for Shiraz, and send him off, as soon as our horses had reposed, to return those of Jaffier Ali Khan, and bring down mine, with the things left at Shiraz. The messenger was speedily procured for us by Nour Mohammed; and, wet, tired, and sleepy as I was, I wrote a long letter to my friend, and gave it in charge to the horseman, who was to commence his journey at day-break in the morning, armed with our own weapons for his defence.

Nov. 3rd.—We were waited on by Nour Mohammed at an early hour, as we had slept in the caravansera; and as soon as the messenger had been dispatched to Shiraz, we repaired to one of the baths of Kauzeroon. It was small and dark, but of exactly the same plan as all those we had seen in Persia, and more highly heated than any. The attendants, too, were more skilful in their duty than even those of the best baths at Shiraz and Ispahan; and in their method of moulding the limbs and muscles, approached nearly to the Turks. This was a very striking difference, for which I could learn no satisfactory reason, but it was one of great gratification to myself.

From the bath we went to a house which was said to be one appropriated to the use of such English travellers as might pass that way, and, as I understood, was set apart for that purpose by the same Nour Mohammed, who called himself the slave of our nation, and swore a hundred vows of devotion and fidelity to all our race. As he had not before seen one exactly of my description dressed as an Arab, and with a humble Dervish for his companion, he thought it best, however, to name me to all others as Hadjee Abdallah, the only appellation he had yet heard, and to follow it up by the assertion of my being an Egyptian Arab recommended to him by a friend. We found here an excellent breakfast in the manner of the country, and several of Nour Mohammed's acquaintances partook of it with us. This, and the lengthened enquiries and replies which naturally followed, detained us until past noon, before the company separated. An offer was then made to us of the use of this house during the

time we halted here for the arrival of our horses from Shiraz, or, if we preferred a situation more airy and detached from the town, the house and garden of the Governor, which he only occupied, or visited occasionally, during the heats of summer. We accepted this last with great readiness, and were repairing thither when we met the messenger dispatched from Shiraz to Bushire, just six days since. I asked him, with anxiety, for the answer to my letter, as the time for his return here had fully expired; but was mortified to learn that he had not yet gone beyond this on his way. It appeared that the Armenians, after engaging this man at my expense, had detained him three days at Shiraz, to collect the letters of others at a stipulated price, of which the messenger himself showed me a large packet: he gave us to understand, at the same time, that he was not engaged by them to convey my letter only, but considered himself as their servant, and thought the answer to be brought here to Kauzeroon was on their account also. This deceitful conduct of the Armenians was so like what I had seen of Eastern Christians generally, that my wonder was less than my disappointment. There was however only one remedy, namely, to omit paying them the sum stipulated, or insist on its being refunded if paid. It was now too late, however, to expect an answer from Bushire before we should be ready to set out from hence; and I accordingly took from the first messenger the original letter, and sent a second to Shiraz, expressing my hope of being there in a few days at farthest.

We proceeded to the garden, which is seated about a quarter of a mile to the west of the town, and found there a most agreeable retreat. The accommodation consisted of a small upper room facing the garden, and an open balcony looking towards the town, with galleries, and a terrace above. The garden itself was spacious and agreeable, and contained combinations not usually seen on the same soil; for we had long alleys of large orange trees, whose spreading branches completely over-canopied the walks; and the

date and the cypress, both in full perfection, flourishing close by each other.

The state of the air, too, was at this season as agreeable as it was possible to desire. There was a softness in it equal to that of an Italian autumn or the summer evenings of Greece, and a freshness not inferior to that of our own early spring. The storm that had burst on us but the preceding evening, had purified the atmosphere; and every tree, and bush, and blade of verdure, breathed forth a perfume, which at once delighted the senses and invigorated and expanded the mind. The heats of summer would seem, however, to be most oppressive here, judging from the inscriptions of some Indian invalids, who had come by this road into Persia for the recovery of their health; for, on the walls of the upper chamber, the state of the thermometer was marked in different months; one of which made it 101° at 5 P.M. in July 1815, and another at 104° and 106° in August 1816.

The house and garden in which we were thus happily lodged, belonged to the reigning Governor of the town, called Kazim Khan; and, like his permanent residence, it was of course transferable to his successors, as long as it might exist. A few servants were left in charge of it, merely to keep it in order; and these were permitted to admit strangers, either as visitors or sojourners, for a few days, since the presents they received from such, formed their only pay.

This garden was first made by a certain Imam Kooli Khan, who was Governor of Kauzeroon about fifteen years since; and from the then more flourishing state of the place, he lived in greater state and splendour than his successors have been able to do. His post was filled, after his death, by his son Mohammed Kooli Khan, who, said our informer, was then young and in the very blossom of life, when the passions are opening, and warmly susceptible of the seductive influence of pleasure. As this young man had come suddenly into the possession of both

wealth and power, he gave loose to his desires, and was surrounded by horses, servants, and slaves in public, and by numbers of the most beautiful women in the privacy of his harem.

A Dervish, whose name is not remembered here, happening to come this way from Bokhara and Samarcand, paid his morning visit to the Khan, as these men are privileged to do, without ceremony. In the conversation which arose between them, the Dervish, who it is said was a native of Upper India, from the district between Delhi and Caubul, explained to him, in the language of our narrator, some of the beauties of philosophy and the consolations of self-denial, and very powerfully contrasted them with the useless and unmeaning splendour of state, which never failed to bring with it a train of vexations and disappointments. The effect of his discourse was said to be so instantaneously convincing, that the young chief arose from his seat of state, resigned his government to another, and made a solemn vow of poverty and piety before God and the whole assembly, and became from thence the humble disciple of this hitherto unknown philosopher. After following him to Bagdad on foot, they remained together some time in that city, when the master died. The disciple still continued, however, to divide his time between the tombs of Imam Ali and Imam Hossein, at both of which places my Dervish, Ismael, remembered to have seen and conversed with him, though he did not then know his history.

He at length returned into Persia, and was now at Shiraz, where he still led a life of seclusion and contemplation, and had never once been known to express a regret for the abandonment of his former honours, or a wish to return again to the pleasures of the world.

This history, which was related to us by a Persian of Kauzeroon, gave rise to a long and warm conversation between myself and my Dervish, on the merit of the young Imam; and I must do my companion the justice to say, that though he set out with the warmest admiration of this man's abandonment of wealth and

power for poverty and insignificance, yet he at length confessed his conversion to my opinion, that, as a rich man, he might have done better by retaining his place, and, under his new convictions, exercising his power in doing good.

The discourse which followed this, on the various doctrines and practices of the many sects of Soofees which exist in Persia and the countries east of it, detained us until we were summoned to the prayer of sun-set by one of the clearest and most melodious voices that I had for a long time heard, issuing from the terrace of one of the mosques in Kauzeroon. The evening air was calm, every other sound was still, and Nature herself seemed sunk into an early repose, which heightened the effect of the holy summons. It reminded me very powerfully of a similar combination on the banks of the Nile, when, in an evening of equal serenity, I was so much charmed with the beautiful and impressive sounds of a Muezzin's voice echoing from the majestic ruins of the deserted Thebes, and calling men to the worship of the true God from amid the wreck of the fallen temples of idolatry.

Nov. 4th.—We passed a morning of great pleasure in the garden, and partook of a breakfast, brought us from the town, in a comfortable apartment of an unfurnished building at the bottom of it.

During the remainder of the day, we profited by our detention here, to see somewhat more of the town than we could have done by a mere passage through it. This task, however, occupied more of our time than was agreeable to me; and at last we returned from our ramble, without being much gratified with the pictures of ruin, desolation, poverty, and seeming discontent that met us at every step.

The town of Kauzeroon is thought by its present inhabitants to have been once so large as to have extended for several fursucks in length; but of this they offer no satisfactory proofs. It may however have been once nearly double its present size,

as vestiges of ruined buildings are seen on each side, beyond its present limits.

Its situation is in a valley of considerable length from north to south, but not more than five miles in general breadth from east to west. The town lies almost at the foot of the eastern boundary, which is a range of lime-stone mountains, broken into cliffs above, and smaller heaps below; and thus differing from its opposite one, the western range, which is more lofty, of an exceedingly steep slope, and mostly unbroken. The greatest length of the town, from north to south, is about a mile, and its breadth from east to west, somewhat less. Even this space, however, contains more ruined and deserted dwellings than inhabited ones; and these last are generally much inferior to what the destroyed ones once were. There are some vestiges of a wall with round towers in some places, but it is not easy to determine whether they are portions of an enclosure to the whole, or parts only of some fort within the town.

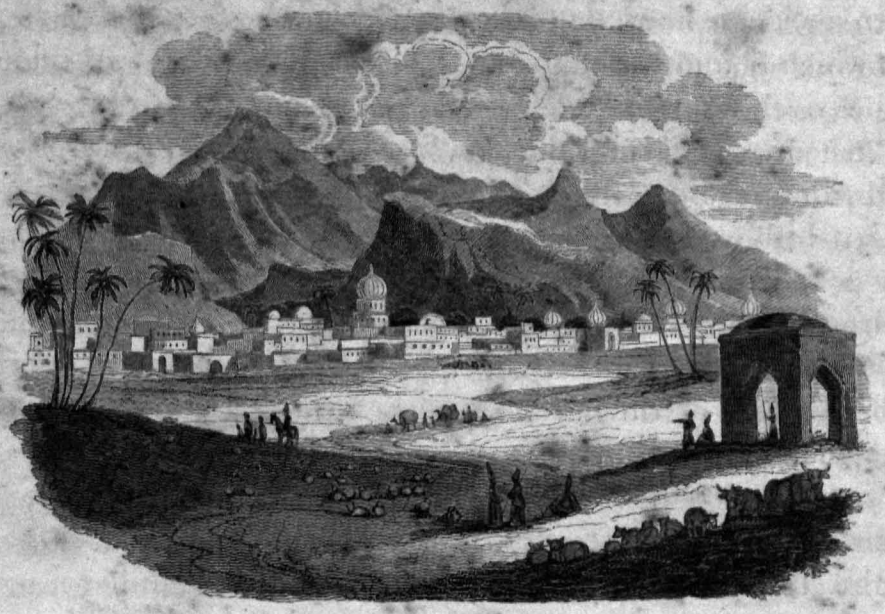
The residence of the governor, Kazim Khan, is the best and only conspicuous edifice among the whole; and this has little remarkable except the two square towers, called baudgheers, like those at Shiraz, which serve as wind-sails to convey air to the lower part of the house.

There are, besides, five mosques, five caravanseras, seven tombs of different holy men, mostly with small domes over them, and two small baths. The houses are built of unhewn stone, rudely placed in mortar, and the exterior plastered over with lime, which is abundant here. Some of the older buildings, were, however, of unburnt bricks; and there are among the ruins a number of sheds, simply matted over, and used as halts for passengers to smoke their nargeels, and refresh themselves on the way.

The cultivated land about the town appears insufficient to support even the few inhabitants here: horses, camels, sheep, and goats, find however, a scanty pasture on the plain; and a few

date trees are the only productions of food for man. Water is said to be, in general, scarce here, though there are three or four separate springs which supply the town. That of which we drank was pure and wholesome, and more agreeable to the taste than the water of Shiraz.

