as it happens) where no enemy can approach: and when the invaders of the country are retired, they return to their habitations, and take up their former trade of plundering and robbing their neighbours, by which means they support themselves."—*Arrian*, b. 7. c. 15. v. 2. p. 156.

* Strabo (lib. ii.) describes these same Cossæans as a people bordering upon Media, and so intractable a race that the Persian monarchs were wont to buy their peace of them to keep them from infesting their territories with their usual depredations; "for," says he, "whenever they attempted to subdue them, the Cossæans, retiring to their mountains, easily frustrated all their designs. So that the Persian kings were forced to pay an annual tribute when they went to their summer palace at Ecbatana, for their safe passage back again to Babylon.—*Rooke's Note to the passage cited.*

as containing the extensive establishment kept up at Dastagherd, and too perfect for the building which Heraclius is said to have *totally* destroyed by flames. Besides which, from such a place, if once invested by hostile troops, the possessor could not make a precipitate escape; this could only have been done in a plain and open country like Khan-e-Keen, where Dastagherd was most probably seated.

It has been said that the present town of Zohaub occupies the site of the ancient Holwan, which was also one of the fertile abodes of Khosrou; and this—from its having behind it a steep range of mountains, and before it a noble plain of a circular form, nearly nine miles in diameter, and being hemmed in all around by lofty hills,—might have made an agreeable residence for the most luxurious prince.

We saw nothing like ancient ruins here, but our examination was a very hasty one. If, however, this be the site of Holwan, as its relative distance from Khan-e-Keen and Kassr-Shirine would seem to imply, D'Anville has erred in placing it on a branch of the Diala, for no river, nor even the arm of one, flows through or near the town.

The most contiguous stream is the Alwund itself, at the other extremity of the plain, nearly ten miles off; and from this all the streams for watering the rice grounds lead up northerly towards Zohaub, the level declining that way.

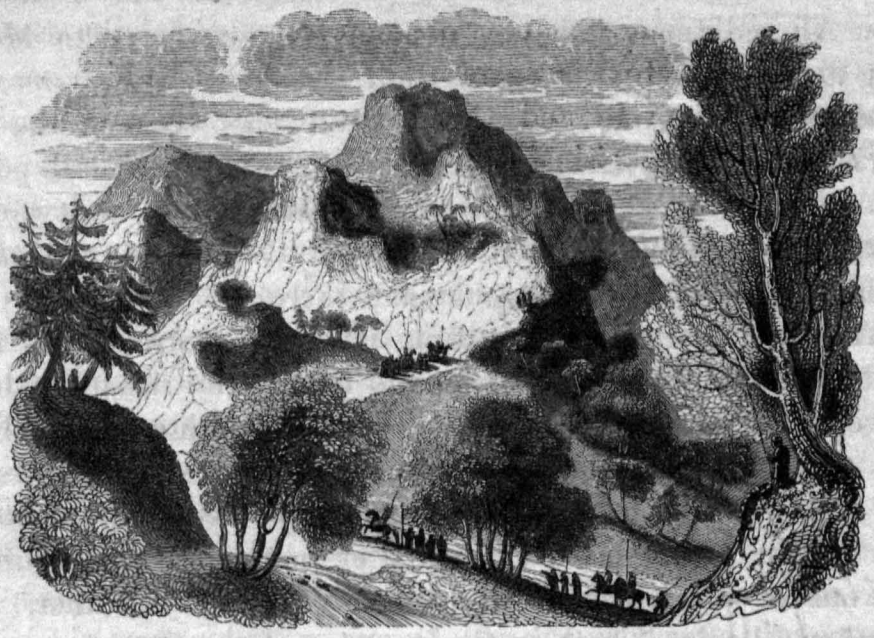
Kinnier has placed Holwan at a place called Albania, near the thirty-fifth degree of latitude; but Zohaub agrees more accurately with the position assigned in its latitude, which is nearer to thirty-four degrees than thirty-five degrees, as well as with its distance from Bagdad, which is fully one hundred and twenty miles, or five days' good travelling; whereas Albania, of which place I have not heard, would be at least thirty miles further—by its position on the map.

We remounted at the khan of Zohaub, about El-Assr, (four o'clock) and going out of the western gate, came round the outer

wall, and went along the high road to Serpool. Our course lay about south-south-east, keeping close to the foot of the western hills. In little more than two hours we regained the common road to Serpool, to the westward of the spot at which we had branched off from it, and then went for nearly another hour over a succession of rising hills.

At sun-set we came to the foot of a steeper hill, on ascending which, and reaching its summit, we had to go down over a rocky slope that might be almost called a precipice, and would, in any other country than this, have been thought impossible for horses to traverse. Here we alighted, unloaded our beasts, and both we and they might be said to have literally slid down one half the way, and tumbled down the other. Our guide insisted on this being the common passage, though we afterwards learnt that he had lost his road, and had brought us by this unfrequented way.

It was quite dark when we reached the khan at Serpool, and we were all sufficiently wearied, by our excursion from the beaten track.



CHAPTER IV.

FROM SERPOOL, ACROSS THE CHAIN OF MOUNT ZAGROS, BY THE PASS OF THE ARCH.

SEPT. 11.—We passed a sleepless night, tormented by myriads of mosquitoes, from the rice-grounds that surrounded us; and though I had covered myself with a thick woollen cloak, these insects got under it in sufficient numbers to sting me into agony, so that I arose in the morning with my hands, feet, and forehead swoln and burning with pain. Our impatience to get out of this place induced us to quit it even before day-light, so that we saw no more of it than the light of the moon admitted. The village itself is small, not having more than thirty or forty dwellings, and these all inhabited by the Koords of the Plain. The khan however is large and commodious, and was built by the Shah Zadé

of Persia, for the accommodation of the Kerbelai, as they are called, namely, those who go on pilgrimage to the Tombs of Imam Ali and Imam Hussein, none but those who go to Mecca being dignified with the title of Hadjee.

Serpool stands near to a remarkable pass between the two detached masses of bare lime-stone rock, rising in spiral points from the Plain, as if shot up from the earth by the most violent effort of nature; and it has running by it a stream of good water, for the comfort of those who may halt there.

The level tract extending from it to the eastward was irrigated by canals from this stream, and covered by rice-grounds in full verdure. Our way across this plain lay south-east for about half an hour along the foot of the bare and steep masses of rock described, having these on our left; while on the opposite side, on our right, was a boundary of more even and rounder hills, one of which was called "Mamaky," or "My Mother," and the other "Looloo," both in the language of the Koords.

As we passed by the first opening in the rocks, called the Boghaz, or Pass, I remarked a mound of old bricks, hewn-stones, and other vestiges of some former building, which had either been an old khan now entirely destroyed, or the site of some still older fort to guard the pass, immediately opposite to which it stood.

It was about half an hour after passing this, and less than an hour from the time of our quitting Serpool, that we went through a second Boghaz, by turning to our left, and going north-east for a few yards, which brought us out into another cultivated plain.

These passes, though not more than one hundred feet wide, have both of them the appearance of being entirely natural. The hills, of which they form the separation, are rugged masses of lime-stone, perfectly bare, and about five hundred feet high, rising on their more sloping sides in a succession of spiral points, over-lapping each other, and showing on their more perpendicular sides, lines of strata almost at right angles with the horizon; so that the

whole looked as if it had been blown up from the bowels of the earth by some violent explosion.

My Dervish, who professed to be a great admirer of the wonders of nature, and who was struck with the wild aspect of these hills, asked me whether mountains grew progressively up from the earth like grass, but at an infinitely slower rate? He was a good deal surprised when I told him that observations on the earth's surface made by men the best qualified for the study, tended to prove that mountains, and every other part of the mineral world in sight, were rather in a state of decay than of growth. He confessed that, on reflection, all he had seen bore testimony to such a doctrine; though from want of considering with proper attention even that which he had seen, he entertained an idea that the mountains of Abraham's day were considerably higher now than they were when the good old Patriarch lived, and that they would continue to increase in altitude until their final destruction.

In this mountain-pass was shown to us a small natural cavern, which a lion had made his den, and to which he had dragged many an unwary passenger as his prey, inspiring such terror as to put a stop to all journeying by this route. It happened that two young Koords were at this period disputing the possession of a Virgin of the Plain, whom they both loved; but as *they* lived on the one side of the pass, and the object of their affections on the other, there was an end put to their evening interviews, by the intrusion of this destroying lion.

It was thought too bold an enterprise, even for a lover, to force this passage alone; but as the object to be attained by such a step was equally dear to both, they for a moment threw aside the jealousy of rivals, and exchanged reciprocal pledges to stand or fall together in the attempt. Then arming themselves, and mounting two of the best horses of the country, they vowed in the presence of their friends, entire and cheerful submission to the will of fate, stated their intention of forcing together this inter-

rupted pass, and dragging out the lion from his den,—being content, if both should escape destruction, that the voice of their beloved should decide on their respective claims, and if one only fell a victim, that the other would have his dying consent to marry her.

They sallied forth, and amid applauses of their comrades, and the wish of all that the bravest should have his reward; when one of them was torn in pieces by the beast, and the other came off triumphant by slaying the animal as he feasted on his companion's corpse.*

From this pass we went up easterly, over a gently ascending plain, well cultivated, and thickly strewed with clusters of Koord hamlets in every part; while on the hills before us were wood and water, the former supplying an abundance of fuel, and the latter descending in small rivulets to fertilize the land.

In about an hour and half we began to ascend the steeper side of the mountain, having the stream of the Alwund close on our right; and about half-way up we came to its source, which issued out from a narrow cleft in the side of the steep rock, and produced

* The determined valour of the people who formerly inhabited this country was observed and admitted by ancient writers. Arrian, describing the march of Alexander against the Cossæans, who refused to submit to his government, says:— 'This people are a very warlike nation, and inhabit the hilly and mountainous parts of Media; and therefore, confiding in their own valour, and the fastnesses of their country, would never be brought to admit of any foreign prince to reign over them, and were never subdued during all the time of the Persian Empire. And at that time they were so very high, that they slighted the valour of the Macedonians. Alexander, however, conquered them in the space of forty days, and, building some towns at the most difficult passes through their country, he marched away." See b. xvii. c. 11. and *Plin. Nat. Hist.* b. vi. c. 27.

