

all the fire-temples that I have seen throughout Persia, which were unequivocally the remains of early ages, were mere altars, in the open air, fitted for retaining fire on their summits; and some of them, particularly those at Naksh-e-Rustan, near Persepolis, not more than two or three feet square, and others near Ispahan, but very little larger. Captain Maude of the navy, who saw both the Tower of Belus and this edifice at Firouzabad, assured Mr Williams, his companion, that they resembled each other both in size, form, and materials; but if so, it could not be this building, with three immense domes; nor the square edifice mentioned by Kinnier, as differing in form and style from any around it, and built of hewn stone, linked together with clamps of iron; nor the stone pillar, one hundred and fifty feet in height, and twenty in diameter at the base; which are said by this writer to be the only antiquities worthy of remark in the plain of Firouzabad, and which have certainly no resemblance to any of the remains at Babylon.

What is more to the present purpose, however, and what must draw us back from this excursion from the shore, is that in describing the modern town of Firouzabad as an inconsiderable place, the same author says, that the water of the river which flows through the plain here, is absorbed in the cultivation of the land. We must resort, therefore, to the former supposition, that if no fresh stream descended to the sea in the time of Alexander any more than now, the inlet of the Khore of Umm-el-Goorm was characterised by his admirals as a river, as narrow creeks of the sea are even now frequently called rivers by the most experienced and scientific sailors and hydrographers of the present day.

Nov. 21st.—The winds still continued light and variable, though chiefly from the eastern quarter, and our progress was accordingly slow. We had seen few fish, and no weeds in the course of our voyage, but great varieties of the substance called by sailors blubber, and a number of sea-snakes, ringed black and

white, and varying from one to four feet in length, and from one to four inches in circumference. These swim on the surface of the water, sometimes coil themselves in circles, and seem to have the same wavy motion which distinguishes the progress of snakes on shore. Their food is probably small flies or animalculæ found near the surface, as these are generally seen there, though they sometimes plunge below, at the approach of supposed danger. In doing this, it is said that they rear their heads high out of the water, as if to effect some change in the state of the lungs, and dive down head-foremost in nearly a perpendicular line. These sea-serpents differ in their appearance from those seen on the approach to Bombay, as the latter are of a yellowish colour, but the former are ringed black and white. Both of these, however, live only within soundings, or where the depth of water is less than one hundred fathoms, so that their habits must sometimes lead them to the ground; and the bite of both is said to be poisonous. In cases of irritation, those of Bombay have been known to bite fishermen, who threw them from their nets, and who afterwards died of the wound; and in an experiment made on a fowl by the bite of a small serpent found in the Persian Gulf, the bird died in less than fifteen minutes.\*

At noon we were in lat.  $27^{\circ} 11'$  north, and long.  $51^{\circ} 15'$  east, with a remarkable piece of table land on the Persian shore, called Barn Hill, bearing north-east, half-north; and a notch in the high land over Astola, bearing east-by-north, half-north, in thirty-five fathoms water. Just below the port of Kangoon, which is immediately under this Barn Hill, is a port called Tauhree, or Tahiree, where extensive ruins are spoken of, with sculptures and inscrip-

\* The prognostic of approaching the river Indus, is the appearance of snakes rising up from the bottom, and floating on the surface; and a similar occurrence of a reptile called Grace is noticed on the coast of Persia.—*Perip. Eryth. Sea. India*, vol. i. p. 95.

The approach to the bay of Baraké, (or the Gulf of Cutch) is discoverable by the appearance of snakes, very large and black. The same occurrence takes place also along the coast of Guzerat, and at Barugaza, (or Baroache); but the snakes there are smaller, paler, and of a colour approaching to gold.—*Ibid.* p. 97.

tions in the Persepolitan character. Among the ruins of the city are said to be two exceedingly deep wells, and stables sufficient to contain a hundred horses, excavated from the solid rock.

The weather continued light, and the winds variable from the eastward; our progress still slow, and our water deepening gradually to forty fathoms at midnight.