The population of Kauzeroon is estimated at about six hundred Moslem families, all Sheeahs, and forty Jewish ones, who are still more poor and wretched than the rest. It is difficult indeed to describe how this race is despised, oppressed, and insulted, throughout all Persia; their touch being thought so unclean, as to render complete purification necessary on the part of the defiled. The few Jews here live as pedlars, and go in little parties on foot, carrying their loads of Indian spices on their backs, between Bushire and Shiraz. The principal occupation of the more wealthy Moslems is the purchase and sale of horses for the Indian market, and raising a cross-breed between the Turcoman and Arab race, which are called, from the name of the place, Kauzerooni, and are celebrated for their excellence as journeying, or road horses, but are inferior to the Arab in beauty, and to the Turcoman in strength. The lower orders of the people live by their humble labours; but among them there is no manufacture, except a particular kind of shoes made of plaited cotton, almost in the same way as ladies' straw-bonnets are made in Europe, and admirably adapted for strength and comfort to the wearer. These are made also in other parts of Persia, but are nowhere so good as here.



CHAPTER XX.

VISIT TO THE RUINS OF SHAPOOR, AND JOURNEY FROM THENCE TO BUSHIRE.

Nov. 6th.—We quitted Kauzeroon about an hour before day-light, and going nearly north-west across a plain, with thorny bushes on it, came soon after sun-rise to the village of Dereez; which, like the town we had quitted, presented more ruined dwellings than inhabited ones.

After a short stay here to procure a guide, we set out for Shapoor, going in a northern direction into a lower plain, covered with fertile soil, and abundantly watered, but being now mostly spread over with thorny trees and wild verdure. We saw here some groups of shepherd families living in the bushes, for their dwellings scarcely deserved the names of tents, and they were

altogether among the poorest and most destitute of all the pastoral tribes that I had ever seen.

In about an hour we came close under the foot of the eastern hills which bound the plain, and passed on our left two branches of the river Sasoon, which were called respectively Reza-abad, and Khoda-abad, lying close to each other, and afterwards winding in different directions through the plain. Above us, on the eastern hill, were the ruins of a castle, called Khallah Dokhter, very poorly built, of unhewn stone and mortar, and from its form apparently a recent Mohammedan work; but such portions of arches as remained in the lower part, though built, like the rest of the edifice, of these rude stones, were rather of the semicircular than pointed kind, though not strictly either. Below this castle was an extensive space, stretching westward from the foot of the hills, spread over with heaps of ruins, among which no one perfect edifice remained. These were all built of unhewn stones, and were humble private dwellings, to which no fixed date could be assigned.

After going over these heaps, we came to a bend of the river Sasoon, which flowed full and rapidly from the eastward in a deep bed, so thickly bordered with wild shrubs, trees, and tall rushes, of twenty feet high, that though we heard the loud noise of the current, we could not through these obstacles distinguish its stream.

A few paces afterwards, we made a short turn round to the eastward, and came into a pass of about a furlong wide, called Teng-e-Chikoon. The highest part of the perpendicular cliffs on each side was nearly three hundred feet, and the southern one was directly at the back of the castle we had seen, which was no doubt constructed expressly to guard this pass. This led into a small round valley to the eastward of it, through which the river Sasoon flowed down, between banks covered with rushes.

On going through this pass, on the southern side of the stream, we came first to a large tablet in the cliff, the sculpture

of which was much injured by the decomposition of the rock. As far as we could trace it, it represented two chiefs on horseback, meeting each other, the right-hand one having his horse's feet placed on a dead body extended horizontally beneath, and before him a figure on foot, apparently in an attitude of supplication. These figures were about the size of life, in tolerably full relief, and appeared to have been finely executed, but were considerably injured.

A few paces beyond this, still on the same side of the stream, and in the southern cliff, but much higher up from the common level of the pass, we came to a larger tablet, filled with a greater number of figures, and divided into separate compartments.

In the central compartment a chief was seen on horseback, having bushy hair and flying ribands from behind, and an egg-like globe, standing with its smaller end on a Norman crown, as seen on the Sassanian medals. His own dress was flowing in multiplied folds; but the caparison of his horse was simple, the bridle of the kind used in the present day, and a breast-piece formed of plates of metal. By his right side was a quiver for arrows, though no other weapon was visible. Beneath the feet of his horse, a figure was seen extended horizontally, as if dead: another was in the act of supplication by kneeling, and extending his clasped hands before him; and a third he held in his right hand, as if to present him to the supplicator. These were all three in the dresses of Roman soldiers,—a short tunic or shirt, extending only to the knees, a mantle clasped over the right shoulder, and a straight sword hanging in a belt on the left side. Neither beards nor mustachios were worn by either, and only a small portion of short curly hair was seen beneath a smooth cap, that fitted close to the skull, and was filleted round by a thick ring, as the Bedouin Arabs fasten their keffeahs in the Desert. This was a deviation from Roman costume, as well as the plain rings or anklets which were seen on their feet. Behind the supplicating figure, were two soldiers standing, the first presenting the supplicator, and the second

extending his clasped hands to implore for him also. The dresses of these were somewhat different; for, though they had each the short tunic, the straight sword, and a mantle clasped before, instead of on, the shoulder, they had high helmets bending forward at the top, of the oldest Grecian form; the style of countenance was also different from the three others described, and they had mustachios, but no beards. Above the head of the chief's horse, and hovering at the same time over the supplicator, was seen a winged genius, presenting something, with two broad flying ribands extending from each end; and, between the head of the horse and the supplicator, was an inscription, written sideways, in Sassanian characters.

In the upper left compartment are six men on horseback, having close, straight, and high caps, not unlike that of the Delhi horsemen of Turkey, but somewhat lower, and rounded instead of flat at the top. These have short straight hair, short close beards, neatly trimmed, smooth at their edge on the cheek, in the manner of the Turks, and all hold up their right arms, and extend their fore-finger upwards.

In the compartment below this, are six other horsemen, in exactly the same dress and the same attitude; but these have the bushy hair of their chief, and were, perhaps, more distinguished guards, as there is only this difference between them and the others.

In the first upper compartment on the right are three men on foot, each holding a standard. Their dresses are simply a short shirt, girded round the waist, and they have no arms whatever. The first has bushy hair, a long sharp beard, and a high pointed bonnet; the second has short curly hair, with a very small bush behind, and no beard, nor any covering on his head; the third, who holds his standard with both hands, and is standing at ease, has long curly hair, and a high bonnet, which falls behind at the point, like the cap of liberty. These two have anklets also.

In the next compartment to this, are three men on foot, with

short dresses, and long straight swords: these have mustachios only; their heads are high and narrow at the top, and their hair is cut, trimmed, and plaited in the form of a Welsh wig. What they hold in their right hands is not distinctly seen; and two of them seem to have scrolls of paper in their left. These wear loose trowsers beneath their shirts, and no neckcloths. They follow each other closely, standing in a firm attitude, and the style of their heads and countenances is quite peculiar. The next compartment appears never to have been sculptured at all.

The first lower compartment on the right contains three men on foot, with short shirts, trowsers, and sandals, without beards or mustachios, and helmets fitting close to the brow and skull, and falling broad over the neck and shoulders. The first of these holds something in his right hand, in the act of presenting it, but it is not distinct: the other two have short spears in theirs, and each has a long straight sword, with a most disproportionately long handle.

The next compartment, following still to the right, contains three men on foot, with short shirts, girded around the waist by cords, neatly knotted before, in a peculiar way, and loose flowing trowsers. These have mustachios only, short hair, with a small bush of curls behind, and are without any covering for the head. The first holds in his right hand a ring, with his arm extended in a right angle with his body; the second rests his left hand on his waist; and the third seems to hold a scroll in his extended right hand.

The last compartment contains a repetition of the last three figures, whose short shirts are girded with cords in the same way as the former, but are curved upward at the bottom, while the others are straight, and hemmed or bordered. Their trowsers are the same; and, like the former figures, these are unarmed. The first holds up, between both his hands, something in the shape of a brick or hewn stone; the second bears what is more like a hand-saw, of the shape still used in Persia, than any thing with which I

could compare it; and the last has a circular vessel, like a very large globular bottle, with a straight neck. These two last compartments may possibly be meant to represent unarmed artificers, and relate to the founding and building of the city, as there are here stones or bricks, water, and tools.

The figures in these sculptures are all as large as life, and in little less than half-relief. The horses are very fine; all the figures are well drawn, in good proportions, and the difference of feature, style of countenance and costume, is very striking.

From hence we went across the stream, which was narrow, rapid, and deep enough to take us up beyond the middle, with no path for our horses; the water was sweet, and beautifully transparent. After long exertion we made a path through the thick rushes, and came up to a large tablet, in which were sculptured two colossal figures on horseback, facing each other: the one on the left had simply a high bush of curled hair, coming up through the centre of a plain crown, and held in his right hand a ring, which he seemed to offer to the other. The one on the right, which appeared in other respects to be the principal figure, was distinguished by the elevated globe rising from the centre of a radiated diadem, and in his right hand he held a flying riband, with something in the middle like the emblem of the winged genius, on the other side; and this he appeared also to present to the other horseman. The dresses and general style of the whole were like that of the chief on the other side; but the figures here are nearly double the size of life, and in proportionately full relief. Behind the principal hero is an inscription rudely cut.

Beneath this rock ran a channel for water, probably of more recent date; as the stream has there worn away the bottom of the sculpture. Some Mohammedan visitor had taken the pains to inscribe his name on the hard rock between the heads of the horses, in a way that must have cost him nearly a day to perform; but there was no date to it. The tradition of the people here is that

both the town and castle were destroyed in the first ages of Mohammedism, when the zeal against infidels was at its highest.

A few yards east of this, and higher up in the cliff, is a large tablet, divided into five compartments. In the central one above, and fronting the spectator, sits the principal personage, whose most remarkable distinction is the enormous bushes of hair on each side of his head, and on the top. The style of it is exactly in the fashion used to this day by the Samauli negroes, on the coast of Adel, near the entrance of the Red Sea. With his right hand he leans on a thick staff or spear, and his left is placed on the hilt of a straight sword, on which he also rests, holding it perpendicularly before him. The seat of this chief is not visible; but he uses the European posture, like the old sitting figures at Thebes and Persepolis.

In the left upper compartment are ten or twelve figures in different costumes, mostly like those on the other side, and, as far as I could distinguish, some of them seemed to be presenting other persons to the chief.

In the upper right compartment were about the same number of figures, in the same variety of dresses; but the design was more distinct, as here guards are evidently bringing in prisoners, some of whom are bound, others have their arms folded in an attitude of defiance, and others again are preparing to resist the force used to push them on, though they are unarmed.

In the left-hand lower compartment are an equal number of persons, mostly in the same dresses, with bushy hair and long swords, on which they are leaning with folded arms. At the head of them, a groom with a close head-dress of a different kind from any of the others, leads a small horse, which has a mattara, or leathern water-bottle, hanging by its side, as now used in Persia, and ready for the journey.

In the right-hand lower compartment is, first, an executioner presenting in each hand a dissevered head to the chief above. Behind him stands a little boy holding fast by his short garment.

Next follow prisoners bound, executioners with large axes of a peculiar shape, others bringing vases, and a little boy riding on an elephant, of excellent shape, but disproportionately small size.

About a hundred yards north-west of this, in the same cliff, and to be got at by going along the channel for water at the foot of the rock, is a large tablet, excavated in a concave form, and divided into seven compartments.