The existence of wild beasts, caverns, and rocky passes in this part of the country, is also noticed in ancient writers.—We learn from Arrian, that in the struggles for dominion which followed the death of Alexander, when Antigonus marched from Mesopotamia into Media, after Eumenes, he took his army through the mountains inhabited by the Cossæans. They are described by the historian as having been a free people, time out of mind, who inhabit in caves, and feed upon acorns and the salted flesh of wild beasts;—and, contemptible as they were held by Antigonus, who declined purchasing his passage through their country, he found more difficulties to surmount in forcing their passes, and lost more men in so doing, than if he had been opposed by a numerous and well-disciplined army. See b. xix. c. 2.

at once a full stream of clear and excellent water. As the mountain became steeper, it was necessary to alight, and walk up with our horses. The scenery was fine, without being either romantically grand or magnificent; the mountain was of lime-stone, of different qualities, and presented many cliffs near its summit, as well as steep slopes lower down, the whole of which was well wooded with small trees of dark green leaves now in full foliage, and the valleys were abundantly verdant.* In some of the views which presented themselves as we wound up the mountain by a serpentine path, I observed several that reminded me of similar ones in Lebanon, particularly near the cedars, and the valley of Hazbeheah, on the way from Tripoly to Balbeck.

It was about an hour after our commencing the steep ascent, that we came to a Roman ruin, called the Tauk, or Arch, as the building at Ctesiphon is called Tauk Kesra, or the Arch of Kesra. This ruin, if it may so be considered, for it is still in nearly a perfect state, represents an arched recess, the back of which is formed by the rock of the mountain planed away for that purpose, and the sides and roof are built of masonry. The recess appeared to be about twenty feet in height, twelve in breadth, and eight in depth inside. The form of the arch is Roman; it is well constructed, and not a stone has apparently been moved from its original bearing, though their outer surfaces are corroded by time and the atmosphere of an elevated region. The sides are formed of large blocks of smoothly hewn stone, closely united without cement, and even polished on the outer surface. The front presents a moulding on the arch, which is itself supported by pilasters

* This corresponds with the ancient descriptions of this district. Among others, Diodorus says: "The country, on the first entrance into Persia from the west, and as far as the Ladders, as they are called, (i. e. the Passes of Mount Zagros,) is flat and low, exceedingly hot, and barren of provision; but the rest is higher, of a wholesome air, and very fruitful. In this part there are many shady valleys, a variety of pleasant gardens, natural walks bounded on either side with all sorts of trees, and watered with refreshing springs; so that those who journey this way, frequently halt here and regale themselves in these pleasant places with great delight."—*Diodorus Siculus*, b. xix. c. 2.

of no determined order,—having the plain lines of the Doric, with a sort of chain band or fillet at the setting on of the capital on the shaft, but all the rest is entirely devoid of ornament.

By the side of this arched recess, a large space of the rock had been planed away on the face of the mountain, probably for an inscription. It was of an oblong form, and from twelve to fifteen feet in length, by six to eight feet in height. It was just of the same size and form, and placed in the same relative situation on the side of the rock, overlooking the highway, as the tablet on the Roman road at the Nahr-el-Kelb, or river Lycus, in Syria, containing a Latin inscription in honour of the individual who projected and executed the road over the promontory there. This was, no doubt, intended for a similar purpose here, but I could discover no traces of any inscription now visible; and from the surface of the tablet being itself still smooth, I should conceive that it had never been engraved on, rather than that it had been once written and since obliterated.

To what period these works may be assigned, an examination of the early histories of expeditions into these countries will best determine. This range of mountains is the Zagros of antiquity, which separated Persia from Assyria; and as the pass here is now the only one practised in this part of the chain, and contains the vestiges of a once noble road, it is not improbable but that it might have been the one marched over by Alexander on his way from Ecbatana to Babylon; and from the known fondness of that conqueror for great public works, of which his footsteps have left as many traces as those of other great men do of devastation, it is likely enough that he either made the road himself, or considerably improved it, and that the arch and tablet here were intended to commemorate his munificence.*

* Alexander, after passing the Tigris, on his march towards the country of the Uxians, was obstructed by the difficulty of the passes, which were all guarded by Madates, a Persian general related to Darius, and commanding a strong and well-disciplined army. He was conducted, however, by an inhabitant of the country, through such a strait difficult pathway

There were several passes in Mount Zagros, noted by the ancients as communicating between Babylon, Susa, and Ecbatana. Strabo enumerates three, the first of which passed by Messabatenus,* and is thought to be the royal road mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, from Susa to Ecbatana;† the second went from Gabiene to Susa,‡ and was no doubt that which traversed the country of the Cosseans;§ and the third went directly from Media into Persia. All of these, however, must have been to the southward of our place of crossing the chain, and this corresponded more accurately with the situation of the Pylæ Zagriensis, or Median Pylæ, properly so called, of which the height was estimated by Polybius to be about a hundred stadia.‖ The details of Alexander's return from Ecbatana to Babylon are not sufficiently minute to decide on the precise route which he followed; but as this last pass lies in the shortest and most direct way, there is sufficient ground to infer that it was by this he returned after his expedition against the Cosseans of the mountains, during the winter, with Ptolemy, his general, as related at length by Arrian.¶

From the Tauk we continued still to ascend by a winding path, with a steep valley beneath us, and an abundance of trees and several fine springs around us in different stages of our way,

over these mountains, as that, with a very little trouble, they soon found themselves standing over the heads of those who guarded the passes below. The guards, seeing this, soon fled; and as the Macedonians had now surmounted the chief difficulty of their march, and were in complete possession of the pass, the cities of the Uxians soon submitted to their power. From hence, it is said, the King decamped and marched towards Persia, and the fifth day came to a place called the Susian Rocks, which was another pass, and guarded also by a large Persian force.—*Arrian's Expedition of Alexander*, b. xvii. c. 7. p. 550.

Both these passes were, unquestionably, through the range of hills dividing Persia from the Turkish Empire and from Khusistan, and known among the ancients as Mount Zagros. The first of them may very probably be the present one of the Tauk, where the arch and ancient road remain; and the last, a pass further to the southward, in a line between this place and Persepolis, and nearly abreast of Susa, as its name would suggest.

* Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 744.

† Diodorus Siculus, lib. xix. c. 19.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid. and Arrian's Expedition, b. vii. c. 15.

‖ Polybius Hist. lib. v.

¶ Arrian's Expedition of Alexander, b. vii. c. 15.

when, in about half an hour more, we gained the summit, to enjoy repose for a moment from the toil of our ascent, to feast on an extensive prospect, and to breathe a delicious air. The summit of the mountain is about three thousand feet above the level of the Plain of Bagdad, and two thousand above the level of the Plain of Bagilan, or Ghilan, on which its base reposes, there being at least one thousand feet in progressive ascent from the first of these levels to the last. As Bagdad, however, is elevated from the sea by so much only as is necessary for the descent of the waters of the Tigris into the Persian Gulf, it would not require much to be added to complete the height of this part of Zagros from the level of the ocean; so that three thousand feet may be considered as very near its total elevation from the sea.

On that part of the summit over which we passed, the snow lies for three full months in the winter, so as to render it impassable for caravans, though single passengers and messengers traverse it at all seasons. There are other parts of the chain, to the north-west of this, which are considerably higher, particularly those seen from Altoon Kupry, which were covered with snow in the month of July, when I passed in sight of them; but such parts of the range as we could see from hence to the south-east, were but very little higher than this on which we stood.*

Our descent from the summit of Mount Zagros was more easy than our ascent had been, this lying over round woody hills, with grass turf and weeds on the soil; and in about an hour after leaving the pass we came to the ruins of an old khan, with a new one near it, now building, and not yet half finished. We found, however, sufficient shelter for our small party, and consequently alighted there.

This is called the Khan-el-Tauk, having no town near it to

* There was a Cœle Persis (Koilé Persis,) as well as Cœle-Syria, both expressing a hollow country, as a Syria or Persia between the mountains. The province of Media is styled Kooestan by the Persians, and Al Jebal by the Arabs: both express a region of mountains, corresponding to the Zagros of the Greeks.

give it another name, and the present new one is the work of the Shah Zadé, the King of Persia's son, the existing lord of the district of Kermanshah. Our whole road from Serpool, thus far, had occupied nearly five hours, and was mostly in an easterly direction; but from the nature of our road, the distance, in a straight line, could not have been more than seven or eight miles.

It had been perfectly calm throughout the day, and hot in the plains on the west of the pass, even at sun-rise: but on the summit of the mountain we enjoyed an atmosphere that was truly delicious, cool, yet soft, refreshing, and invigorating, without being at all sharp or biting,—such an air, indeed, as I had not breathed since leaving the delightful spring months on the mountains of Jerusalem.

We had now entered the territory of Persia: the Pass of Zagros, or the Tauk, being the frontier between it and Turkey. There are Koords in the plains on each side of this range of mountains—those on the west being subject to the Pasha of Zohaub, who is tributary to Bagdad; and those on the east to the Shah Zadé of Kermanshah himself, without the intervention of a Pasha of their own.

I had looked about with more than usual care for the vestiges of some distinct race of people here, the descendants of the old Bœotians, who were carried away by Xerxes, and placed near to this Pass of Zagros;* but I had as yet seen none that I should have taken for people of such an origin. The Arabs were too

Freinshemius, in his Supplement to Quintus, speaks of a city called Celonæ, in the district of Ghilan, inhabited by certain Bœotians whom Xerxes had transported into the East, and who retained strong traces of their origin in their language, which was composed mostly of Greek words, though they spoke also the language of the country in which they dwelt in their commerce with the nations of it.—Vol. ii. p. 545.

Most other authors give this name Celonæ, as the name of a country, or district.

"Tridui deinde itinere emenso Celonas perventum est: oppidum hoc tenent Bœotia profecti, quos Xerxes sedibus suis excitos in Orientem transtulit, servabantque argumentum originis peculiari ex Græcis plerumque vocibus constante, ceterum ob commerciorum necessitatem finitimorum Barbarorum lingua utebantur."

familiar to me to be mistaken wherever I saw them, even among a crowd of strangers; the Koords also are a very marked race, and appear from their physiognomy to be of a Tartar origin; while the Persians are, if possible, a still more distinct family than either.