It is in this bay that Kangoon is situated; and both the name, the relative position, and the local features of the place, as far as we could collect them from the information of those whom we consulted, all agree accurately with those of Gogana, one of the stations at which the fleet of Nearchus anchored, and placed by Arrian at the mouth of a winter torrent called Areon. "The place," he says, "was not without inhabitants, but the anchorage unsafe, on account of the shoals and breakers which appeared on the ebb of the tide, and the approach was narrow and dangerous."\* A winter-brook is not, however, to be found always in the same spot at any distance of time; and, accordingly, we could learn nothing of a stream now existing at Kangoon, sufficiently large to deserve notice; although, as the natives said, whenever it rained hard at this place, the rain formed torrents, as it did every where else in the world; and they wondered that we should enquire after this as a singularity, or peculiar to Kangoon alone, for so they understood the drift of our enquiries. We subsequently learnt that there was a stream of fresh water which descended from the mountains above Kangoon; but it was added, that this did not discharge itself into the sea, being exhausted among the date-grounds before it reached the shore. On this stream, at about two hours from the town, a water-mill once stood, at which the people of the country had their corn ground; and a well is mentioned, not far off, having thirty-three yards of water in it, and sending up a bubbling spring above its brink in certain seasons of the year. In the time of Alexander, therefore, a winter torrent may easily be supposed to have discharged itself into the

sea at Gogana. The character of the anchorage, as having shoals and breakers near it, which showed themselves on the ebb-tide, is still, however, characteristic of the place; and the approach, if made near to them, is still narrow and dangerous. But those very shoals and breakers, which were objects of terror to a Greek fleet, are the cause of the secure anchorage afforded by them to vessels navigated after the improved method of the moderns; as ships anchoring in deep water, at a sufficient distance from them to swing clear, in case of a change of wind, find a smooth sea, and all the safety of a more confined harbour.

The small island of Monjella, as it is called in the English charts, lies from four to five leagues south-south-west of the point called Ras Berdistan by the natives, and the nearest part of the main land bears from it east-north-east about a league and a half. This island is called Umm-el-Nakheela, or 'the mother of palm trees;' from أم 'a mother, the root, or primary-cause;' and نخل, 'the palm or date tree.'

This is literally the same as the *Palmêira* of the Portuguese; and it is highly probable that, in giving this name to it, they meant it to be a translation of the native one, which they found characteristic of the spot to which it was affixed. It is also the same as the *Om-en-châle* of Niebuhr, though he makes it a place on the continent, and not an island. The difference in sound between these names is not so great as in their orthography; but the manner of writing the last, proves decidedly that Mr. Niebuhr was not aware of the derivation of the name; and his placing it on the continent is equally a proof that his information was from report; for, if he had passed near to it, he would have seen an island as large as Shitwar, covered with date trees, and thus explaining the etymology of its name.

There is said to be no fresh water on the spot, and consequently no inhabitants; and this island, with two smaller nameless ones to the westward of it, is seated amidst shoals and broken ground on every side. There is nevertheless a passage for native



coasting-boats between these islands and the Persian shore, which is only sailed through in the day, on account of the dangers there; but is constantly frequented, inasmuch as it saves a considerable distance to those going up or down the coast along shore, in cutting off the great circuit that must otherwise be made, to go clear without the shoals to the westward. This last piece of information I received the most positive assurances of, and indeed it was subsequently confirmed to me by a person who had sailed through it, and whose description of the island and channel agreed exactly with the testimony of the others. Nearchus, therefore, might easily have taken his fleet through this passage, as none of his vessels probably drew more water than the common coasting-boats of the present day.

It was highly satisfactory to ascertain this fact, as one of the chief difficulties to render intelligible in the relation of this voyage by Arrian, lay here on this part of the coast. The distance sailed from Gogana to the mouth of the river Sitakus was eight hundred stadia, or about fifty miles, and the run was not made without danger. On this passage Dr. Vincent remarks, that the coast itself measures that distance, without allowing for the circle that must be taken to round the shoal off Cape Verdistan. It is not probable, he adds, that an English vessel should ever determine whether there is a passage within the breakers; but within, undoubtedly, Nearchus must have sailed, to make the stadia agree; and though M'Cluer makes an anchorage almost in the centre of them, a passage close to shore must be dubious, unless it could be proved that it is still practicable for native vessels. If there is a passage, he concludes, the measure of Arrian is correct; if there is no passage, it is the first on this coast which has been deficient.\*

It is a pleasure to remove the difficulties and reconcile the seeming inconsistencies of early writers in any way, but especially so in cases where it serves to establish the fidelity of an ancient and curious journal like the present, relating to one of the most in-

teresting voyages ever performed, considering the time, the circumstances, its motive, and its end; and thus to remove the charge of falsehood and invention, which some angry but injudicious critics have laid to the whole history of it. It has happened, indeed, in more instances than the present, that the new lights thrown on geography and history by modern discoveries, have tended to illustrate and confirm the writings of the ancients, more particularly of those who treated of countries east of Greece; as every one who has followed Herodotus, Strabo, Arrian, and the author of the *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, as travelling guides over the countries and shores which they describe, must have had abundant opportunities of observing.