In the first division, beginning on the upper corner on the left, are about fifteen horsemen, with dresses and helmets as in the first compartment on the other side, each extending their right arms, and holding out their fore-fingers.

Opposite to this, on the right, comes, first, one who holds a ring, and is followed by chiefs and men of distinction, with short loose shirts and trowsers, short hair, mustachios, and bare heads. The first of this train holds a sceptre or mace, and has a wide scarf flowing from behind him; the second holds a cup; the next, a sword; the two next are indistinct; the one following has the egg-like emblem of the king, without his crown, held horizontally or lengthwise on his hand; the last has also a cup;—and all these are on foot. In the second compartment, on the left, the same design is almost exactly repeated,—the parties, however, are here all on horseback.

Opposite to this, on the right, are figures with the same dresses as those above, except that they have close caps on their heads, while the curly heads of the others are bare. The first of these figures is indistinct; the three next, by crossing their spears on each other's shoulders, carry on them a bale packed with two broad bands; the next carries on his back a bag full of something; the next holds a basket in his hand; and the last bears a long package on his head, while a lion walks beside him. This must evidently relate to the bringing in of spoils from some conquest.

In the centre of a long compartment below these, spreading the whole breadth of the tablet, is the chief, in the same dress as before. his horse treading on an extended body, a suppliant kneeling

before him, and he holding another with the same dress, in his right-hand. It is, in short, a perfect miniature of the large design described on the other side, except that here, instead of the attitudes of the two soldiers standing before, one of them, in a Sassanian dress, is presenting the chief with a ring in the usual way. Above is the winged genius, but I could perceive no inscription. Behind them are men leading a mule, to judge by the form of its tail; one bearing a large burthen on his head, and followed by another riding on an elephant; while above them, in the same compartment, are six bareheaded figures, shrouded in loose drapery, like veils or mantles hung before them. Behind the sovereign, in the left of the same compartment, are fifteen or sixteen horsemen, the first five of which only have the bushy hair of the chief; and as these were probably officers, it confirms the idea of this being a mark of distinction.

In the left-hand compartment below, the same design of horsemen is repeated,—the dresses being also the same, and the hair of all the figures short and uncurled.

In the right-hand lower compartment, the first figure seems, by his bare head and long robes, to be a priest: with one hand he leans on a staff, with the other he holds the egg-like emblem horizontally, as if to present it to his sovereign. Next follows one in the same dress and the same attitude, bearing a large vase. After this, one in a Roman dress, with the short shirt, and mantle clasped on the right shoulder, bears a standard in his right-hand, and with his left holds the reins of two horses, or, judging by their long ears, perhaps very handsome mules, who draw a chariot of three stages, with small but broad round wheels. Over the heads of the mules, another figure, also bareheaded, and in the same Roman dress, holds the egg horizontally in both hands, extended aloft to their full stretch. The two succeeding figures are much broken, but seem to be men bearing small heavy sacks, as if of treasure, on their backs.

The figures in the compartments to the right of, or fronting

the sovereign, who looks that way, are all on foot, except the driver of the elephant; and on the other side, or behind him, they are all on horseback.

A Mohammedan visitor had here also sculptured some Arabic inscriptions. The figures of this tablet are small, but in full relief, and of more finished execution than any of the other side.

About a quarter of a mile west-south-west of this, and among heaps of ruined dwellings, are the remains of a small square edifice, which was probably a temple of worship, as it consisted of only one apartment. It is not more than fifty feet square, and faced north-north-west and south-south-east. It is deep in the inside beyond the common level, and is filled with green bushes. The north-north-west wall is standing, and would seem to be the front; but there is a great peculiarity in it, as there is no door of entrance in this, nor the mark of one in any other of the sides. It has an arched window cut in a single stone, and this not placed in the centre of the building. On the top are the mutilated bodies of four sphynxes, which face inward to the edifice; so that it would seem from this, not to have been roofed originally. The stones are large, well hewn, extremely regular in shape, which is an oblong square, and joined with much greater skill than those in the platform of Persepolis, though, from being a soft lime-stone, the edges are more worn and rounded. The walls are about fifteen feet thick: the space between the inner and outer facing being filled up with unhewn stones, imbedded in lime; and this, as a piece of masonry, is quite equal to Roman works in general. This place is called Ser-a-goh, or the cow's head, from the supposed resemblance of the sphynxes to cows.

About a quarter of a mile to the south-west of this, going through heaps of ruined dwellings, all of a common kind, we

Sapor, or Shahpoor, the Sassanian monarch from whom this city was named, was conducted to Antioch by a Pageant Emperor of his election, who wore the purple of the Cæsars. —*History of Persia*, vol. i p. 98.

found a large square enclosure, called the Mesjid, or Mosque. The interior of the open space presented two portions of wall belonging to some small edifice of ancient date, the plan of which could not be traced. It had since been built on by more modern and inferior works. Close to this were the fragments of two pillars; the shafts of which were plain, formed of many small divisions, and about three feet in diameter, but no capitals were near. The exterior wall of this enclosure was of very inferior masonry; and from loop-holes in the top, and the appearance of a parapet there, it seemed to have been once used as a fort. Its dimensions were about a hundred feet square. There was near this the domed sepulchre of an Imam Zadé, whose name we did not learn; and among the tombs of those around it were some of five, and others of three hundred years old, the inscriptions of which were in Arabic. The dead were called by our companions 'Shapoori,' or natives of Shapoor. This, however, throws no light on the latest date to which the city itself existed, as the people inhabiting the plain are still called Shapoori, and are still interred near the tomb of this revered saint.*

We went from hence to gain the main road by striking across the cultivated land in a south-easterly direction, and our way was full of difficulties from the canals and bushes which impeded it. We were in some degree rewarded by being thrown on two small fire altars, which lay detached from every other portion of ruin, and bore exactly south-east, distant about a quarter of a mile from the supposed fort that we had left.

In the reign of Baharam, the son of Hoormuz, and grandson of Shahpoor, the city of this name appears to have been the capital of the empire. It was then that the celebrated Mani, the founder of the sect of the Manicheans, flourished; and in a book called Ertang, he endeavoured to reconcile the doctrines of the Metempsychosis, as taught by the Hindoos, and the two principles of Good and Evil of Zoroaster, with the tenets of the Christian religion. He returned to a cavern, after the fashion of impostors, and brought out from thence paintings and writings, which he pretended to have received from Heaven, and called himself the Paraclete, or Comforter, promised by Jesus to follow him; but he and all his disciples were at length put to death by Baharam, and the skin of the impostor was stripped off, and hung up at the gate of the city of Shapoor.—*History of Persia*, vol. i. p. 101.

These were of the same semi-pyramidal shape as the ones hewn in the rock near Persepolis, and about the same size, of three feet in height, and eighteen inches square. They were however fed with fire by a square passage, which went right through them, about midway up the height, and had a large square opening going from the centre of this to the top, for the ascent of the flame and smoke. They were both perfect, extremely portable; and as both together would form only a load for a strong mule, they might be brought away from the spot, and taken to Bushire with ease.*

Our remaining way to Derees was over the same fertile and well-watered soil, now choked with thorns and wild grass, on which cattle were feeding; and it was past sun-set when we reached the place, where we had the satisfaction of finding the messenger returned with our horses and baggage from Shiraz, and a comfortable shelter and meal provided for us.

Nov. 7th.—We left Derees two hours before daylight, on our way to Bushire. In an hour from hence we reached the Rah Dan, where an alarm was given at our approach. Soon after, we came to a long and narrow ascending pass, called T[illegible]-e-Turkoon, and, crossing this, came out into a fine plain. In an hour afterwards we reached its boundary, having on the right a long village called Kanaredj, and by the road-side a small caravansera. This led us to the brow of a lofty hill, which we descended by the Kotel Kanaredj. A Rah Dan was placed here also in a narrow passage, through mountains of lime-stone, slate, and veins of quartz. Some of the cliffs were very rugged, with almost perpendicular strata; and the roads were extremely bad. This Kotel, or Pass, took us an hour to clear. In half an hour from

* Near Baka, in Mazanduan, are some ancient places of fire worship of a singular kind. They are arched vaults built of stone, over a part of the soil from whence flame issues, as at Karkook; and a cane or pipe being fixed into the ground near the altar, a light burns up through it like the blue flame of spirits, but more pure; and to one of these temples even Hindoo pilgrims are said to resort from the distant banks of the Ganges.—*History of Persia*, vol. i. p. 261.

its foot we reached a small village of huts, called Khish, with some ruined houses: and in half an hour afterwards we alighted at the caravansera of Koneh Takhta, where we refreshed. This village contains only a few houses and huts, seated in the centre of a fine and extensive plain, to the north of which were large groves of trees and gardens.

From hence in two hours we came to another Rah Dan, which stood on the brow of the last range of hills we had to descend, by the steep pass called Kotel Dahlikee. When we reached the valley below this descent, we found a fine clear stream of water, running rapidly through a deep bed to the westward, but nearly as salt as the sea, so that our horses, thirsty as they were, would not touch it. This Kotel was extremely long, consisting of two or three stages, and was most fatiguing to our animals and ourselves. We came at length to a point, from which we could see nothing before us but one continued plain, and the blue line of the sea in the western horizon,—an object I had not witnessed for many months, and one which gave me as much delight to behold again, as was experienced by the Grecks under Xenophon, when they first saw the Euxine in their retreat from Asia to Greece. It was sun-set before we reached the bottom of this pass, when we turned around to the south to enter the large village of Dahlikee, where we found shelter in a new and good caravansera.

Nov. 8th.—We remained here only just to feed and repose our horses, and set out again before midnight. We went southerly along the foot of the hills, as on our right was swampy ground; and in our way we passed some fœtid pools, and were plagued with flies and musquitoes: the night was calm and warm.

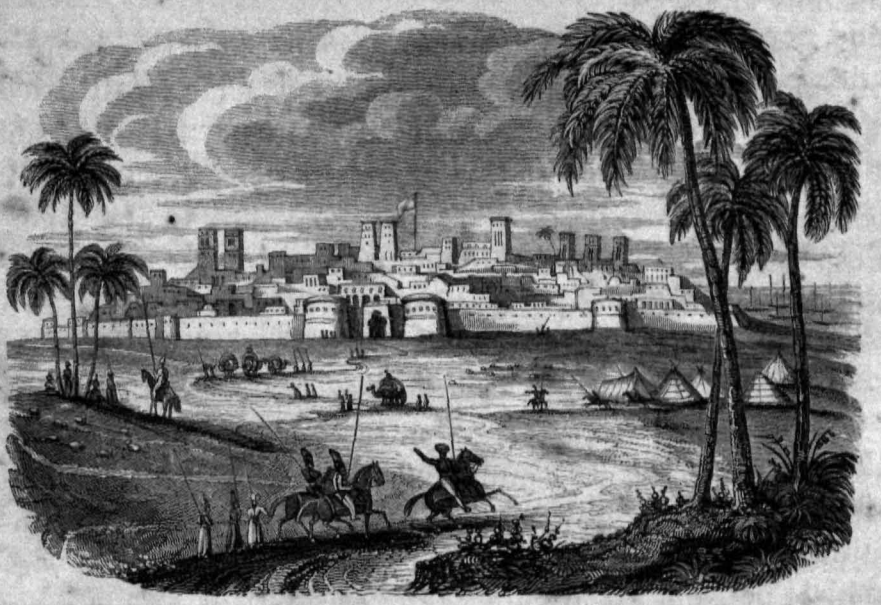
The road gradually turning off to the south-west, we came in about five hours to the large scattered village of Barazgoon, seated among palm-trees, and four fursucks from Dahlikee. From hence we were two hours going across the plain to a smaller village, called Seeroond; and in two hours more we reached the station of Ahmedee, which is accounted by the

people to be ten fursucks from Dahlikee, but which we thought to be only eight.