But, in the course of my enquiries, I learned that there were formerly in these mountains a people called Nessereah, who, like those of the same name in Syria, paid divine honours to the *pudenda muliebris*, and held an annual feast not unlike the ancient mysteries of Venus. They had however made gradual advances towards Mohammedanism, though they still retained this strange mixture of pagan rites among themselves; and while they professed, in the presence of Moslems, to read the Koran, and be followers of the Prophet, they were scarcely ever seen to pray, were known openly to make, sell, and drink wine, to commit incest under the guise of religion, and to have secret laws and opinions which it would be death to any of them to divulge. They had lived long in the mountains in this state of independence, until a series of persecutions and gradual emigration had brought them to settle in the villages around.

The greater part of these people are now at Kerrund, where they form the majority of the population, and are called both Nessereahs and Ali-Ullaheeahs, from some peculiar notions which they have of an incarnation of God in the person of Ali. They are however regarded by all as pagans, and a hundred tales are told to support this opinion. At their annual feast it is said that they all meet in a room, where, after some ceremonies performed by their chief, the lights are put out, and every female takes off her drawers and hangs them on a place in the wall. The men then enter, and each takes down a pair of these drawers, still in the dark, when, the light being renewed, the owner of each garment is sought out, and she becomes the partner of the man who possesses it for the night, or, as some say, his wife for the whole ensuing year.

The opinions and practices of the Nessereah near Aleppo, are

kept equally secret; and the Syrian custom of the hosts giving their wives and daughters to the enjoyment of strangers who sojourn among them at their town of Martowan, is known to all who have passed that way. M. Volney, the first, I believe, who publicly noticed this custom, considers it as the remains of the worship of Venus; and I have little doubt but that the practices of the people here spring from a similar origin, though they themselves are too ignorant of their own history to be conscious of it, as well as too reserved to say what they think. It is clear, however, that no part of Mohammedanism can have led to such rites; since it is as free from all mysteries of that nature as Christianity itself.*

As the original religion of this sect has been thus so mixed with later ones as now scarcely to be identified, so their race has lost all marks of primitive distinction by their having learned the language and the manners of the people by whom they were surrounded—those in Syria speaking only Arabic, and these only Persian and Koordish. The former, however, are said to intermarry only among themselves, which they can well do, from being a numerous people; but here, where they are few, it would be more difficult; intermarriages with Koords and Persians therefore continually happen, which take place the more easily, as from their outward profession there is scarcely any distinguishing these pagans from the purer disciples of Islam.

After all that has been said, it may be judged how far these people are likely to be the remains of the Greeks before spoken of. Rennel, in his Illustrations of the Geography of Herodotus, says: "The Bœotians, (Thebans), carried away by Xerxes, (Polymnia, 233,) were placed in the country of Assyria, at Celonæ, now Ghi-

* A colony of the sect of Ismael, and followers of Hassn Subah, appear to have settled in the mountains between Tortosa and Tripoli, in Syria, as well as here on Mount Zagros. The tribe of Kaindu among the Tartars practised the custom of lending their wives to their friends, as is done by the Nessereeah and Ismaëlies.—*De la Croix Hist. of Chengiz Khan*, p. 86—412.

lan, near the ascent of the Pass of Mount Zagros. This is collected from Diodorus Siculus, lib. xvii. cap. 11. Alexander saw them at Celonæ, on his way from Susa and Sittacene to Ecbatana, after his return from India. Diodorus says, that they had not altogether forgot their laws, their customs, or their language, although they had learned those of the natives by intermarrying This was no more than one hundred and fifty years from the time of their removal from Greece.*

It has been before remarked that Ghilan is still the name of a district, and not of a town; and this district, commencing here at Bagilan, goes all the way down to the ancient Susiana, to the southward. Polybius speaks of the district of Chalonites at the ascent of Zagros, which is no doubt the same with Ghilan and Celonæ.†

SEPT. 12th.—We passed an agreeable night at the Khan-el-Tauk,' though we felt keenly the cold of the open air: but this change, after the intense heat of Bagdad, was delightful. We mounted our horses again at day-break, and enjoyed a still higher pleasure in the fresh breeze of the morning. The situation of the khan in a hollow valley, surrounded on all sides by steep rocky mountains and smaller wooded hills, offered us a magnificent sun-rise view.

We went hence, for nearly two hours, in an east-south-east direction, through fine mountain scenery, and woods hemmed in by steep rocks on all sides. The trees were of many kinds, and all in full foliage, but the most numerous were those called in Persian Belloot and Sameel. Springs of water were also abundant, and on the banks through which they ran, we saw not less than a hundred of the large and beautiful mountain partridges of the country. Many syrens, a solitary magpie, and some crested hoopoes were among the number of the rest, but there was neither thrush nor lark to cheer us with their morning songs.

After clearing the mountains, we came out on a fine plain

* Rennel's Illustrations of Herodotus, p. 268. † Polybius Hist. lib. v. c. 5.

covered with Koord huts and villages, the land being well cultivated in some parts, and having good pasture in others. This plain I should conceive to be two thousand feet above the level of Bagdad, as from the summit of the mountain to this its eastern base, we had not come down more than one thousand feet in a perpendicular line. The climate here was like that of an English summer's morning, and we proceeded with such light hearts, that I caught myself singing a song of home, a most unseemly occupation for a bearded pilgrim, and one for which my Dervish gave me a timely check, by exclaiming, "Ya Hadjee! Selah al Nebbe!" "O pilgrim, pray to the Prophet!" not meaning that I should actually alight and perform my devotions in earnest, but merely as a preparatory summons of my attention to some questions with which he very judiciously thought it necessary to interrupt my dangerous dream.

In about an hour after our entering on the plain, we passed a small village, seated under the hills on our left, called Khallet-Zenjey, with many poplar trees, and a fine stream of water descending from it into the plain, but no castle near it, as its name would seem to imply.

In another hour, having gone south-east for two hours over the plain, and been in all about four hours and a half from the Khan-el-Tauk, we entered a fine large caravanserai, a little below the town of Kerrund, and alighted there before noon.

When the necessary care had been taken of our horses, a duty which fell always to my own lot to execute rather than to superintend, we left the khan and walked up to the town, which is about a quarter of a mile to the northward of the high-way. Our road led through narrow stone-hedged lanes, on each side of which were large vineyards and gardens, with an abundance of poplar trees planted in rows. The vines were yet bending beneath the weight of their clusters, and pomegranates studded other trees in full ripeness. The town itself too, as we drew

nearer to it, presented a picture of more comfort and industry combined, than I had yet seen in so small a place, since leaving Syria. It resembled, both in its situation and general aspect, many of the Druse villages in Lebanon, and gave me a favourable impression of the character of those who peopled it.

The town consists of two portions facing each other on opposite sides of a clear stream running down between them. Each of these portions stands on so steep a slope of ground, that the houses rise in stages above each other; and every street, which consists only of one side towards the hill, has the terraces of the houses below on a level with its edge on the other side. Both these portions taken collectively, are seated also at the foot of a bare lime-stone range of rock, which rises up almost perpendicularly behind the town to the north, in spiral points, overlapping each other like so many separate beds of columns tapered away at the upper parts and uniting in one solid mass below.

Before the town to the south, and extending for several miles south-east and north-west, is a fine plain, of the highest fertility, watered by the stream which issues from a cleft in the rock behind the town itself, so that its situation is as favourable for agricultural industry as could be desired. The number of dwellings may amount to five or six hundred, and of inhabitants to nearly two thousand, the greater part of them being Nessereah, and the remainder Mohammedans of the Sheeah sect.

The occupations of both are chiefly agricultural; but by the former of these are manufactured muskets and pistols, of a very superior quality, to the value of a thousand piastres, or 50*l.* sterling, per pair.

My Dervish had halted a week here, on his way from Kermanshah to Bagdad, about a year since, for the sake of a kind and pretty damsel of this Aphrodisian race, who listened to his vows. During the whole of our way he had praised the beauty and the compassionate disposition of this fair one, and promised me a

thousand times, on his eye and his head, that I should see her for myself, and drink out of the same cup as he had done, if I desired it. When we left the khan, therefore, I had indulged the hope of such an interview, and even expected, from the reputed frankness of the fair one's heart, and her hospitality to strangers, to learn some curious particulars regarding the race to which she belonged; but we were both sadly disappointed, the Dervish in his anticipations of pleasure, and I in my hopes of information, when we learnt that, only two months since, a young Koord peasant had married her, and taken her away to his hamlet, where now, perhaps, she discreetly kept all the secrets we should have else attempted to draw from her.

We returned to the khan with heavy steps, and met at the door of it a small caravan, conveying a consignment of dead bodies from Kermanshah. This caravan was composed wholly of mules, each laden with two corpses, one on each side, and a takhteravan, or litter, borne also by mules, though it contained only one body, which was that of a person of some distinction. These were all packed in long narrow cases or coffins, and secured with matting and cordage, like bales of cotton. They were the bodies of devout dead, from different parts of Persia—two from Ispahaun, and one from Shirauz, which were being conveyed for interment to the grounds of Imaum Hussein, at Kerbela. Besides the charge of carriage, which is double that of any other commodity of equal weight, large sums, from two to five thousand piastres, are paid to the Mosque there, for a sufficient space of ground to receive the body, and other presents must be made to the tomb of the Imaum himself; so that this is a distinction which the comparatively rich only can enjoy.

When the animals entered the khan, the bodies laden on the mules were cast off, without ceremony, and placed at random in different parts of the court-yard, the one in the litter alone being paid any attention to; so that, as they were neither marked nor

numbered, they were probably the bodies of individuals who had been just able to pay the lowest price of admission into this sacred ground, and would be laid there without inscriptive stones, or other funeral monument; for it could scarcely happen, from the way in which they were lying about, that they should not be mixed and confounded one with another.

The presence of these dead bodies in the khan made no impression on the living who were there, as the mule-drivers stretched themselves along by the side of them at night, with an indifference that argued their being long familiarized with such cargoes. This was a scene which I could imagine to have been frequent enough in ancient Egypt, where all the population, who could afford it, were embalmed in state, and others, at the charge of the nation, their mummies being transported from place to place, according to their peculiar temple of worship, or their favourite place of burial.