A passage within the shoals of Berdistan does then, as we have seen, still exist, and is frequented at the present day: the distance given by Arrian for Nearchus's run through this passage is correct; and nothing can be more satisfactory proof of his having gone this way, than the details which he gives of the run throughout. The whole navigation along this part of the coast of Persia is, he says, among shoals and breakers; but, he adds, they (the Greeks and Macedonians) secured themselves in their present station by drawing their ships on shore, in order to careen and refit such of them as had been injured during the voyage.\*

Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>.—Light, variable airs, and agreeable weather, but unfavourable to our progress. The ship's place at noon was in lat.  $26^{\circ} 49'$  north, and long.  $51^{\circ} 35'$  east, with Barn Hill, north-north-east, and the notch over Astola north-east half-east, in thirty-eight fathoms.

The evening brought us fresh breezes from the north-west, to which we crowded all sail, though our situation required much caution in the course, the soundings, and the look-out. We here passed over the site of the Crescent, which, with the Scorpion, forms the two banks, called the Pearl-shoals of his Majesty's sloop *Scorpion*, 1807, as laid down in Arrowsmith's chart of 1810, and

noted in Horsburgh's Directory of 1809, in the body of the work, as discovered by the ship Pearl in 1796. Each of these shoals appears to occupy a considerable space; and they are said to be dry in several parts, though they have a passage between them of twenty to twenty-five fathoms depth. Among the longitudes of the squadron, which were all by chronometer, our own was the westernmost by a few miles, and fresh departures had been taken from the meridian of Bushire, as in long.  $50^{\circ} 44'$  east; yet these shoals were evidently without us, or to the westward of our reckoning, and therefore probably to the southward and westward of the position assigned to them in the books and charts.

Nov. 23rd.—At sun-rise we were off a remarkable mountain on the Persian shore, which forms a sea-mark for the navigation of the Gulf, under the name of Charrack Hill. Beneath it is a small port, of the same name, belonging to the Joassamees, and affording shelter to their piratical boats. This town was once possessed by the Danes; and there is still a race of their descendants there, with light hair and blue eyes; but in all their habits and language they resemble the aborigines of the country. The high land of Charrack seems to be the Mount Ochus of the ancients; and it is from every point of view a remarkably conspicuous object. Opposite to this point of Charrack is the small island of Kenn, or Kym of Horsburgh, about ten miles from the shore. It is low, and more thickly wooded than any of the islands in the Gulf, and is fruitful and well inhabited.\* Supplies of provisions and water may be obtained here, as well as shelter found under its lee from the north-west gales, in a good anchorage of nine fathoms, abreast the village, at its eastern end. As this island is low, it is not to be

Ammianus Marcellinus says, that the southern part of Persia, bordering on the Gulf, abounds in palm-trees, in fruits, and in streams, which render it agreeable. He observes also, that there are many considerable cities in the interior, or higher regions of the country, and that no towns of note existed on the sea-coast. The reason of this was not understood by him; but it was undoubtedly because the climate of the coast was less agreeable than that of the elevated parts of the interior, and because they had no maritime wars or maritime commerce to render sea-ports necessary.—Lib. xxiii. c. 6.

distinguished more than four leagues off; but Charrack Hill, on a bearing of north-north-east, is a good mark for running right upon it. When this hill at sun-rise bore east by north half-north, we had the notch over Astola, bearing north by west, and were then in forty fathoms water.

At noon the ship's place was in lat.  $26^{\circ} 19'$  north, and long.  $26^{\circ} 55'$  east, the weather dark and cloudy, Charrack Hill north-east by east half-east, and soundings forty fathoms. In the afternoon we had a light breeze from the north-west, which fell off at sun-set, and the atmosphere was then so heavy that no land could be seen. Our water deepened to forty-five fathoms at midnight.