The water here was exceedingly good: but the people were poor, and nothing was to be had except some small dried fish like smelts, with a few dates, and bad bread. The inhabitants all now began to look more like Arabs than Persians. Having reposed here under a tree, we fed our horses, and soon after sun-set mounted again. We followed the great road across the plain, in a south-south-west direction, and after about two fursucks, passed a cluster of date-trees on our left, where a caravan was halting. This place had no houses, but was called Chartak.

In four hours from thence we reached the walls of Bushire; but as it was night, we could gain no admission within the gates, so that we had to wait outside until sun-rise. The sound and the smell of the sea were most gratifying to me: but we slept but little, from the going out of the women and asses in the morning, long before daylight, to fetch water for the day from the wells in the plain.

Nov. 9th.—We entered the gate of Bushire at sun-rise, rode to the British factory, and, leaving our horses, went straight to the bath; after which, we walked through the dirty and sandy town, to the Resident's house. There we found a cordial reception from a large party of my countrymen, who were staying with the Resident, and were furnished with a room, in which I passed a day of complete repose.



CHAPTER XXI.

STAY AT BUSHIRE—ITS TOWN, PORT, COMMERCE, AND INHABITANTS.

My stay at Bushire was in many respects agreeable, as, among the English gentlemen there, were some few whose society was such as would lessen the tedium of any place of exile, which this might really be considered. My Dervish, Ismael, insisted on remaining with me till I embarked for India, and repeated his assurance that if the remainder of my way to that country were not by sea, an element of which he had an indescribable horror, he would accompany me to the last stage of my journey: and when we parted, which we did with mutual regret, he spurned the idea of receiving a single piastre for his journey. He had accompanied me, he said, from pure esteem and affection, though the journey was so long

and perilous; and he should return as he came, without asking of me any thing beyond some token or memento: though even that he should never require to remind him of the frank and open-hearted Hadjee of Egypt. I indulged him in his wishes; parted from him on the day of our sailing, with no other gift or exchange than mutual pledges of friendship and esteem; and subsequently heard, by an Arabic letter from himself, received by me while in India, of his safe return and happy meeting with his friends at Bagdad, about the period of my reaching Calcutta.

The information I collected, from personal observations made during my stay at Bushire, will be found embodied in the following description:—

The town of Bushire, or, as the inhabitants call it, Abu Shahr, is seated in a low peninsula of sand, extending out from the general line of the coast, so as to form a bay on each side. Its geographical position has been pretty accurately determined to be in lat. 29° 0′ north, and in long. 50° 48′ east, as the result of many repeated observations. The appearance of the town, on approaching it either from the land or the sea, is rather agreeable than otherwise, and promises more than it is afterwards found to contain. From the edge of the coast, on which it stands, a level plain extends behind it for a distance of more than forty miles in a straight line, where it terminates at the foot of the first range of hills between Bushire and Shiraz, and where the mountainous part of Persia may be said to commence. These hills, being abrupt and lofty, form a fine background to the view in clear weather, and their distance giving them the blue haze which often leaves only their outlines distinct, they afford a picturesque relief to the monotony of the scenery near the coast. The town itself is seated so nearly on a level with the water's edge, that the tops of the houses are first perceived as if rising out of the sea. The general aspect presents a number of tall square towers, called baudgeers, or wind-catchers, and constructed with passages for air, during the ex-

* From the Arabic ابوشهر literally, the Father of Cities.

cessive heat of summer, to ventilate the houses over which they are erected. The dwellings are all flat-roofed and terraced, and mostly built of a light-coloured and friable madrapore, or coralline; and as there are no domes or minarets seen among them, and a total absence of trees, gardens, or verdure, the whole picture is of a dull, grey, sandy hue, particularly uninviting, and even fatiguing to the view under a sultry sky: indeed, except when the weather is sufficiently clear to unveil the mountains of the background, it possesses no relief; but the only contrast it offers is a change from the blue surface of a level sea to the yellow plains of a parched and sandy desert as level as itself.

On landing, the scene is not at all improved: the town is now found to stand partly on a slight eminence, which is greatest in its centre, and is not more than one hundred feet at its highest elevation from the sea. From thence it shelves gently down to the beach on either side, where the houses are literally built upon the sands. The whole number of dwellings does not amount to more than fifteen hundred, of which one-third, at least, are reed enclosures, scarcely deserving even the name of huts, as most of them are unroofed, and are inhabited by none but slaves and the very lowest order of the people. The houses are built chiefly of a friable stone composed of sand and shells imbedded in clay; and the best of them are constructed of burnt bricks brought from Bussorah. The style of architecture is that which prevails in Arabia generally, with slight additions of the Persian kind. The buildings are large, square, flat-roofed, laid out in central courts and small apartments, badly lighted, and often as badly aired. Excepting the East India Company's factory, the residence of the Governor, and a few good dwellings of the merchants, particularly the Armenians, there is scarcely one comfortable, and certainly not one handsome edifice in the place. The streets are so many narrow alleys, without sufficient height of wall on either side to shelter the passenger from the sun, the only advantage that narrow streets possess; and they are totally with-

out order or regularity in their windings and direction. The mosques are all open buildings, without domes or minarets, and are inferior both in general appearance without, and in their neatness within, to those seen in the smallest villages of Arabia. Coffee-houses there are none that I remember to have seen, as this beverage is not much in use among the inhabitants. The only bath that exists here, is small, mean, filthy, and badly attended; and the bazaars are simply benches covered by a roof of matted rafters, of the most wretched appearance. There are one or two good caravanseras near the landing-place for boats, occupied by and belonging to Armenian merchants; but those belonging to the Mohammedans hardly deserve the name.

The town is open to the north-east, which fronts the inner harbour; to the south-west, which fronts the outer roads; and is enclosed only across the peninsula by a poor wall extending from sea to sea, and in which is the gate of exit and entrance to and from Persia. There is nothing in all this that can deserve the name of a fortification: and the only defence which it presents towards an enemy, is a few dismounted guns, without this gate, on the land side; a battery of six or eight nearly abreast of the factory, in the south-west quarter of the town; and half a dozen others, placed before the Custom-house, in the north-east quarter, and facing the inner harbour,—all of them of different calibre, and mounted on carriages of such a crazy kind, as would certainly fall to pieces on a second or third discharge. On the south-west side, which faces the outer roads, it is all a level sandy beach, which, from its being shoal water near it, is beat on by an almost constant surf, though not of such violence as to prevent the landing of boats in moderate weather. The north-east, which faces the inner harbour, has a wharf or two for landing goods on, and is altogether better sheltered; though, from the number of the sand banks, and the diversity of channels between this place and the shipping, it is not easily accessible even in boats, except to those in some degree

acquainted with the shoals; but it is always preferred as the safest and best landing-place.

The population of Bushire has been variously estimated, and has no doubt been at a very different standard at different periods. At present, the most favourable accounts do not make it more than ten thousand, and the true number is perhaps still less. The Ahl-el-Bushire, or the *race* of Bushire, as they are emphatically called, present a disagreeable mixture of the Arab and the Persian; in which, whatever is amiable in either character seems totally rejected, and whatever is vicious in both is retained and even cherished. These form the great body of the people; and their dress, their language, their manners, and their general appearance, —all bespeak their mongrel breed. The chief occupations of these are trade and commerce on a confined scale, fishing, pilotage, and the navigation of their own vessels of the port. In person, they are neither so meagre nor so swarthy as the real Arabs of the opposite coast; but they are equally ill-featured and dirty, and destitute of the high spirit, the feeling of honour, and the warm hospitality which distinguish these: they retain, however, all their meanness in bargains, and their disposition for robbery and plunder of property not attainable by better means. Their dress is equally a combination of the Arab and Persian garments, without being purely the costume of either. The shirt, trowsers, and zuboon, or outer garment, are Persian; but the turban and the abba, or cloak, are Arabic,—the one is formed of the blue checked cloth of Muscat, or the brown cloth of Shooster; and the other of the manufacture of Lahsa, Kateef, and Coete, on the opposite shore. The black sheepskin cap, the most peculiar feature of the Persian dress, is worn only by such as come down from the higher country and remain as sojourners here, and is in no instance used by a native of Bushire. The common language is Persian, but of so harsh and corrupt a kind, that the natives of Shiraz, who pride themselves on the purity of their tongue, affect to treat it as almost

unintelligible; and short as is the distance, and constant as is the communication between these places, I scarcely ever remarked a greater difference than there is between their different pronunciations of the same words: the one is a model of the most harmonious utterance; the other is nearly as harsh as the most ill-spoken Arabic. This last language is understood by most of the natives of Bushire; but they have as little elegance in their way of pronouncing this, as they have in speaking their own tongue; and one must hear the Arabic of Bushire, to comprehend how harsh and disagreeable its sounds are capable of being made. This double corruption is the more striking, as they live close to, and in constant communication with Shiraz, where Persian is spoken in its greatest purity; and they both trade with and receive frequent visitors from Coete, or Graen, on the opposite coast, where the Arabic is spoken with all the softness and harmony of which it is susceptible, and in a way superior to that of any other part of Arabia in which I had heard it.

The merchants of Bushire are composed about equally of Persians and Armenians. The latter, however, are men of more extensive connexions with India; and as they possess more activity, intelligence, and integrity of dealing, so they are more wealthy; and this, with the countenance which they receive from the Company's Resident here, is sufficient to give them considerable influence in the place. There are no Jews of any note, as at Bussorah; nor Banians, as at Muscat;—the Armenians supplying the place of both, as brokers and agents for others, as well as traders on their own account; and as these both write and speak English and Hindostanee, they are more generally useful to maritime men, and mercantile visitors from India.

The Governor of the town, Sheik Abd-el-Russool, is of a family long resident here, and he exercises all the responsible functions of the government, though he has an uncle, Sheik Mohammed, in whose presence he himself stands, and to whom he always yields the greatest honours. Both of these, when they walk out, are

attended by a guard of about twenty armed men, as well as servants; yet these add nothing even to the apparent dignity of the persons whom they attend. It is the daily practice of both these chiefs to come down before noon, and after El-Assr, to the seaside, fronting the harbour, where they sit on the bench of a miserable matted hut, erected for that purpose, and derive great satisfaction from the salutes of passengers, and from observing what may be doing among the shipping. When Sheik Mohammed, who is the eldest, but not the actual Governor, happens to be there, his nephew first stands at a respectful distance, with his hands folded beneath his cloak. He is then desired to seat himself, which he does frequently on the ground, and in the humblest and most obscure place that he can find behind his uncle. After some time he is desired to advance forward, and he ventures to change his first seat for a better one; and this farce continues, until, after repeated invitations, he becomes seated in front of his superior, while all the rest stand; but he never shares the same bench with his relative.