On enquiry of some of the muleteers, who had come up from Mendeli to this place with salt, we learnt that it was five days' journey from hence, in nearly a southern direction, and that there was a river flowing down by it from the northward.

SEPT. 13.—We quitted the khan of Kerrund at sun-rise, and going south-east through the plain before it, we came, in half an hour, to a well, with a deep spring of fine water, called in Koordish, Ain-Chermook, or the White Fountain. We met here some female peasants, who drew water for our horses with great readiness; and as no males of their tribe were near, they laughed and jested with great freedom. None of them were veiled, and few, indeed, had their bodies completely covered. Among them were some fine forms, but their features were coarse, and their complexions browned by the sun; though their long tresses of black glossy hair, and brilliant eyes of the deepest jet, gave an expression of great vivacity to their whole appearance. The village in which they lived was at the foot of the southern hill, and was

called the White Village, giving its name to the fountain at which we drank.

In an hour from hence we entered a narrow valley, of a winding form, called, in Koordish, Teng-e-Rush, or the Black Pass, from its being reputed to be the scene of dark and treacherous deeds. We went through it, however, in safety, and without seeing a living being, though a vigilant look-out was extended on all sides. After ascending through this, we came upon gentle hills and wavy lawns, spread over with trees in full green foliage, which, contrasted with the yellow stubble of the recently reaped corn, produced a most agreeable effect. The whole of the scenery for the next two hours, still in a south-east direction, was indeed as much like that of a fine Eglish park as could be imagined, and resembled very strongly the beautiful grounds between Khallet-el-Hhussan and Tartoose, in Syria.

As we drew towards the termination of our day's journey, the eminences became more abrupt, rocky, and destitute of wood, till at the end of it we came out on another fine plain, stretching from north-west to south-east for nine or ten miles, and being from four to five miles wide, bordered by a ridge of high hills on each side. In our way through this, on the same course, we passed two Koord villages and several small settlements of reed huts; and in two hours from our first entering on it we alighted at the caravansera of Harounabad.

The situation of this town, at the foot of a line of hills, with a stream of water near it, and a wide plain extending along its front is very similar to that of Kerrund. Its style of building is also the same, but it has not the fine vineyards and gardens of that place, there being no Nessereah here to consume the wine. The population of this village scarcely exceeds a thousand, and these are all Persians and Koords of the Sheeah sect. The name of this place signifies "built or peopled by Haroun," but whether by the celebrated Haroun-el-Raschid, or any other of that name, is not

known. The birth-place of this Caliph of Bagdad was the city of Rey, the Rhages of the Scriptures, whose ruins are near to the present Teheran, and this continued always to be one of the chief seats of his magnificence, containing in its splendour, according to Oriental Historians, three millions of inhabitants. As Bagdad became, however, the residence of his latter days, and the tomb of his wife Zobeida is still shown there, this town of Harounabad might have been a station in his way from the one place to the other, retaining his name from some connection with his presence or patronage, now perhaps forgotten.

The stream which rises here is called Serneshoor, and is considerable enough to require a bridge near its source. It goes easterly from hence, and probably falls into the Kara Soo, or river of Kermanshah; but the people, satisfied with its watering their plain, knew nothing further of its course beyond their immediate neighbourhood.

SEPT. 14th.—There being two horsemen going from hence soon after midnight, who intended making the two stages to Kermanshah in one, we determined to accompany them, and mounting when the moon had risen, we went together south-east over the plain, and along the stream of Serneshoor, for half an hour. From hence we turned up northerly through rocky hills, by a nearer bye-path, known to our companions only, and passing over them came again into the high-road on a course of east north-east.

A little before day-light we ascended a very rugged steep, which was appropriately called in Persian "Kotel-Nal-Shikund," or "The horse-shoe-destroying Hill." Our course after this was all the way east north-east, and we seemed to be gradually raising our level by every successive hill, until the sun-rise opened to us the beautiful prospect of "Mahee-Dusht," or the "yearly-birth-giving-plain." This presented to us an extent of about fifteen miles in length, by ten in breadth, of perfect level, stretching from north north-west to south south-east, and bounded

by lofty hills with ragged summits on the one side, and by gentler and more rounded ones on the other.

It was studded with villages in every direction, not less than twenty of which presented themselves successively to our view; some on little eminences in the plain itself, and others peeping out from nooks and valleys in the sides of the hills, which opened but for a moment on our sight, and then closed again as we passed along. These villages were formed of well-built houses, many of them containing apparently two hundred separate dwellings; and besides these was a still greater number of grass and reed huts scattered in clusters over the face of the plain. The soil was watered by a clear stream, at the source of which we drank. It issued from the foot of the hill, from the brow of which the view first opened on us, and only a few paces to the left of our road. It is called the "Water of Mahee-Dusht," and is said to lose itself in that plain, extending its fertilizing influence no further.

The land was divided into apparently equal portions of arable and pasture; the corn grown on it is praised for its excellence, and the virtues of its grass are particularly celebrated. The popular opinion is, that even barren animals brought from other parts will there become fruitful; and it is said that every species of cattle bred on this plain, and continuing constantly to graze there, will bring forth its young, invariably, every year, from whence its expressive name. Others, however, give this epithet a different interpretation, and say that it signifies "the yearly-purchase-giving-plain," meaning, that whosoever may buy a portion of the soil there, or place animals of any given worth to graze upon it, will every year reap the amount of his purchase in actual profit on them; or in other words, make a profit of cent. per cent. per annum. A long dispute was maintained on this subject, even in our small party, which was at last amicably terminated by the general admission that such a name was chiefly meant to indicate

the great fertility and excellent qualities of the soil; and that in either case the epithet was sufficiently expressive.

We continued to go east-north-east over the plain, for upwards of an hour, when we reached the caravanserai, having been about six hours on our road from Harounabad, on a general course of east-north-east. There were only a few dwellings near the khan, which had been erected on the banks of the stream that ran by it, for the shelter and supply of passengers halting on the road; and even from these, though small, we procured what we had not been able to do from the largest towns since leaving Bagdad. We found here milk, lebben, cheese, dates, good bread, and fruits of several kinds, in abundance; so that we enjoyed our repose, and prolonged it until noon before we prepared to move.

After prayers, we remounted and continued our way, still going across the plain in an east-north-east direction, and having the high and ragged summits of the mountains of Bisitoon in sight above the range that formed the boundary of the plain before us. In about two hours we reached the foot of this boundary, when we began to ascend over bare hills, and through uninteresting scenery, with a total absence of wood. In half an hour we halted, and drank at a fountain of excellent water, rising in the hills, called in Koordish "Ain-el-Koosh," and considered to be exactly half-way between the khan of Mahee-Dusht and Kermanshah. From hence, after a short ascent, we went over two or three swelling eminences, till we came in sight of the gardens of Kermanshah, the fresh and verdant bowers of which offered a beautiful contrast to the brown aspect of the barren hills. We now began to meet crowds of passengers issuing from the town, many of them apparently coming out on an evening excursion only; and about sunset we came in sight of the town itself.

We watered our horses at a small stream just below, and in the immediate skirts of the town; but not at the Kara Soo, as the maps had led me to expect from their placing that river west of Ker-

manshah. The appearance of the place, from this point of view, was that of a very large provincial town, but not of one which was the seat of Royalty. There were neither lofty minarets nor fine domes to be seen, and excepting the harem of the Shah Zadé, seated on an eminence in the midst of a verdant garden, and the octagonal and flat-topped kiosque of his own dwelling in the castle, there were no striking objects to arrest the attention.

We entered by a mean gate, through a wall newly built of unburnt bricks, flanked by round towers, turreted, and showing loop-holes for musketry, and ports for cannon; but without a ditch, or any mounted ordnance on the battlements. The first streets through which we passed, after entering the town, were not superior to those of the commonest villages, but we soon came to works of a better description. The whole town seemed to be in a state of building, as if just rising from the ashes of some former one, or just founded by a colony of foreign settlers. We now went through fine streets in every stage of their progress,—from those just finished to those but newly begun. All was like the bustle and activity of a perfectly new place. The shops were decked with finery, as if to catch the eye, and force themselves into early custom. There seemed an abundance of every thing to be desired, both necessaries and luxuries. The half-built streets and new bazars were thronged with people, all extremely busy, and intent on some important errand.

I fancied myself in what I should have expected a Chinese town to be,—amidst a crowded and active population, seeing on every side ingenious devices to attract the attention, and hearing at every moment the cries of those who did not depend on the mere silent exhibition of their wares alone to sell them. Every thing offered a striking contrast to the towns of Turkey and Arabia. There were no coffee-houses at which grave idlers were lounging over their pipes; no slow and solemn-paced passengers who moved as if for pleasure only; no fine flowing dresses or gay

colours, compatible only with stately attitudes and a freedom from menial occupations; no narrow and dark passages to exclude the rays of the sun; and neither mosques nor camels to complete the characteristics of great Oriental towns. But in lieu of these were seen a hundred better pledges of the ingenuity, comfort, cleanliness, and activity of the people, and the gratifying sight of building and repair instead of gradual neglect and decay.

We made our way through the town, passing by all the large khans, until, arriving at its further extremity, we found a small caravanserai, in which were only a few poor workmen having chambers; but as we were likely to find here the privacy we so much desired, we accordingly alighted and took up our quarters in this welcome obscurity.

CHAPTER V.

VISITS AT KERMANSHAH, TO THE FRIENDS OF MY COMPANION.

Sept. 15th.—We took an early walk through all the principal parts of the town; in the course of which, my companion, the Dervish Ismael, met with a hundred of his old acquaintances, and forty or fifty of his best friends, he having been at different periods a frequent resident of Kermanshah. The salutations between them were in all cases cordial, but with the chosen few it was that of the closest and fondest affection. They kissed each other on the lips, on the cheeks, and on the shoulders; drew off to look for a moment face to face, as if to assure themselves that the joy of meeting was not a mere illusion; and re-embraced again and again, with greater warmth than before. We were thus taken into several private parties, saw the interior of many of the largest

houses, and were entertained after the best manner of the country. All these were gratifying advantages, and afforded me much unexpected pleasure; but it was still inferior to the gratification I derived from witnessing at every succeeding interview, so much of cordial attachment and friendly joy, which unequivocally displayed itself in those happy meetings of men who evidently regarded each other sincerely.

Every step of our road from Bagdad thus far, had given me more favourable impressions of the general character of my companion than I had anticipated. The extent of his information, and the depth of his metaphysical researches, had often surprised me; while, though several dark spots tainted his history, there was nevertheless such a total absence of the meaner qualities of the soul, so high and independent a spirit, so frank and undisguised a heart, and so much of charity and benevolence mingled with every feeling to which it gave birth, that the good seemed to me to outweigh by far the evil. I could not therefore but feel an esteem for the man, mixed with a constant and a deep regret that so much natural talent and overflowing benevolence of disposition should have been half lost, and half perverted to worthless purposes, from the want of a proper bias being given by education and example in youth.

Ismael, for such was his name, was by birth an Aghwan, or Affghan, from the country between Hindoostan and Turkomania. His father was poor, but avaricious to an extreme degree; and he conceived that it was the constant sight of this sordid passion displayed before him in its excess, which gave him a contempt for wealth and worldly honours at an early period of his life.

His brothers, he said, were of similar dispositions with their father; and he therefore left them all, before he had attained his tenth year, and that too without a sigh of regret, excepting only those with which he answered a fond mother's tears, as she wept over her darling boy at parting. He promised, however,

constantly to think of her, and to prove a friend when all the world should have neglected her.

After wandering through the whole of the Khorassaun, visiting the great city of Bokhara in the north, and obtaining always the mere supply of food and raiment which he desired, by the occupations which fortune threw in his way, he came down through Persia to Bagdad, and there for a period settled.

He had by this time read most of the Poets and Philosophers of the East, since he already understood the Persian, the Turkish, and the Arabic languages, sufficiently well to write in each. He had studied Astronomy, Alchemy, and Physiognomy, as sciences.—not on those principles of demonstration which form the basis of scientific pursuits in Europe, but after the best manner which the learning and learned men of the country could point out to him. He had come at last, however, to the conclusion of the Royal Hebrew, who was called the wisest of men, that all was vanity and vexation of spirit. Like this luxurious monarch, he had tasted of every pleasure which either courage or money could procure him. In his pursuit of sensual enjoyments, he had broken down every barrier of moral or religious prohibition; and, conceiving himself to be the lord of his own soul, without future tribunal or account, had launched into the abyss of forbidden gratifications—in which he became so deeply immersed. that the satiety of their excess, as he himself expressed it, wrought out its own cure.

At Bagdad he became more correct in his conduct, though still equally regardless of wealth or of worldly honours. Having an extraordinary talent as an engraver, he applied himself to the engraving of rings and seals; in which he soon became so celebrated, that there was not his equal throughout the land of Islam. Applications were made to him from Constantinople and all the great towns of Turkey, as well as from every part of Persia, from Tabriz to Shiraz. As his charges were always extravagantly high,

from his consciousness of being without a rival, and from its requiring a very powerful inducement to draw him either from his studies or his pleasures, money flowed fast into his purse. Had he possessed half the avarice of his father, he might soon have been a wealthy man; but the moment that he found himself master of a sufficient sum, he quitted Bagdad on an excursion of pleasure, generally into some parts of Persia, where he remained until all was expended, and then returned to his occupations to recruit and prepare for further relaxations. Without this variety, he said, life would be insupportable; at the best, he thought it had too much of monotony, even in its pleasures, for a vivid and ardent mind; and if this were not relieved by those occasional flashes of joy, and pangs of torture, which at one moment intoxicate, and at another harrow up the soul of the man of feeling, it would be better to terminate than to continue a life not worth the trouble of preserving.

Ismael had been known to the English residents at Bagdad for several years, during which period he had executed a number of seals and rings in a way that could be done by no one else in the city. He was well known, therefore, both to Mr. Rich and Mr. Hine, who equally approved of my making him the guide and companion of my future journey.

The circumstances under which our intimacy took place were these:—Being desirous of having a seal-ring engraved, for my own use, with the Arabic name of Abdallah-ibn-Suliman, the Dervish Ismael was sent for by the gentlemen of the house, and was brought by Mr. Hine to my chamber. Some complimentary salutations having passed between us, we sat down together; and, Mr. Hine leaving us alone, when the order for the seal was perfectly explained, we fell into other topics of conversation. Not many minutes had passed, however, before my visitor started up hastily and exclaimed:—"W'Allah! ya Hadjee Abdallah, in can t'roakh al thaany Doonya, ana u'idjey maak"—By God, O!

Pilgrim Abdallah! if you go even to the other world, I will follow you." He answered "Al Ullah,"—It rests with God. And thus our first interview ended.

I had thought no more of this affair, regarding it as the mere flight of a capricious fancy; but the Dervish himself was more in earnest than I had conceived. He went immediately to declare his wish to Mr. Rich, who treated it as I had done myself; and thus the matter remained suspended. Some few days afterwards the ring was brought, when Ismael then told me that he had made every thing ready for his departure, and would not listen to a refusal. I was myself perfectly passive in the case; as it was a matter of indifference to me who my companion was, provided he understood Arabic and Persian, of the last of which languages I knew but little. Mr. Rich still thought, as before, that so apparently capricious a determination was not likely to last; and that I might therefore be abandoned on the road, if I went with the Dervish only. Mr. Hine, however, thought he knew sufficiently of Ismael's character to vouch for his fidelity, and advised me to take him with me, as he desired.

In all this, not a word was said about the time of service, or of the compensation expected for it. The affair was concluded as a matter of pure attachment, by his saying, "I shall lose here the opportunity of gaining two or three thousand piastres for the execution of orders now on my hands; I shall suffer more in tearing myself away from two or three friends who are very dear to me, and from one tender object of my affections who is of far more value to me than my own existence; but from the moment that I saw you and heard your voice, I felt that your soul contained what I had all my life been searching for in vain, and that it was my destiny to follow you wherever you might go." He added, "I shall go and bury my sorrows in the bosom of love, and await the moment of our separation with all the tranquillity of a soul resigned to its fate." I did all that was in my power to combat this illusion, for such it evidently was, but in vain. The Dervish

remained fixed in his purpose, beyond all the power of entreaty or refusal to shake it.

When the day of our departure from Bagdad came, Ismael appeared before me in tears, and his eyes were red and swoln with shedding them; but when I asked him why he would make such painful sacrifices for my sake, he answered only by beating his hand violently upon his heart, stifling a deep sob, and turning aside his head to hide the vehemence of his grief. We armed ourselves in my room, before we descended into the court to mount; and when I braced on my pistols, he handled them, and tried their locks with a sort of frantic pleasure. His own musket, which was a small East India military one, of English make, pleased him extremely; and he tried the elasticity of my lance, shaking his head at the same time, and regretting that he was not expert in the use of so appropriate a weapon as this was for a horseman. He examined every item of my baggage with scrupulous attention, demanded to know the exact sum of money which I took with me, and what was the nature of the papers I possessed. In short, his behaviour appeared to me so strange and unaccountable, that I felt myself now and then relapsing into those suspicions which my kind advisers had previously removed. But my naturally confiding disposition overcame all doubts, and I was ultimately quite satisfied with the arrangements made.

We set out therefore together, without any other feeling on my part than a strong desire to know more of my companion, whose conduct appeared so inexplicable,—and every day partially accomplished that wish. At the gate of Bagdad, Ismael was met by an elderly Christian merchant, whose name was Elias, and the parting between these was like that of a father and a son separating never again to meet. Tears flowed fast from the eyes of both; and when I learnt that this venerable old man was the father of Ismael's love, there was something associated with the idea of a Moslem Dervish dying with affection for the daughter of a Christian merchant; (and these—though one was poor and

despised the world, and the other wealthy and attached to it—hanging over each other's necks in all the sorrow of the most closely united souls,)—there was something in all this so strange, yet so affecting, that I felt my own sympathies powerfully touched by the scene.

On our way, the Dervish was always too much occupied, either by his own reflections, or in conversation with me, to attend to the common duties of the road; so that all these, as I expected, had fallen on me. But for this I was prepared; and although they occupied more of my time than was favourable to making such ample observations on our route as I desired, yet they in no way interrupted the general tranquillity of my mind, and I was therefore content and happy.

The Dervish was as regardless of his own immediate concerns as of mine; for, after quitting Bakouba, he had lost a purse containing forty-five gold sequins,—a small bag, in which were some fine stones that he had promised to engrave for his friends during his absence, at the first place he should find leisure,—as well as a paper, in which were written certain commissions for him to execute for his friend Elias, from Ispahan, the loss of which last affected him more deeply than all the rest.

We had travelled thus far, however, happily together; and each appeared satisfied with the other. On the road, the Dervish scarcely ate or drank sufficiently to support nature, and slept always on the bare earth without a covering. His sleep was seldom tranquil: for, besides his speaking dreams, I had been often awakened by him in the night, when I found him sitting in a corner, smoking his short pipe formed only of the clay-ball without a stem, and either repeating some passages of Persian poetry, or sighing out occasional lamentations in his native tongue.

We were in every sense of the word companions; and though the vigilance of our look-out when alone, or the fear of being betrayed to suspicious observers when in a caravan, occasioned us

to talk but little when on horseback; yet, when we had alighted at the caravanserai, and the evening shadows came to veil us from the observation of others, we often sat up in close conversation together until midnight. It was in the course of these communions that I had learned such of the particulars of his history as are already detailed, with other still more striking features of his disposition.

It must be premised that this man, though bred a Moslem, and always supposed to have so continued,—as any recantation of the faith in one born a believer is punished with death,—had reasoned himself out of all belief in any revealed religion whatever. His notions on this subject, and his reasons for the opinion which he entertained that all the reputed Prophets were either misguided zealots or shameless impostors, were so like those of Deists in most countries as to need no detail. He professed his admiration, however, of the precept which enjoined us 'to do unto others as we would they should do unto us;' but, like many others who publicly make this the rule of their conduct, he very frequently departed from it. His passions were by nature too powerful, and through life had reigned too long without control, to be made subject to any laws: so that, when doctrines stood in the way of his pleasures, he invariably trampled them under foot.