The forces of this government vary in number and description at every different period of the year, as they are mostly composed of persons whose services are demanded at the exigency of the moment; so that there are sometimes not an hundred, and at others more than a thousand in pay at once. These, like the soldiers of all the Turkish, Persian, and Arabian countries, are mostly horsemen, paid by the chiefs whom they serve, without discipline or uniformity of dress, and furnishing even their own arms and accoutrements at their own caprice. The Governor is nominally subject to the Prince of Shiraz, and through him to the King of Persia. to whom he pays a yearly tribute; but this is often withheld on slight pretexts, and nothing but the power to be able to maintain an independence is wanted, since the disposition manifests itself on almost every occasion.

Notwithstanding the meanness of Bushire as a town, it is the best, excepting Bussorah only, that now exists in the whole of the

Persian Gulf. It possesses considerable importance, when considered as the only port of such an extensive empire as Persia; for it is through this channel alone that all her supplies from India by sea are received. The former splendour of Ormuz and Gombroon, or Bunder Abassi, at the entrance of the Gulf, is known to have been derived from their commerce only, when they stood in the same relation to Persia generally, as depôts for maritime commerce, that Bushire does at present. The history and the fate of these settlements are known to every one. They were once splendid cities: they are now no more. Whether this be a fate that awaits Bushire, or not, would be difficult to prophesy; but as it has never attained for its merchants the wealth which the liberality and munificence of Abbas the Great allowed his subjects to acquire; and as its trade, though sufficiently extensive, is crippled by the overwhelming pressure of a long train of exactions continued from the sea to the inland capital; it is likely that it will never arrive at the pitch of opulence to which Ormuz and Gombroon attained, nor, for a long period at least, sink to the utter desolation of these proud marts, since no change can be so much for the worse as to effect such a total abandonment.

The trade at present existing between Persia and India admits of the average arrival of twelve or fifteen merchant-ships yearly from Bengal and Bombay. Not more than half their cargo is however landed here; and often not more than a third, as a portion of it is usually taken out at Muscat, and a still larger portion goes on to Bussorah. From Bengal are brought rice, sugar, indigo, pepper, and spices, with a small assortment of muslin and piece-goods. From Bombay are imported the annual supplies of iron, steel, tin, lead, and woollen cloths, sent by the East India Company, and continued to be sold yearly at a loss, in consequence of their being obliged by their charter to export a certain quantity of these articles annually from Great Britain, and to force a market for them where they can. The productions of China, in sugar, sugar-candy, preserved ginger, camphor, and

porcelain, are also brought from Bombay, as well as cassia, cloves, nutmegs, and other productions of the Eastern Isles. These are all taken up into Persia by caravans of mules, which pass regularly between this place and Shiraz. The rice and sugar of Bengal often find their way to Bahrein, and other islands of the Persian Gulf, as well as the coffee of Mokha, which is shipped at Muscat, in order to fill up the vacant room left by goods being discharged there. The rice of Persia is preferable to that of India, and coffee is not a very general beverage in this country, though it is all over Arabia, which sufficiently accounts for the diversion of these two articles into other channels

The returns for these imports are made in Persian horses, supplied by contract for the East India Company's cavalry; in old copper, collected in the interior, in domestic utensils, &c. and sent to Bengal; in assafœtida, an article much used in the cookery of India; in dried fruits, particularly almonds, small raisins, quinces, and apricots; in carpets for Mohammedan prayers, for mosques, and for private apartments, the manufacture of the country; in otto of roses and rose-water, in small quantities; and in Shiraz wine. All these articles do not amount, however, to one-third the value of the imports; so that the residue is made up in money. This consists of Spanish and German dollars, a few Venetian sequins, and other gold coins, but mostly of Persian rupees. The freight of all articles from India to Bushire is nearly the same as from India to Bussorah, and the bulky articles of return are also taken back at the same rate. In treasure, however, there is this difference, that while from Bussorah it pays three per cent. to Bombay, and four per cent. to Bengal, the last risk being nearly double that of the first; from Bushire they are both paid alike, at only three per cent. equally for Bombay and Calcutta; and the only explanation that one can get for this inconsistency of making no advance of freight, when the distance, the time, and the risk, are all doubled, is, that it is an old custom, and cannot be broken through.

The duties on merchandize exported and imported are regulated by the package and quality of the goods, and not fixed by a per centage on their value. Rice and sugar pay each half a rupee per bag; sugar-candy, a rupee per tub; indigo, fifteen rupees per chest; pepper, cassia, cloves, cardamoms, and other spices, six rupees per bag; camphor, two rupees per box; China ware, four rupees per chest; Mokha coffee, two rupees per bale; and sweetmeats, three rupees per package. The duties on Indian piece-goods vary considerably, according to their quality, but average at about ten per cent.; and those on the European articles, of cloth, iron, steel, lead, and tin, at not more than five per cent. on their invoice price. The duties on the exports or returns are still less: horses and money, which form the greatest portion of these returns, are both exempt from duties of any kind, as well as old copper, and Persian carpets; dried fruits pay only one rupee per package; assafœtida, a rupee per jar; rose water, two rupees per case of several bottles; and Shiraz wine is free.

It is a common practice for the Governor to appropriate to himself such of the merchandize passing through his port as may be convenient to himself, either for his own immediate use, or to speculate in as an article of commerce; but, instead of paying for such goods when thus taken, he suffers the amount to stand over as a balance in favour of the owners of them, to be liquidated by remitting them the duties on further imports, till the amount is made up. This is naturally an obnoxious mode of dealing, in the estimation of the merchants; but they have no remedy. During our stay here, the Governor was engaged in a war with some villages on the plain behind the town, and was much in want of lead for musket-balls. This want, instead of increasing the demand for, and consequently the price of the article, as it would naturally have done under any well-regulated government, had actually the effect of stopping the supplies of this metal, which were laid in expressly for the place. A vessel lying in the roads had on board several hundred slabs of lead, shipped at

Bombay for Bushire; but the owner of them, fearing that if they were landed, the Governor's agents would seize them for their master's use, on the usual condition of the long payments described, requested the captain not to land them here, and paid additional freight for carrying them on to Bussorah, where even an uncertain market was better than the ruinous one to which they would come here, by falling into the Governor's hands. Under such a system, light as the duties on merchandize may be, commerce can hardly be expected to flourish; and the fact is, that there is a disinclination to speculate beyond the actual consumption, and a fear and restraint in all commercial undertakings, which is destructive of the activity that commerce requires to make it advance, or even to keep it alive.

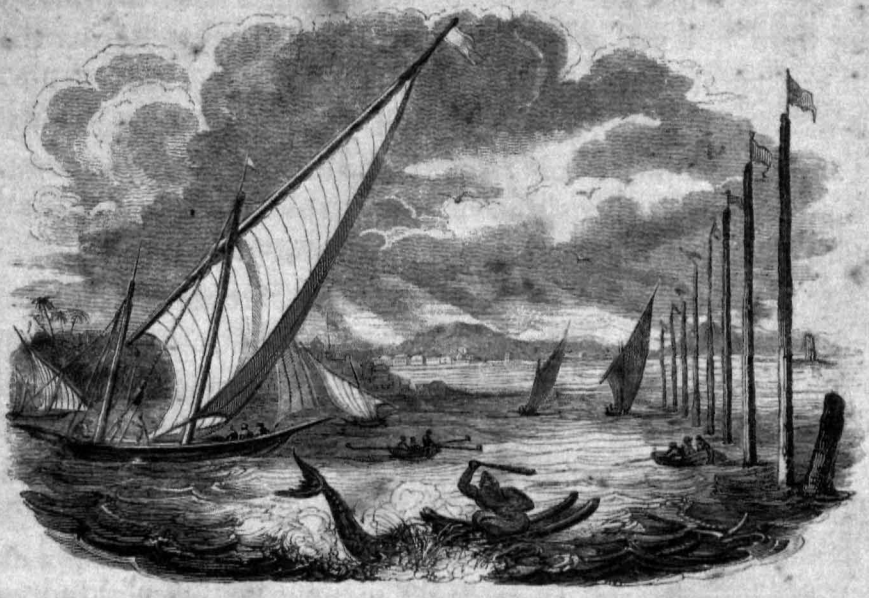
As a sea-port, Bushire has no one good quality to recommend it. The anchorage of the outer roads in four fathoms water, is at least six miles from the shore, and is so exposed to the full fury of the north-west and south-east gales, which prevail here, that whenever it blows a single-reef breeze, no boats can communicate between the town and the vessel, and no supplies or information be received; while the ship herself rides as heavily as in the open ocean, without the least shelter; and as the holding-ground is good, it is not an uncommon event for vessels to part their cables and be driven to sea. The inner harbour is only accessible to ships drawing less than eighteen feet water; and as the entrance is over a bar across a channel of less than half a mile wide, such vessels can only go in with a favourable wind, and at the top of high water in spring tides. The depth within increases to three and a quarter and three and a half fathoms, and the holding-ground is good: but here, though the sea is broken off by the projection of the Rohilla Sands a ship is exposed to all the force of a north-west wind, and the distance is still three or four miles from the shore, which renders communication by boats difficult, and often impossible, when it blows strong. It appears by some of the older descriptions of Bushire, that the Company's cruisers, and other small

vessels, were formerly able to anchor close up to the north-east side of the town, within the inner harbour; but the channel leading up to this will now scarcely admit of small dows, except they are lightened. There are anchorage-births for native boats behind some small islands, to the north-east extremity of the inner harbour, or in the deepest part of the bight which it forms. This was at present occupied by the fleet of a certain Arab, named Rahmah-ben-Jaber, who has been for more than twenty years the terror of the Gulf, and who is the most successful and the most generally tolerated pirate, perhaps, that ever infested any sea. This man is by birth a native of Graine, on the opposite coast, and nephew of the present governor, or Sheikh, of that place. His fellow-citizens have all the honesty, however, to declare him an outlaw, from abhorrence of his profession; and he has found that shelter and protection at Bushire, which his own townsmen very properly denied to him. With five or six vessels, most of which are very large, and manned by crews of from two to three hundred each, he sallies forth, and captures whatever he may think himself strong enough to carry off as his prize;—the vessels of Graine, of Bussorah, of Bahrein, of Muscat, and even of Bushire, where he resides, falling equally a prey to him. His followers, to the number perhaps of two thousand, are maintained by the plunder of his prizes; and as these are most of them his own bought African slaves, and the remainder equally subject to his authority, he is sometimes as prodigal of their lives in a fit of anger, as he is of those of his enemies, whom he is not content to slay in battle only, but basely murders in cold blood, after they have submitted. An instance is related of his having recently put a great number of his own crew, who used mutinous expressions, into a tank on board, in which they usually kept their water, and this being shut close at the top, the poor wretches were all suffocated, and afterwards thrown overboard. This butcher chief, like the celebrated Djezzar of Acre, affects great simplicity of dress, manners, and living; and whenever he goes out, he is not to be distinguished

by a stranger from the crowd of his attendants. He carries this simplicity to a degree of filthiness which is disgusting, as his usual dress is a shirt, which is never taken off to be washed from the time it is first put on till it is worn out, no drawers or coverings for the legs of any kind, and a large black goat's-hair cloak, wrapped over all, with a greasy and dirty handkerchief, called the keffeea, thrown loosely over his head.

Infamous as was this man's life and character, he was not only cherished and courted by the people of Bushire, who dread him, but was courteously received and respectfully entertained whenever he visited the British factory! On one occasion, at which I was present, he was sent for to give some medical gentlemen of the navy and the Company's cruisers an opportunity of inspecting his arm, which had been severely wounded. The wound was at first made by grape-shot and splinters, and the arm was one mass of blood about the part for several days, while the man himself was with difficulty known to be alive. He gradually recovered, however, without surgical aid, and the bone of the arm between the elbow and the shoulder being completely shivered to pieces, the fragments progressively worked out, and the singular appearance was left of the fore arm and elbow connected to the shoulder by flesh, skin, and tendons, without the least vestige of bone. This man, when invited to the factory for the purpose of making this exhibition of his arm, was himself admitted to sit at the table and take some tea, as it was breakfast-time, and some of his followers took chairs around him. They were all as disgustingly filthy in appearance as could well be imagined; and some of them did not scruple to hunt for vermin on their skin, of which there was an abundance, and throw them beside them on the floor. Rahmah-ben-Jaber's figure presented a meagre trunk, with four lank members, all of them cut and hacked, and pierced with wounds of sabres, spears, and bullets, in every part, to the number perhaps of more than twenty different wounds. He had, besides, a face naturally ferocious and ugly, and now rendered still more so by several

scars there, and by the loss of one eye. When asked by one of the English gentlemen present, with a tone of encouragement and familiarity, whether he could not still dispatch an enemy with his boneless arm, he drew a crooked dagger, or yambeah, from the girdle round his shirt, and placing his left hand, which was sound, to support the elbow of the right, which was the one that was wounded, he grasped the dagger firmly with his clenched fist, and drew it backward and forward, twirling it at the same time, and saying, that he desired nothing better than to have the cutting of as many throats as he could effectually open with this lame hand! Instead of being shocked at the utterance of such a brutal wish, and such a savage triumph at still possessing the power to murder unoffending victims, I know not how to describe my feeling of shame and sorrow, when a loud burst of laughter, instead of execration, escaped from nearly the whole assembly, when I ventured to express my dissent from the general feeling of admiration for such a man.



CHAPTER XXII.

BUSSORAH—THE CHIEF PORT OF THE PERSIAN GULF.—ITS POPULATION, COMMERCE, AND RESOURCES.

Being desirous of rendering this volume as complete as possible, from materials collected by my own personal observation, I am induced to follow up this account of Bushire, by a still more enlarged and comprehensive description of Bussorah, the chief port in the Persian Gulf, drawn up, as stated below, after a considerable stay at the place itself, and that too, within a very few months after the termination of the journey and voyage described in this work. Shortly after my arrival at Bombay, I was appointed to the command of a large Indian ship, the Humayoon Shah; in which I returned to the Persian Gulf, and made a long stay at each of the great marts of trade included within its boundaries.

The opportunities which this afforded of acquiring much new information, as well as of correcting such as had been previously obtained, were not neglected: and I think I may safely say, that no existing account of the Gulf of Persia generally, and of its chief ports more especially, will be found to contain more copious or more accurate information than that which it is my good fortune to be able to lay before the reader of these pages. The hydrographical observations made in the second voyage, though important to the correct navigation of the Gulf, have been embodied in another work,* as being less interesting to the general reader, and such parts of the journal only retained in this, as possess the great literary interest of elucidating the early voyage of Nearchus, in the time of Alexander the Great, when this sea was for the first time visited by the navigators of antiquity. With this explanation, I proceed to the account of Bussorah, with its introductory paragraph, as explanatory of the circumstances under which it was composed.

After a residence at Bussorah of more than three months, during which time I made repeated excursions through the town, and had very frequent intercourse with all classes of the native inhabitants of the place, the following particulars were collected, and with the impressions to which these gave rise, were faithfully committed to writing on the spot.

The town of Bussorah† is seated near the western bank of the combined streams of the Euphrates and Tigris, about fifty miles below the point of their union at Kourna,‡ and seventy above the point of their discharge into the sea. These two rivers preserve their respective names of the Fraat and the Dijela, from their sources to their point of union; and the stream there formed, is called the Shat-el-Arab, or river of the Arabs, from this point to

* See Voyage from Muscat to Bushire, and from Bushire to Bussorah, in the Persian Gulf, published in 'The Oriental Herald' for October and November 1828.

† بصرة Bussra is the true orthography.

‡ Kourna, at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, is one of the three Apameas built by Seleucus, in honour of his first wife, Apamea.

the sea. The position of the British factory, which is nearly in the centre of the town, has been fixed by astronomical observations, to be in latitude 30°.29′.30″ north, and in longitude 47°.34′.15″. east.

The form of the town, as enclosed by its walls, is an irregular oblong square, its greatest length being in a direction of east-north-east and west-south-west, and its greatest breadth being from west-north-west to east-south-east, lying thus nearly at right angles with the stream of the Shat-el-Arab, which runs by the town from north-north-west to south-south-east. The portion of the wall which faces to the east-north-east, passes along the western bank of the river, within a few hundred yards of its edge, and may extend about a mile in length from south-south-east to north-north-west. The portion of the wall facing the south-south-east, goes nearly in a straight line from the river into the Desert, or from east-north-east to west-south-west for nearly three miles. The wall facing the north-north-west, and that facing the west-south-west, are almost confounded in one, by the irregularities in the line of the first, and by the last being joined to it by a rounding or circuit on the north-west, which leaves the angle of their union ill-defined. The compass of the whole, however, may be estimated at from eight to nine miles.

The walls themselves are built of sun-dried bricks, and are of considerable thickness at the foundations, with loop-holes for musketry in a parapet wall at the top, continued all round, and occasional ports for cannon; but of these there are very few mounted. Some portions of the wall are bastioned by circular towers, and most of it is crowned with battlements; but the work, though forming an effectual defence against the Arabs of the Desert, is, to the eye of an European, destitute of the symmetry and strength required in a fortified barrier; and the wretched state of the whole at present, from the neglect of timely repair, makes it look rather like the ruined walls of some deserted city, than the enclosure of one still inhabited.

The walls of Bussorah have five gates, three of which face the south-south-east, and, beginning from that nearest to the river, are called Bab-el-Meejmooah, Bab-el-Seradjey, and Bab-el-Zobeir; the other two face the north-north-west, and are called Bab-el-Robat, which is near the Mekam, and Bab-el-Bagdad, which leads directly into the central and most peopled part of the city. These gates mostly take their names from that of places to and from which they lead, and are all of them of mean appearance in their original structure, and in a state of great ruin from neglect of repairs.*

For the irrigation of the grounds, for the supply of the city with water, and for the facility of transporting goods, there are three large canals that lead from the river by and through the town. The northern and southernmost ones enter just at these respective angles of the city walls, and go along in the direction of them, on the outside, and within a few yards of their foundations, extending all the way to the opposite angles of the town, and there uniting without or beyond the western wall, so as to form a complete ditch to the fortifications. From these canals, smaller channels carry off the water in different directions, to irrigate the soil through which they pass.

The central canal enters from the river about midway between these two, but rather nearer to the northernmost one. This goes up westerly, through the whole length of the town, and serves at once to supply the inhabitants with water for domestic purposes, to irrigate the whole of the fields and gardens within the walls, by channels leading off from it in various directions, and to admit of the transportation of goods in the large boats which pass from the river to the centre of the town, laden with all the various commodities that enter into the consumption of the people, or into the foreign trade of the merchants here. All these canals are filled by the flood, and left dry by the ebb tide twice in every

* There is a neat one now building, facing the south-west, between the Bagdad and Zobeir gates, and to be called Bab Bakna, from the name of the present Mutesellim.

twenty-four hours; the only exceptions being when strong north-west winds prevail about the neaps, so as to check the flow of the water, and make a continued ebb in the river for two tides following. As, however, even on ordinary occasions, there is seldom more than one flood that can fall at a convenient hour of the day, from the ebb lasting mostly eight hours, and the flood only four, there is often a considerable bustle and noise on the canal among the boats passing up and down, so much so as to give an impression to a stranger of a much more active commerce than really exists. The canal itself is much too narrow for the convenient passage of the vessels employed on it; and as none but the very smallest of these can move, except at the top of high water, they are often all in motion at once. Boats grounding in their passage lie until the next flood floats them, and laden vessels losing the springs, sometimes lie in the very centre of the channel until the ensuing spring, blocking up the passage entirely for smaller vessels, which might otherwise have water enough, but for which room is not left to pass.

For the conveyance of passengers on this canal, small canoes, called here bellem, are employed; and these having a clean mat in the bottom for the seat, and a light awning over head to shade it, are pushed along by the two boatmen who stand in the head and stern, and with long poles fitted for the purpose, give the canoe sufficient velocity to keep up with a well-manned four-oared boat. These are the smallest vessels seen, and these, from having only a draught of a few inches, can be used at any time of the tide, except at dead low water. From these, there are boats of all sizes, up to vessels of fifty tons, which are the largest that I remember to have seen on the canal. The canoes are often very long and narrow, and from the peculiar finish of their prows have a light and elegant form. The most usual way of impelling them along the stream is by the use of the bamboo poles; but they are sometimes rowed by short paddles, which are used by the rowers alternately from side to side, and then present the appearance so

graphically described in Arrian's report of the Voyage of Nearchus, when the fishermen whom they saw at Kophos, in boats similar to these described, were said to have their oars not fastened to their rowlocks, as in Greek vessels, but to hold them in the hand, so that they seemed to *dig* the water, rather than to row, and to toss it up as a labourer throws up earth with his spade.*

There are also circular boats made of basket-work, and covered with bitumen, which are from six to eight feet in diameter, of shallow draught, and capable of carrying six or eight persons. These are used both on the canal and on the river, and are paddled or spun along, for they make chiefly a circular motion, with sufficient ease. They are called here kufa, and seem to be of the same kind as those circular boats made of reeds, and in the form of a shield, which are noticed by Herodotus as in use on the river of Babylon upwards of 2000 years ago.†

There is still another species of boat used principally for heavy burthens; this is called a donak, but, from the singularity of its form, it is not easy to be described. It rises at each end with so much sheer as to be nearly like a crescent, but falls out above, where the sheer is deepest, or near the centre of the boat's length, as if the timbers had been all twisted from their original place. The bottom is quite flat, and the stem and stern rise to a considerable height from the water, falling at the same time inward, like the horns of the moon; and the whole is covered with a thick coat of bitumen.

The rest of the vessels employed on the canal are of the common form used throughout the Persian and Arabian Gulfs; and, notwithstanding their inelegant forms above water, have often beautiful bottoms, and are strongly built.

The whole of these canals, with all their dependent channels, are merely dug out of the soil, without being lined with artificial embankments or masonry in any part throughout their entire

* Voyage of Nearchus, (§. 28.) Dr. Vincent's translation, vol. i. pp. 41, 42. 4to.

† Herodotus, Clio, cxciv.

length; and the few brick-built bridges that are thrown across them in different parts of the town, are of the meanest kind.

On coming from the river, and going up to Bussorah by the central canal, the entrance is made through a narrow mouth, with a circular fort on the left, and a mosque with a small minaret on the right. Several houses follow on each side, those on the left being chiefly timber-yards, and storehouses of articles most in demand for the use of boats and shipping; and that on the right, called El Mekam, having a coasting custom-house, with a coffee-house, mosque, and the dwellings of those whose occupations have drawn them to reside around this spot.

The portion of buildings on the right of the canal at its entrance is called 'El Mekam,' literally the place of residence for the governor's lieutenant,* and was formerly the station of such an officer from the Pasha of Bussorah, who had his own palace further up in the city. The portion of buildings on the left side of the canal, and opposite to El Mekam at the entrance, is called 'Minawi.'