His companions and bosom friends in Bagdad were two Moslems: one a Persian of the Sheeah sect, the chief Mollah of the Tomb of Imaum Moosa, the author of many existing books on science and philosophy, and by far the most learned man of that city; the other an Arab Soonnee, a Mollah also, of the Mosque of the Vizier, near the banks of the Tigris at Bagdad. Besides these, were eight or ten wealthy Christian merchants, Armenians and Catholics, who were known to each other as fellow members of a secret society, calling themselves 'Mutuffuk b'el Filosofeeah,' or 'United by Philosophy.' These men met occasionally at the house of one or other of the Christian members, and there

gave loose to every sort of debauchery which could be indulged in as pleasure. Music, wine, lascivious dances, women, and, in short, all that was deemed voluptuous, was yielded to; so that the Bacchanalia of ancient Rome seemed to be revived by these Eastern libertines.

During the late Ramadan, nearly a thousand pounds sterling was expended, among this knot of philosophers, for women only; by which, however, they procured those of the first distinction in the place, both wives and daughters of those high in office and in wealth. That such things are practicable and practised, is beyond a doubt; and, indeed, when the very separate state in which the women live from the men, their liberty of going out and coming in when they please, except in royal harems where they are guarded by eunuchs, and the impossibility of recognizing one woman from another in their street-dresses, be considered,- one cannot but subscribe to the opinion of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, 'that as far as the safety of intrigue is implied by liberty, the women of Turkey have more than those of Europe.' The separate purses of the husband and the wife, and the stated allowances of the latter, contribute very powerfully to their infidelity. Shut out from that open intercourse with men which the females of Europe enjoy, and denied the benefit of education, the only pleasures they know are those of the passions, a love of novelty in suitors for their favours, and a fondness for finery in dress. As, however, they seldom entertain any decided preference for particular individuals, and would find it generally difficult to indulge their choice, all affairs of this nature are conducted by inferior agents, and money is the only standard by which the claims of the solicitors are measured. When the sum is once fixed, the rest is easily accomplished; and whole nights are passed by supposed faithful wives in the arms of others, without their being missed by their husbands, since it is not the fashion of the country for married people to share constantly the same bed. Three thousand piastres, or

about one hundred and fifty pounds sterling, were currently named as the price of the daughter of the Dufterdar Effendi, one of the Secretaries of State; and this sum was said to have been actually paid by an old Christian merchant who had a wife and twelve children of his own!

Amidst all this, I was at a loss to conceive how the Dervish could find much enjoyment, while labouring under the strong passion which I supposed he must then have felt for the object of his affections at Bagdad, whom he had quitted with so much reluctance. What was my surprise, however, on seeking an explanation of this seeming inconsistency, to find it was the son, and not the daughter, of his friend Elias who held so powerful a hold on his heart! I shrunk back from the confession as a man would recoil from a serpent on which he had unexpectedly trodden; and I was struck silent from further enquiry, as one would be averse to moving forward while so venomous and deadly a reptile lay in his path. I was delighted to find, however, at last, that this was a pure and honourable passion. His fondness for the boy was of such a nature as that he could not suffer him ever to leave the house, or be profaned by his exposure to the sight of others, keeping him always as sacred as the most secluded member of the harem; and in answers to enquiries naturally suggested by the subject, he declared he would rather suffer death than do the slightest harm to so pure, so innocent, so heavenly a creature as this. The friendship existing between the father of the child and its avowed lover, seemed to prove at least that the parent was satisfied as to the nature of the feeling; and all that I saw myself, though I then thought it was for a *female* person, still appeared to me, even after I was undeceived in this particular, to be the result of a genuine effusion of nature, and in no way the symptoms of a depraved feeling.

I remembered all that had been said on the subject of the love of boys among the Greeks, by those who conceived it to be a pure

and honourable affection, as well as by those who thought the contrary. M. De Pauw's remarks on the beauty of the Grecian youth were fresh in my recollection, and Archbishop Potter's apology for, or defence of the practice, as springing from an honourable source, were still familiar to me. This instance seemed so strong a confirmation of the possibility of such a passion existing, and being yet productive of no corrupt effects, that I had no longer any doubt but that the greater number of instances were of this kind.

The remarks of Archbishop Potter on this subject are so much to the purpose, that it may not be deemed irrelevant to introduce them here: He says:—

'Who it was that first introduced the custom of loving boys into Greece is uncertain; however (to omit the infamous amours of Jupiter, Orpheus, Laius of Thebes, and others,) we find it generally practised by the ancient Grecians, and that not only in private, but by the public allowance and encouragement of their laws; for they thought there could be no means more effectual to excite their youth to noble undertakings, nor any greater security to their commonwealths, than this generous passion. This the invaders of their liberties so often experienced, that it became a received maxim in the politics of tyrants, to use all their endeavours to extirpate it out of their dominions; some instances whereof we have in Athenæus: on the contrary, free commonwealths and all those states that consulted the advancement of their own honour, seem to have been unanimous in establishing laws to encourage and reward it. Let us take a view of some few of them.

'First, we shall find it to have been so generally practised, so highly esteemed in Crete, that such of their well-born and beautiful youths as never had any lovers, incurred the public censure, as persons some way or other faulty in their morals; as if nothing else could hinder but that some one's affections would be placed

upon them: but those that were more happy in being admired, were honoured with the first seats at public exercises, and wore, for a distinguishing badge of honour, a sort of garment richly adorned; this they still retained after they arrived to man's estate, in memory they had once been κλεινοὶ, *eminent*, which was the name the Cretans gave to youths who had lovers. The lovers themselves were called Φιλήτορες. One thing was remarkable in this place, that the lovers always took their boys by force; for, having placed their affections upon any one, they gave notice of it to his relations, and withal certified them what day they designed to take him: if the lover was unworthy of the boy, they refused to yield him up; but if his quality and virtues were answerable, they made some slight opposition to satisfy the law, and pursued him to his lodgings, but then gave their consent. After this, the lover carried the boy whither he pleased, the persons that were present at the rape bearing him company. He entertained him some time, two months at the farthest, with hunting and such diversions; then they returned him home. At his departure, it was ordered by law that the boy should receive a suit of armour, an ox, and a cup, to which the lover usually added out of his own bounty several other presents of value. The boy being returned home, sacrificed the ox to Jupiter, made an entertainment for those that had accompanied him in his flight, and gave an account of the usage he had from his lover; for in case he was rudely treated, the law allowed him satisfaction. It is farther affirmed by Maximus the Tyrian, that during all the time of their converse together, nothing unseemly, nothing repugnant to the ancient laws of virtue passed between them; and however some authors are inclined to have hard thoughts of this custom, yet the testimonies of many others, with the high characters given by the ancients of the old Cretan constitutions, by which it was approved, are sufficient to vindicate it from all false imputations. The same is put beyond dispute by what Strabo tells us, that it was not so

much the external beauty of a boy as his virtuous disposition, his modesty, and courage, which recommended him.

'From the Cretans pass we to the Lacedæmonians, several of whose constitutions were derived from Crete. Their love of boys was remarkable all over Greece, and for the whole conduct and excellent consequences of it every where admired. There was no such thing as presents passed between the lovers, no foul arts were used to insinuate themselves into one another's affections; their love was generous, and worthy the Spartan education; it was first entertained from a mutual esteem of one another's virtue; and the same cause which first inspired the flame, did alone serve to nourish and continue it; it was not tainted with so much as a suspicion of immodesty. Agesilaus is said to have refused so much as to kiss the boy he loved, for fear of censure: and if a person attempted any thing upon a youth besides what consisted with the strictest rules of modesty, the laws (however encouraging a virtuous love) condemned him to disgrace, whereby he was deprived of almost all the privileges of free denizens. The same practice was allowed the women toward their own sex, and was so much in fashion among them, that the most staid and virtuous matrons would publicly own their passion for a modest and beautiful virgin, which is a farther confirmation of the innocency of this custom. Maximus the Tyrian assures us the Spartans loved their boys no otherwise than a man may be enamoured with a beautiful statue, which he proves from what Plutarch likewise reports, that though several men's fancies met in one person, yet did not that cause any strangeness or jealousy among them, but was rather the beginning of a very intimate friendship, whilst they all jointly conspired to render the beloved boy the most accomplished in the world; for the end of this love was, that the young men might be improved in all virtuous and commendable qualities, by conversing with men of probity and experience; whence the lover and the beloved shared the honour and disgrace of each other;

the lover especially was blamed if the boy offended, and suffered what punishment was due to his fault. Plutarch has a story of a Spartan fined by the magistrates, because the lad whom he loved cried out effeminately whilst he was fighting. The same love continued when the boy was come to man's estate; he still preserved his former intimacy with his lover, imparted to him all his designs, and was directed by his counsels, as appears from another of Plutarch's relations concerning Cleomenes, who, before his advancement to the kingdom, was beloved by one Xenares, with whom he ever after maintained a most intimate friendship, till he went about his project of new-modelling the commonwealth, which Xenares not approving, departed from him, but still remained faithful to him and concealed his designs.

'If we pass from Sparta to Athens, we shall find that there Solon forbade slaves to love boys, making that an honourable action, and, as it were, inviting (these are Plutarch's words) the worthy to practise what he commanded the unworthy to forbear That lawgiver himself is said to have loved Pisistratus, and the most eminent men in that commonwealth submitted to the same passion. Socrates, who died a martyr for disowning the pagan idolatry, is very remarkable for such amours, yet seems not whilst alive to have incurred the least suspicion of dishonesty; for what else could be the cause that when Callias, Thrasymachus, Aristophanes, Anytus, and Melitus, with the rest of his enemies, accused him of teaching Critias to tyrannize, for sophistry, for contempt of the gods, and other crimes, they never so much as upbraided him with impure love, or for writing or discoursing upon that subject? And though some persons, especially in later ages, and perhaps unacquainted with the practice of the old Grecians, have called in question that philosopher's virtue in this point, yet both he and his scholar Plato are sufficiently vindicated from that imputation by Maximus the Tyrian, to whom I refer the reader. The innocency of this love may farther appear from their severe

laws enacted against immodest love, whereby the youths that entertained such lovers were declared infamous and rendered incapable of public employments, and the persons that prostituted them condemned to die. Several other penalties were likewise ordered to deter all men from so heinous and detestable a crime, as appears from the laws of Athens, described in one of the foregoing books.