In the time of Hossein Pasha, the son of Ali Pasha, both of them mentioned in the Travels of Pietro della Valle and Tavernier, the city of Bussorah was distant nearly two miles from the banks of the river, and Minawi was then a distinct village, serving as the port or landing place. It was this Hossein who extended the walls of the former town down to the river, and enclosed the village of Minawi within it, by which means all the intermediate fields and gardens which had never before, nor have even since been built upon, became incorporated with the rest The newly enclosed village was then fortified by a strong wall continued all around it, and formed nearly an eighth of the whole

* مقام 1st. A place of residence, a dwelling, a mansion. 2d State, dignity, condition. Thus, قايم مقام from قايم standing in, fixed in, &c. and مقام a place, forms the Arabic, Turkish, and Persian title of Kaim. Mekam, meaning a lieutenant, vicegerent; and as such is applied to the deputy governor of Constantinople, or to any other *locum tenens*. — *Richardson's Arabic Dictionary*, p 1809.

space enclosed within the walls of Bussorah, even when thus extended.

Dr. Vincent, in endeavouring to prove the etymology of Talmena, one of the stations of Nearchus, as given by Arrian, to be from a ruined fort, takes the *Tal* from the Hebrew for a ruined heap, and Mina from the Arabic for a fort, which he supports by saying that Mina, Minau, at the Anamis, and Minavi at Basra, are all expressive of a fort.* But this is not true, as Mina in Arabic signifies a port, or anchoring-place for ships,† as well as a landing-place for boats, and answers exactly to the Italian term Scala, which is used throughout the Mediterranean for similar places. On the coast of Syria, the town of Tripoli is about a mile or two from the sea, and the landing and anchoring place before it is called El Mina. This is the case also at Latikea, just above it; and even in Egypt, where towns are at a little distance from the river, as Cairo, Manfalout, and Assiout, the places at which the boats land are called El Mina, or the port of the town, to which it serves as such. In no one instance do I remember the application of this, or even a term like it in sound, to a fort, in any of the numerous dialects of Arabia which I have heard spoken.

After passing the Mekam on the right, and Minawi on the left, the rest of the way up to the city by the canal is bordered by a public road on the southern side, and date-trees and gardens on the northern, for about half a mile or more; and though the canal, from being narrow and low, is exceedingly hot in the day-time, the sun beating on it with full power, and the high banks keeping off all wind, yet, at the cool time of morning or evening, when the water is high flood, the passage up and down is agreeable.

At the distance of about a mile from the entrance of the canal, the houses of Bussorah are first met with, and these are most thickly placed on the southern side. Somewhat less than

* Commerce of the Ancients in the Indian Ocean, vol. i. p. 263. 4to.

† مينا a port, haven, harbour, an anchoring-ground for ships.—*Richardson*, p. 1922.

a mile further up is the British Factory, which, presenting a circular brick wall toward the river with arched windows or ports, and having a large gate towards the creek, with sentries, flag-staff, &c. has all the appearance of a fortress, and is indeed by far the best building to be seen in the whole city.

Within the next quarter of a mile above this is the Seraia, or palace of the Mutesellim, and the Custom-house, both of them buildings of the meanest kind, and in the worst state of repair; and just above this last, the bridge that crosses the canal in a line from the Bagdad gate, renders it unnavigable further up, though the stream itself continues till it reaches the other extremity of the town.

The rise of water in this canal is about eight feet perpendicular with the flood of spring tides, and six feet with the flood of the neaps, and at low water it is nearly dry. The time of high water at the full and change is five P. M., or about an hour earlier than it is in the middle of the river opposite to the point of this canal's discharge.

The space actually occupied by buildings does not comprise more than one-fourth of that which is enclosed within the walls of Bussorah, the rest being laid out in corn-fields, rice-grounds, date-groves, and gardens, in this respect it has been very aptly compared to ancient Babylon, a great portion of which seems, by the account of all the historians who have described it, to have been laid out in the same way. The buildings themselves are badly planned and constructed, and are mostly as deficient even in what are held by their occupiers to be conveniences and comforts, as they are to the eyes of a stranger destitute of beauty.

From the want of stones, which are here scarcely to be found or met with in a journey of many miles, the walls of the city, as well as by far the greater number of dwellings within it, are built of sun-dried bricks. The few houses that have kiln-dried bricks in their walls, are too inconsiderable in number to form an exception, and are confined to the British factory, the

Seraia of the Mutesellim, one or two of the principal mosques, and perhaps half a dozen mansions of rich men in different parts of the town. The scarcity and consequent high price of wood, occasions the trunk of the date-tree to be almost the only sort employed in building; and this, from its fibrous nature, cannot be wrought into a regular shape by all the art of carpentry. Stone and wood are therefore rarely seen, and the buildings, from the necessary confinement to such materials as are used in them, are all of the meanest appearance.

In assigning an etymology to Bussorah, Dr. Vincent says, 'Basra, Bozra, and Bosara, is a name applicable to any town in the Desert, as it signifies rough or stony ground; and thus we have a Bosara in Ptolemy near Muskat, and a Bozra, familiar in Scripture, denoting an Arabian town in the neighbourhood of Judea, taken by the Maccabees.'* The Hebrew signification, as applied to the Bozra of the Scriptures, is consistent and appropriate, since that town is really seated on rough and stony ground, and so probably was the Bosara of Ptolemy near Muskat, judging from the general character of the country there. The Arabic Bussra, (for that is the nearest pronunciation of the name بصرة) though allied perhaps to the Hebrew Bozra or Botzra, has yet some distinguishing features of difference. بصرة is interpreted, 1st. *Whitish* stones. 2d. A kind of earth, out of which they dig such stones. 3d. The city of Basra or Bassora, as seated on such ground. The *whitish* stones cannot be the meaning of the name either of Bozra in Syria, or of Bussorah on the Euphrates, as the former is on a bed of black basaltic rock; and in the latter there are no stones of any description at all. Although this name is applied equally to the earth, out of which such stones are dug, I could not learn, during my stay here, that the earth of Bussorah at

* Golius ad Alfrag. p. 120. *Terra crassa et lapidosa.* But see בוצרה under בצר. Botsrath *desertum* à Batzar *clausit*, quia clauduntur aquæ. From hence, adds the Dean, *Bazar* for an emporium, and urbs munita, quia *circumclauditur*, to which the Bursa of Carthage is allied.—*Vincent's Commerce of the Ancients, &c.* vol. i. p. 436, note.

all produced any such stones; and the only difference between the soil of the present town, and that of the old city, which is supposed to have been near Zobeir, is that the one is more sandy than the other; but both are equally destitute of stones. There is another meaning given to بصر as signifying 'the side, border, or margin,' a sense that would apply to the Hebrew Bozra, as it was the easternmost town of note in all the Hauran, and 'bordered' upon the country of the Nabateans, but still more suitably to Bussorah, which was upon the 'side and margin' of Arabia itself, and near the banks of the Euphrates, which in all ages has been considered as its eastern boundary by land. The Hebrew and the Arabic names, though differently spelt by us, who know and preserve the distinction between them, are written and pronounced exactly alike by the respective inhabitants of each, who, it is true, are all Arabs. The word Bazar بازار is of a different origin in its root, and of different orthography, and means equally a place where goods are publicly sold, or the act of bargaining for purchase and sale in private, and does not seem allied to either of the others.

The population of Bussorah has varied at different periods of its history from 500,000 to about 50,000 inhabitants. The former is supposed to have been the *maximum* of its most flourishing state; the latter the *minimum*, after the dreadful ravages of the plague in 1773—when upwards of 300,000 souls are said to have fallen victims to this destructive scourge. It is true that at the time of Mr. Niebuhr's passage through this place, which was in 1764, he supposed the population scarcely to have exceeded 40,000; and by a calculation of one hundred houses to each of the seventy mehalles or parishes of the city, and seven dwellers to each house, which he thought was the utmost that could be allowed, the number made only 49,000. But in an interval of nine years, which passed until the plague of 1773, great changes might have been effected in the state of the surrounding country, and a surplus population of a still greater number have been drawn to the city, by causes which offered brighter prospects to

the inhabitants of it. Such sudden changes are not uncommon in the great cities of the Eastern world, and more particularly in those which, like Bussorah, are frequently exposed to become subject to different masters, and be contended for as a frontier post between two warring powers, and whose prosperity, even in times of political tranquillity, depends on so precarious a foundation as foreign trade.

At the present moment, while it enjoys sufficient security from all dangers without, and is subject to its old masters the Turks, who preserve good order within, the population is on the increase, and may amount altogether to nearly 100,000 souls. About one-half of these are Arabs, one-fourth Persians, and the remaining fourth a mixture of Turks, Armenians, Indians, Jews, and Catholic Christians, with a few Koords from the mountains of Koordistan, and a small portion of the Arab Christians, called Subbees, or disciples and followers of John the Baptist.

The Arabs are mostly persons born in the town, or in its immediate neighbourhood, with occasional settlers from Bagdad, Kourna, and the villages along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, as well as some few Desert Arabs from the country of Nedjed, and trading people from Coete, or Graine, the great sea-port of that part of Arabia. The occupations of the Arab population are chiefly commercial among the higher order, and labour and cultivation among the lower. The religion of both is of the Soonnee sect of Mohammedism, and they are in general sufficiently tolerant to those of a different faith. The dress of the merchants, who are originally of Bussorah, as well as those who come from Moosul and Bagdad, differs but little from that of the same class of people in Syria, except that it is here gayer and more costly in the same rank of life. Indian muslins and Angora shalloons are worn in the summer; but fine broad cloths, of the brightest colours, Indian stuffs, and Cashmeer shawls, form the winter apparel; and these are displayed in such variety, as to make the wardrobe of a well-dressed man exceedingly expensive.

The Arabs from Nedjed, and those from Coete or Graine, wear invariably the Bedouin handkerchief, called Maharama and Keffeea; the poorer people bind them round their heads, with bands of camel's hair thread, made into a sort of rope; but the wealthier class, although they are clad in the most costly robes, still retain this mark of their Desert origin, and sometimes even wear a rich Indian shawl as a turban over it, while the long ends of the coarse Bedouin keffeea hangs over their shoulders, forming a singular mixture of the costumes of the Desert and the town. The light Bagdad cloak, in alternate stripes of reddish brown and white, are worn by all in the summer; and thicker abbas, of a similar form and pattern, by the poor in the winter; but the rich at this season wear fine thick cloaks of a black colour, with a broad and deep three-forked stripe of gold, woven into the cloth, and descending from the top of the right shoulder down the back.

The Persian part of the population of Bussorah are all of the Sheeah sect of Moslems; but as their party is the weakest, they conceal the hatred with which this religious distinction inspires them towards the Turks and Arabs as Soonnees; and even their peculiar fasts and festivals are, for the same reason, observed with some degree of privacy. The rich among them are mostly merchants, who have commercial relations with their countrymen settled at the chief ports in India, and with others in Shooster and the higher parts of Persia, but seldom further north than Bagdad, as the Aleppo and Damascus trades are in the hands of Arabs. The lower classes of the Persian population are occupied mostly as writers, servants, shopkeepers, and mechanics; in all which professions or stations, their superior activity, industry, insinuating manners, ingenuity, and address, are conspicuous; and while among the Arabs a man is either a merchant in easy circumstances, or a mere labourer, Persians are found filling most of the intermediate stations, and rising by their own exertions from the lowest to the highest ranks. The dress of the Persians differs but little from that which is common to all the parts of Persia which I

have seen, excepting only that the black sheep's-skin cap is exchanged for the shawl or muslin turban, and the scarlet embroidered coat for the Arab cloak. These, however, are sufficient to alter the appearance of the dress so much, that a stranger would not easily distinguish a Persian from an Arab inhabitant of Bussorah. Some, indeed, both among the rich and the poor, adopt the Arab costume entirely; and then it is only by the characteristic features of their race, and by their peculiar manner of pronouncing the Arabic language, that they can be known.