'There are many other examples of this nature, whereof I shall only mention one more: it shall be taken from the Thebans, whose lawgivers, Plutarch tells us, encouraged this excellent passion to temper the manners of their youth; nor were they disappointed of their expectation, a pregnant evidence whereof (to omit others) we have in the ἱερὰ φάλαγξ, or sacred band; it was a party of three hundred chosen men, composed of lovers and their beloved, and therefore called sacred; it gained many important victories, was the first that ever overcame the Spartans (whose courage till then seemed irresistible) upon equal terms, and was never beaten till the battle at Cheronea: after which, king Philip, taking a view of the slain, and coming to the place where these three hundred, who had fought his whole phalanx, lay dead together, he was struck with wonder, and understanding that it was the band of lovers, he said, weeping, 'Let them perish who suspect that these men either did or suffered any thing base.'' *

I took the greatest pains to ascertain, by a severe and minute investigation, how far it might be possible to doubt of the purity of the passion by which this Affghan Dervish was possessed, and whether it deserved to be classed with that described as prevailing among the ancient Greeks; and the result fully satisfied me that both were the same. Ismael was, however, surprised beyond measure, when I assured him that such a feeling was not known at all among the people of Europe. 'But how?' said he: 'Has

* Archæologia Græca, vol. ii. chap. ix. p. 239, 8vo ed. 1820.

Nature then constituted you of different materials from other men? Can you behold a youth, lovely as the moon, chaste, innocent, playful, generous, kind, amiable,—in short, containing all the perfections of innocent boyhood, which like the most delicate odour of the rose, exists only in the bud, and becomes of a coarser and less lovely kind when blown into maturity—can you look on a being, so fit for Heaven as this is, and not involuntarily love it?' I agreed with him that a sort of admiration or affection might be the result, but I at the same time strove to mark the distinction between an esteem founded on the admiration of such rare qualities, and any thing like a regard for the person. I did not succeed, however, in convincing him: for, to his mind, no such distinction seemed to exist; and he contended, that if it were possible for a man to be enamoured of every thing that is fair, and lovely, and good and beautiful, in a *female* form, without a reference to the enjoyment of the person, which feeling may most unquestionably exist, so the same sentiment might be excited towards similar charms united in a youth of the other sex, without reference to any impure desires; and that, in short, in such a case, the lover would feel as much repugnance at the intrusion of any unchaste thought, as would the admirer of a virtuous girl at the exhibition of any indelicacy, or the presence of any thing, indeed, which could give offence to the strictest propriety in their mutual intercourse.

The Dervish added a striking instance of the force of these attachments, and the sympathy which was felt in the sorrows to which they led, by the following fact from his own history. The place of his residence, and of his usual labour, was near the bridge of the Tigris, at the gate of the Mosque of the Vizier. While he sat here, about five or six years since, surrounded by several of his friends, who came often to enjoy his conversation and beguile the tedium of his work, he observed, passing among the crowd, a young and beautiful Turkish boy, whose eyes met his, as if by

destiny, and they remained fixedly gazing on each other for some time. The boy, after 'blushing like the first hue of a summer morning,' passed on, frequently turning back to look on the person who had regarded him so ardently. The Dervish felt his heart 'revolve within him,' for such was his expression, and a cold sweat came across his brow. He hung his head upon his graving-tool in dejection, and excused himself to those about him, by saying he felt suddenly ill. Shortly afterwards, the boy returned, and after walking to and fro several times, drawing nearer and nearer, as if under the influence of some attracting charm, he came up to his observer, and said, 'Is it really true, then, that you love me?' 'This,' said Ismael, 'was a dagger in my heart; I could make no reply.' The friends who were near him, and now saw all explained, asked him if there had been any previous acquaintance existing between them. He assured them that they had never seen each other before. 'Then,' they replied, 'such an event must be from God.'

The boy continued to remain for a while with this party, told with great frankness the name and rank of his parents, as well as the place of his residence, and promised to repeat his visit on the following day. He did this regularly for several months in succession, sitting for hours by the Dervish, and either singing to him, or asking him interesting questions, to beguile his labours, until, as Ismael expressed himself, 'though they were still two bodies, they became one soul.' The youth at length fell sick, and was confined to his bed, during which time his lover, Ismael, discontinued entirely his usual occupations, and abandoned himself completely to the care of his beloved. He watched the changes of his disease with more than the anxiety of a parent, and never quitted his bed-side, night or day. Death at length separated them; but even when this stroke came, the Dervish could not be prevailed on to quit the corpse. He constantly visited the grave that contained the remains of all he held dear on earth, and,

planting myrtles and flowers there, after the manner of the East, bedewed them daily with his tears.

His friends sympathized powerfully in his distress, which, he said, 'continued to feed his grief,' until he pined away to absolute illness, and was near following the fate of him whom he deplored. On quitting Bagdad, however, the constant succession of new scenes and new events that befel him, in an excursion through Persia to Khorasan, progressively obliterated the deep impressions which sorrow had made upon his happiness. It was on this occasion, of his leaving the city, that his feelings burst forth in an elegiac 'Ode to Love,' which he paraphrased from his native tongue, the Pushtoo, into Arabic; and even in that form it appeared exceedingly eloquent, and reminded me powerfully of the praises which Anacreon bestowed on his lovely, and, perhaps, equally chaste Bathyllus.

From all this, added to many other examples of a similar kind, related as happening between persons who had often been pointed out to me in Arabia and Persia, I could no longer doubt the existence in the East of an affection for male youths, of as pure and honourable a kind as that which is felt in Europe for those of the other sex. The most eminent scholars have contended for the purity of a similar passion, which not only prevailed, but as we have already seen, was publicly countenanced, and praised, in Greece; and if the passion there could be a chaste one, it may be admitted to be equally possible here. De Pauw ascribes it in that country to the superior beauty of the males to the females, which is hardly likely to have been the sole cause; but, even admitting the admiration of personal beauty to have entered largely into the sources of this singular direction of feeling, it would be as unjust to suppose that this necessarily implied impurity of desire, as to contend that no one could admire a lovely countenance and a beautiful form in the other sex, and still be inspired with sentiments of the most pure and honourable nature toward the object of his admiration.

One powerful reason why this passion may exist in the East while it is quite unknown in the West, is probably the seclusion of women in the former, and the freedom of access to them in the latter. People of such warm imaginations and high sensibilities as some among the Asiatics unquestionably are, must pour out their hearts and discharge the overflowing affections of their nature on something, and they are likely to fix them on that which they deem most amiable and lovely among the objects familiar to them. Had they the unrestrained intercourse which we enjoy with such superior beings as the virtuous and accomplished females of our own country, they would find nothing in nature so deserving of their love as these. But in countries where scarcely a virtuous and never an accomplished female exists, where almost every woman is without education, and where opportunity and high payment are all that is required to make the most chaste a willing prey; in countries, in short, where, besides the debased state of female society, men are so completely shut out even from this, that the occasional sight of their beauty cannot inflame them, where can any thing so love-inspiring else be found, as a young, an innocent, an amiable, and an intelligent youth? And who but those of the very basest of their species, would think of degrading, even in their own eyes, a being, whether male or female, whom they devotedly and sincerely loved?

Such debauchees as we have in England, who pride themselves on the number of innocent girls they have seduced and betrayed, might perhaps do so; but these are surely not a criterion by which to judge the great mass of any country. Even where custom and habit may have deadened the feelings of shame at this crime, the voice of nature must be always heard to plead against it. And such, indeed, is the fact; for while the Jelabs or public boys of Turkey and Persia are as much despised and shunned in those countries, as abandoned women are with us, or even more so; the youths who are the avowed favourites or beloved of particular individuals, are as much re-

spected, and thought as honourably of, as any virtuous girl, whose amiable qualities should have procured her an honourable lover, while her companions were seeking in vain for such a distinction.

But it is time to return from a digression, which it is hoped will not be thought wholly irrelevant, as tending to elucidate a very important feature in the manners of the East, and one on which much misconception exists. My Dervish, then, notwithstanding this disposition, unknown and almost inconceivable among us, had many excellent qualities which Europeans, as well as Asiatics, know how to appreciate. He was brave and fearless in the highest degree, a virtue in the estimation of all men, from the savage to the sage. He had a heart that felt most warmly for the distresses of the poor, and had relieved many from his own purse, and pleaded the cause of others in appeals to mine, during the short time we had been together. On our route, we had found a little orphan boy, whom his master had left behind him on the road, from his incapacity to walk as fast as the daily journeys of the caravan. As his feet had swollen from his being shoeless, Ismael set him on his own horse, and walked from Harounabad all the way to this place, on his account alone. Not satisfied with this, he had this morning sought out his master in a khan, publicly reproved him for his cruelty and want of feeling, purchased a pair of shoes for the lad himself, and gave him two sequins to provide against any similar abandonment. He had been hitherto faithful in all his transactions with me, whether it regarded his word or the unlimited use of my purse, and I believe him to have been sincere in his expressions of gratitude for my consenting to take him with me. He had brought his mother to Bagdad in her old age, and supported both her and her widowed sister with a large family of children for several years, always leaving with them a sufficient sum of money whenever he quitted that place on an excursion of pleasure. And to close all, he was apparently beloved by every one who knew him for any length of time, which a man can hardly be

without having many real claims to esteem. In Bagdad, besides the gentlemen of the English Residency, who thought highly of his general character, and those of his other friends who all spoke to me of his intended absence with regret, there was not one among more than fifty that we had met to-day who did not salute and embrace him warmly, expressing a hope that he was come to make some stay among them, and evincing great disappointment, and even sorrow, when he spoke of his being merely the passenger of an hour.