The Turks are very few in number, and are almost all in offices of trust under the Government, or otherwise personally attached to the Governor himself. This man, who is called here the Mutesellim, or literally the Lieutenant of the Pasha of the province, is himself a native of Bussorah, but of Turkish descent; and having been many years at Constantinople, and served several campaigns against the Russians, he is much more a Turk than an Arab. The officers attached to him are principally Turks by family, but born in towns remote from the metropolis, as Moosul, Bagdad, and Bussorah. All these, however, preserve the Turkish kaook of Constantinople as a distinguishing mark of dress; their other garments differing in nothing from those of the well-dressed merchants of the place. Few as are these Turks in number, and never at any time perhaps exceeding five hundred, they maintain firm possession of the city, with the aid of a small number of Georgians, Koords, Arabs, and Persians, who are paid by the Government as soldiers, but who furnish their own arms and clothing, and are the most undisciplined rabble that can be imagined. The horse are estimated at 1500, but that number is seldom complete, and the foot are composed of five companies or Beiraks, of nominally one hundred muskets each. There are about fifty of the best of these who are selected as a body guard for the Mutesellim, and who accompany him to the mosques on Fridays, and attend him on state occasions. These are foot soldiers and musketeers, and they are distinguished by a uniform

dress of red jackets, seamed with black cord, the full blue Turkish trowsers, white turbans, and English muskets, with black cartouch-box and belts. This is the only instance of uniform that I remember among the soldiers of either the Arabs, the Turks, or the Persians, and has, I think, been occasioned by the constant station of the British Resident's guard here, and the frequent arrival of East India Company's cruisers and merchant vessels, with disciplined sepoys on board. The Tefenkchee Bashee, or chief of these musketeers, wears the large fur cap of the Bagdad soldiers; but all his inferiors, with the exception of the body guard already mentioned, dress in their own way, and just as their means allow, except that each Beïrak or company has some trifling mark by which it is distinguished from others.

In personal appearance, the Turks of Bussorah are far below those of Asia Minor and the large towns of Syria, and still more inferior to those of Smyrna and Constantinople, both in strength of frame, fairness of complexion, and general beauty of person. The degeneration has been effected probably by several united causes; such as a mixture with Arab blood, the use of negro slaves, and long residence in a hot and unhealthy climate. In character they have a good deal of the gravity, resignation, and attachment to old customs, which distinguish the Turks of the north; but they do not appear to inherit their love of ostentatious display, their haughty carriage towards those of a different faith, their polite and courtly manners towards their friends, nor their proud and unbending courage against their enemies. They possess a power equally despotic with that of other Turks ruling over Arab towns; but they use it, certainly, with almost unexampled moderation: the consequence of this is, that their government is popular with all classes, and there is scarcely an Arab inhabitant of the city, who would not prefer the reign of the Osmanli or Turkish authority to that of any Arab Sheikh, and who would not take up arms to defend it.

The Armenians of Bussorah do not at present exceed fifty

families, though formerly they were much more numerous. They are here, as throughout all the rest of the Turkish Empire, a sober, industrious, and intelligent race of people, engaged in occupations of trust as brokers, and doing business also for themselves as merchants. Their dress differs in nothing from that of the rich natives of the place, except that they confine themselves to dark-coloured cloths for their garments, and wear blue, black, and brown Cashmeer shawls for turbans, never assuming the gay tints reserved for the adorning of the faithful; though at this place there seems more laxity in the execution of the law enforcing distinctions of dress and colours to be worn by people of different faiths, than in most other Turkish towns that I have seen. The Armenians communicate with each other in their own language; but in general they speak Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, equally well; and some few add to these, English, Portuguese, and Hindostanee, which gives them great advantages in their mercantile transactions. They have a small church, and two or three priests attached to it, and their community is respectable and happy. An instance was related to me of their strict attention to the reputation of their body, which deserves to be recorded:—A young widow, who had been left without a protector, and was sufficiently handsome to have snares laid for her virtue, yielded to temptation, and lived for a short time as the mistress of a rich person, but without further prostitution. The circumstance becoming known, it was decided by the Armenians that their nation was scandalized by such an occurrence; and their influence was sufficient to get this fair sinner banished from the town, and sent to Bagdad, where they furnished her with a maintenance from their body, to prevent a recurrence of the necessity which she pleaded as an excuse for her past transgressions.

The Jews of Bussorah are also less numerous than they formerly were, though at present they are thought to amount to more than one hundred families. The heads of these are all merchants and traders; and as they add to the sobriety, industry, and

perseverance of the Armenians, a meanness, a cunning, and a disregard of principle, which are peculiar to them, they insinuate themselves into all affairs of business that are transacted even between strangers, and are not only in general the greatest gainers in every affair, but often derive a profit as brokers and agents, when the principals for whom they treat may lose. They form here as separate a body as in all other parts of the globe, living only among themselves, and preserving, by intermarriages among their own immediate offspring, that peculiarity of feature as well as of character, which distinguishes them from the one end of the world to the other. Their dress differs very little from that of the wealthy natives of the place, except in their confining themselves, like the Armenians, to dark-coloured garments. Their turban is, however, peculiar; and instead of the overhanging tarboosh and full shawl of the Armenians, it is formed of a flower-striped silk and cotton cloth, bound tightly round a red cap in flat folds, with sometimes a border of fringe at the edge. The rich, of whom there are many, are always well-dressed; the poor go from mediocrity down to filth and rags; and all classes wear their beards and the hanging side-locks which distinguish their sect from all others. Their common language is Arabic; though among themselves, and in correspondence with other Jews, they write this in the Hebrew character; but of Turkish, Persian, or any other tongue, there are few who know enough to transact the most common business, which forms a great feature of difference between them and the Armenians.

The Catholic Christians are much fewer in number than either of the last mentioned, and do not at present exceed twenty families. Some of these are natives of Bussorah, and others are recent settlers from Bagdad and Aleppo. They are all merchants and traders, and are distinguished from the mass only by their wearing dark turbans; since in manners and language they resemble the other inhabitants of the place. These have a church attached to the hospital of the Carmelite Friars, which has long

existed here. There were formerly several friars of that order attached to the Convent as missionaries; and until within these few years, always two of them. At present, however, there is but one, who is an old Neapolitan of about sixty, and has been here altogether nearly thirty years, having visited Europe once only in that interval. He is one of the most uninformed members of his order that I remember to have met with, and after so long a residence in the country can scarcely speak the language of it intelligibly. His solitude was so insupportable when he lost his last companion, that he became a most abandoned drunkard in endeavouring to cheer it by the bottle. So scandalous was his behaviour during the period of constant inebriation, that his flock bound him by the most solemn oaths made at the altar, never to taste the alluring poison again. To this he rigidly conforms; but it costs him, according to his own confession, the sacrifice of the only consolation which he enjoyed on this side the grave!

The Subbees are a sect of Christians, who call themselves disciples and followers of John the Baptist, and their community consists of about thirty families. They dress so exactly like the Arabs of the place, that there is no means of discovering them by their exterior, and their language and general manners are also the same with those of the Mohammedan inhabitants of the town. The chief seat of these Subbees is Kourna, at the conflux of the Tigris and Euphrates; and at that place their Bishop, and upwards of a hundred families reside. There are also some few at Shookashoaah, a large Arab town higher up, and they are scattered over the plain country of Khusistan, at Shooster, Dezhpool, and other places there; but their limits are very narrow, and their whole body collectively is thought to be less than a thousand families. They possess a Gospel of their own, which is written in a dialect of the Chaldaic, but with characters peculiar to themselves, of which Mr. Niebuhr has given an alphabet, though he seems to have collected no other information regarding them.

This gospel enters at large into the genealogy, birth, and education, of John the Baptist, with his separate history until the time of his baptizing Jesus, when the histories and acts of both are treated of in continuation; but in what particulars their version accords with, or differs from any of those received among us, I could not learn; as, in the first place, the book itself is not easily to be procured from their priests, and in the next it would require either a knowledge of their language, or a translation of it by them into Arabic, to understand it, neither of which was it in my power to obtain. This gospel is attributed by them to John the Baptist himself, and it is their sole authority in all matters of faith and doctrine. They have besides, however, a book of prayers and precepts, with directions for ceremonials, which they ascribe to the learned men of their sect, who immediately succeeded their great leader. They admit the divinity of Jesus, as Christ, the Son of God, and conceive that John the Baptist is to be honoured as his fore-runner, and as the person selected by God to perform the most holy sacrament of baptism on his child; but what are their notions regarding the Trinity I could not learn. They are distinguished from all other Christians by their frequent repetition of this sacrament on the same person, who, in other churches, would receive it but once. It is said, even, that every individual of their body is baptized annually on some particular occasion; but whether this is a fixed day for all, or peculiar festivals chosen by the individuals themselves, does not appear. This, however, is certain, that on all important changes, or undertakings, or events of their life, baptism is re-administered. The child at its birth is baptized; when named it is baptized again; on completing the age of puberty it is also baptized; and whether contracting marriage, becoming the parent of children, undertaking a journey, recovering from sickness, or any other important event, as well as after death, and before interment, baptism is re-administered with all the solemnity of the first occasion. The prayers used at their marriages and funerals are said to be long: the

first is a ceremony performed among themselves in some degree of privacy; but the latter is conducted openly, without their being interrupted in it by any one. They have no standing church, since their places of worship must be newly erected for every new occasion. It is therefore usual with them, when these occasions occur, to make an enclosure of reeds, when, after a most tedious process of purification, the ground becomes consecrated, and they perform their worship therein, secluded from the eyes of strangers, after which the building is pulled down and destroyed. Their attention to the purity of their food is carried to an extraordinary degree, and equals that of the highest caste of Bramins in India. No water that is not drawn from the river by themselves in their own vessels, and even after that suffered to subside, and be otherwise purified by their own hands, can be drunk by them. If honey, or similar articles, are purchased by them in the bazaar, it must have purified water poured on it, and remain a certain time covered to be cleansed before it can be eaten; and even fruit, though fresh from the tree, must be similarly washed, to be purged of its defilement. It is, however, singular enough, that while they carry this attention to religious purity of food to a degree unknown to all other sects of Christians, abstinence and fasts should be held in abomination by them; and that, contrary to the general Christian notion of this being always acceptable to God, and tending to purge the soul, as well as the body, of impure passions and desires, the Subbees regard it as a heinous sin, and as a profanation of the gifts which the Creator has so bountifully provided for his creatures. In their moral character, they are neither esteemed more upright nor more corrupt than their neighbours. One of their most distinguished virtues is mutual confidence in each other; and a breach of trust in any way is said to be regarded by them as a more damning offence than murder, fornication, and adultery, combined. It is, no doubt, this peculiar tenet, added to their notions of defilement from strangers, and the constant intermarriage of