When evening approached, after we had passed a day of continued entertainment, with scarcely any other intermission than our passage from one house to another in different quarters of the town, we supped together in a party of a dozen of the most select, at the house of a new settler here from Ispahan. To none of his friends had Ismael disclosed the fact of my being an Englishman, so that I still passed as a Soonnee Moslem of Cairo, from the Hadj. When the reasons of my journeying this way were demanded, it was answered by Ismael, that my sister was the wife of Ghalib, the former Shereef of Mecca, whom Mohammed Ali Pasha had displaced, and that some of her money having been lent to Persian pilgrims of distinction, whose funds had fallen short during their long journey and stay at Mecca, I was going into Persia to collect this, but wished to pass uninterrupted and without parade. The Dervish then added, that there being none among my own servants who had been in the country before, he had advised me to leave them at Bagdad, and had himself engaged to be my conductor, interpreter, and slave. All this was readily believed, but some scruples were entertained as to the rigour of my practice in abstaining from forbidden things. 'What!' said the Dervish, 'do you think then, while the Cadi of Stamboul, and half the Mollahs of that City of the Faithful, drink wine, as it is reported, until they cannot distinguish their daylight from their sunset prayers, that a Hadjee Massri, an Egyptian pilgrim, a

relation of the Shereef of Mecca, would be shocked at it?" I gave my assent to the general observation that such prohibitions were intended for the ignorant (from whom the pride of every man triumphantly excepts himself); and, as it was tacitly acknowledged that none of us were of that number, we drank deeply of the golden wine of Shirauz, which Hafiz and Saadi have so eloquently praised, and Gibbon so justly asserted to have triumphed in every age over the forbidding precepts of Mohammed.

CHAPTER VI.

DESCRIPTION OF KERMANSHAH, ONE OF THE FRONTIER TOWNS OF PERSIA.

SEPT. 16.—On my leaving Bagdad, Mr. Rich had furnished me with a letter to the Shah Zadé, the King of Persia's second son, who resides at Kermanshah, as well as other letters to persons of distinction here; but as we had hitherto found it unnecessary to claim the protection of the great, we thought it best not to force ourselves on their notice by the presentation of such letters, and accordingly avoided it.

As there was yet no caravan moving either for Hamadan or Ispahan, we devoted the day to completing our examination of the town, and closed it in a party in one of the best baths of the

place,—said our evening prayers in the Great Mosque, and returned to the khan at an early hour.

Here, as I had hitherto found but little leisure, or privacy, since our arrival at Kermanshah, I sat up, by the light of a dim lamp, with the door closed on my small chamber, and employed myself in noting down the incidents of our stay in this place, and the impressions to which they had given rise, with the following sketch of Kermanshah itself.

This town is seated on three or four gentle hills, at the foot of a range, which is passed on approaching it from the west; so that it contains within its walls some slight and other steep ascents, with eminences of different heights, and their corresponding valleys. It is said to have been founded by Baharam the Fourth, the brother and successor of the famous embryo King Shapoor, who was himself called Kermanshah, from having filled the station of Governor of the city of Kerman.

To the north and the east it has before it a beautiful and extensive plain, at the entrance of which it may be said to stand. The boundaries of this on the north are, the high range of mountains called Kooh Tauk-e-Bostan, including in it the peculiar masses of Kooh Parow and Kooh Bisitoon. On the south it is closed by the range of Kooh Seeah, both of these ranges going in nearly a north-west and south-east direction. Between these the plain extends for about fifteen or twenty miles in length, and from five to eight in its greatest breadth.

The form of Kermanshah is irregular, approaching nearest to a circular outline, of about three miles in circumference. The wall which surrounds it is flanked with circular bastions, at stated distances, turreted, and pierced with loop-holes and ports for cannon; but it is without a ditch, is built chiefly of sun-dried bricks, and has at present no ordnance mounted on any part of it.

There are five gates. The one on the west is called Durwazé Kubber Aga, from a pretty little tomb of an Aga there, with a

flower-garden before it. The one on the north-west is called Durwazé Nedjef Asheref, meaning the gate at which a Saint dried up the sea. The story connected with the name is this. In the time of the Imaum Ali, there was a large lake here, by the side of which a poor man was sitting, shaving the hairs from off his legs and body, when his razor and stone fell into the water. The Imaum coming by at the time, and witnessing his distress, enquired into the cause of it, and finding that the Faqueer was a holy man, ordered the lake to be dried up, which it instantly became at his word, restored the man his razor, and has remained dry land ever since. This fact is believed here with all proper respect; and from its being one of comparatively recent date to that of Moses drying up the Red Sea, it is thought fit by these superstitious Mohammedans to be placed beside it in the Chronicles of Truth, and is triumphantly cited to prove that their favourite Imaum was equal to Moses at least. The third gate, on the north, is called Durwazé Shereef Abat, from some person of that name, who probably built it. The fourth, on the north-east, is called Durwazé Tauk-e-Bostan, from its leading to the arched cave in the mountain;—and the last, on the south-east, is named Durwazé Ispahan, from the high road to that city leading from it.

Not half a century ago, Kermanshah was but a large village, the inhabitants of which subsisted chiefly by their agricultural labours in their own plain, and by the feeding of their cattle on the fine pastures of the Mahee-Dusht. As a frontier town in the west was wanting, however, to oppose to the Pasha of Bagdad, in the event of war between Turkey and Persia, as well as for the more effectual government of the western provinces of Shooster, Lauristan, and the parts of Koordistan subject to the Persian power, Kermanshah was fixed on to become the future residence of one of the King of Persia's sons.

Since that period the town has gradually increased in size, in population, and in affluence, and goes on still augmenting its numbers. During the visit of Mr. Rosseau, the French Consul

General of Bagdad to this place, in 1807, he estimated the number of its inhabitants from sixteen to eighteen thousand.* At this moment, however, it certainly contains thirty thousand; and from all that I observed of the space covered by houses, and the manner in which they were occupied, I thought the number of people here at least equal to the half of those at Bagdad, which would make the estimate still higher.

Of these inhabitants, the great mass are Mohammedans of the Sheeah sect, the rest being made up of about twenty Soonnee families, settlers from Turkey, a hundred Jews, only one Christian of any kind, who is Yusef Khan, a Russian, and now Topjee Bashi, or chief of artillery, of the Shah Zadé, some few Koord residents, and many Georgian slaves, chiefly females. The only Arabs here are merely sojourners. Armenians there are none, either as passengers or residents; and of Guebres or fire-worshippers, the old followers of Zoroaster, as far as I could learn, there have never been any resident here. The three last were enumerated, however, among the population of the place, by Mr. Rosseau. If such persons were here at the time he wrote, it could only be in the way that Mr. Rosseau and ourselves were, as sojourners or travellers: yet no one in describing the state of Kermanshah at either of those periods would reckon among its population either Frenchmen, Englishmen, or Affghans.

The government of the Shah Zadé extends northward into Koordistan, southward to Shooster and the sea coast of Khusistan, westward to the Tauk or pass of Mount Zagros, and eastward to the town of Hamadan. Over these provinces the Prince exercises sovereign authority, without reference to his father, and he is thought by many to be the most powerful of all the governors in the empire, not excepting the Shah himself. The present Prince is the eldest son of the reigning Sovereign, by a Georgian mother. He is about eighteen years of age, and is conceived to owe all the

* Vide "Mines de l'Orient," tome 3, p. 85.

greatness of his influence to the firmness of his general conduct, and his personal superintendance of public business, a duty which is said to be neglected by his brothers. His sway is called a mild one, though, but on the evening of yesterday, two men were, by his order, blown off from the cannon's mouth for some trifling offence, which would not have incurred, even in Turkey, a higher punishment than the bastinado. He is, however, a great speculator and trader, and encourages commerce in others, as far as such a disposition in himself will admit of it without thwarting his own personal interests.

Being in a manner the founder of the town in its present state of opulence (for before his reign its improvement was very inconsiderable), he takes a pride in embellishing it by public works; and this, as it adds much to the comfort as well as attractions of the town, ensures him the praise of all parties. A large palace near the centre of the city, for himself, a country house surrounded by gardens for his harem, and a spacious mosque near his own residence for the public use, have been built from his own funds, without any extraordinary contributions. The whole range of streets, bazars, caravanserais, baths, &c. which are now erecting, are, however, building from advances of their future occupiers, in loans to the Prince, on the faith of his promise, that the sums shall be accounted for in their annual rents. The Prince is therefore the great owner of the land, and of the buildings; and as his will is law, the rents will no doubt be so regulated, as to return him an enormous profit, in which case, instead of a munificent adorner of a city of his own founding, he can be regarded only as a monied speculator in possession of an unrestrained monopoly.

The force of the city is not at all equal to its real importance, as the western frontier town of an extensive kingdom. It had not, as far as I could perceive, at present, a single cannon mounted on its walls. Several fine long brass pieces, of Persian foundry, and apparently very old, were lying about on the ground before the Prince's palace, and in another public square; and there was in

his service a Russian Topjee Bashi, or chief of the cannoneers, so that when the more profitable improvements of building are terminated, that of fortification may perhaps be better attended to. The whole military establishment of the Shah Zadé is estimated to consist of about five hundred horse and a thousand foot. Like the soldiers of Turkey, these are required to arm and clothe themselves out of their pay, are totally without any distinguishing uniform, and as undisciplined as an enemy could wish. These few troops are thought sufficient for the maintenance of public order in the neighbourhood of the town, and for the regular guard of the Prince's person. All else would be superfluous, in his estimation, since the governor of every province under the Shah Zadé must, over and above the yearly tribute to the Prince's treasury, provide troops for the defence of his own district, out of the contributions which he is authorized to levy at will on the people subject to his immediate control. To keep up a large army, or to train and discipline the small one really embodied in time of peace for more prompt and effectual service in war, would not enter into the conception of those who look on the duration of both the one and the other to be dependant on the will of God alone, and totally exempt from human control.

The details of the Government are nearly the same here as in the great towns of its sister kingdom, Turkey: personal favour and bribery are always of avail, and corruption exists in every office and department of the State. Notwithstanding this, however, the people appear to be happy, and are firmly convinced that no country can be equal to their own. Their climate, their water, and the productions of their soil, are justly praised; though even from these they do not derive half the enjoyment they are capable of affording, from want of the necessary knowledge how to employ them to the best advantage. But, because the signal drum is beat three times after sunset, at the last sound of which the streets must be cleared of every individual on pain of death, they think their Government the best that possibly can be, and