Ras Nabend, which is nearly opposite to this, is conceived to be the place of the river Bagrada, of Ptolemy, which he makes the boundary of Karmania, differing in this from Arrian, whose limit, as we have seen, was opposite to Kaeese, and formed by the range of hills ending at the sea, in the mountain of Charrack. The name of the river Bagrada, in Africa, is derived by Bochart from ברכתא Barkatha, a pond, in the Hebrew;\* and Dr. Vincent says, that the characteristics of the Nabend in Persia, would suit such a derivation very well. I could learn no other features of this stream than that it was large, deep, and capacious; nor were our informers able to say whether it had any name resembling the supposed ancient one, either in sound or in signification. The word برکه Burkah, which is evidently allied to the Hebrew Barkatha, signifies the same thing both in Persian and Arabic, though it belongs originally to the latter. Dr. Vincent did not seem aware of this; for, in a note on a place called by Colonel Capper. Birket Rahamah, he asks, 'What is Birket? Birk, is a well:' and adds, 'If the traveller had given us this, we might have judged whether it is yet a lake or dry.' He then proposes a query, 'Whether it is not an error of the press for Bahr-el-Rahma, the sea of Rahama, or Birk-el-Rahama, like Birk-el-Hadji, in Egypt, the lake of the Pilgrims, i. e. where they assemble for the pil-

\* Shaw's Travels in Barbary, p. 77.

grimage. The fact is, that Bir, and not Birk, is the common Arabic name for a well; and Birket, the usual term for a lake, as in the Birket-el-Hadj, or the Lake of the Pilgrimage; for that is precisely the way in which it is pronounced in Egypt, where this lake is situated, and where it derives its name from the Hadj, or assemblage of pilgrims, who depart yearly from this spot for Mecca, halting here to fill their water, and to wait for the Emir-el-Hadj, or Prince of the Pilgrimage, who generally leaves Cairo the day before they set out.

Nov 24.—At sun-rise, the weather being clearer, and the wind moderate, with a land breeze from the north-east, we saw Charrack Hill again, bearing north by east half-east, and were then in forty-two fathoms water.

I sought and enquired in vain after the Siraff, which is thought to have been seated at the foot of Charrack, and opposite to Kaeese; and which is noticed by Edrisi as a seat of commerce in his time, and connected with Kaeese, as Gomberoon was afterwards with Ormuz. Dr. Vincent proves, from the relation of a voyage of two Arabians, that in the ninth century Siraff was a port of importance; for it seems in that early age to have been in the possession of the Arabians, and the centre of an Oriental commerce, which perhaps extended to China. He adds, that both Siraff, which was conquered by Shah Kodbadin, king of Ormuz, about the year 1320; and Siraff, whose decline is mentioned by Alfragani, in his time, yielded its consequence to Ormuz, which was a celebrated mart long before the Portuguese were masters of that island; and he inclines to think, though Siraff is said by D'Anville to be now in ruins, that both the name and the site are to be identified with the Charrack of the coast. As Siraff was said to have been opposite to Kaeese, there was a difficulty in reconciling it to the position of Charrack, as given by M'Cluer, since this was to the eastward of his Cape Bestion, and rather opposite to Polior, or Froor.



Dr. Vincent was right in suspecting this arrangement, and in calling in question the accuracy of M'Cluer, with regard to names; though he modestly expresses himself as not qualified to decide. The town of Charrack is, as he conceived it ought to be, to the westward of this Cape, and close to the eastern foot of the hill from which it derives, or to which it gives its name. This, it is true, is still to the eastward of Kaese, but not so far as to prevent its being called, in a general way, 'opposite to the island.' The town of Tawooné is nearest to the island on the east, and Kallat-el-Abeed, so called from an old castle in the mountains above, in which some rebel slaves defended themselves, is the nearest to it on the west. Between this and Cheroo another town was named to us, called Goorezy; but this we did not clearly perceive. Among them all, however, a position might be selected for Siraff, which would accord accurately enough with its vicinity to Kaese, if other circumstances indicated either its name or its remains there.

Heather, on the authority of M'Cluer, places the islands of Kaese and Hinderabia, at about fifteen miles distant from each other; but it appears that this navigator subsequently stated to Mr. Dalrymple, that he had altered the situation of Hinderabia, as he found it too near to Kenn; and actually extends the distance from twelve to twenty geographical miles, without stating what after-discovery had led to this correction. The illustrator of Nearchus's voyages very naturally congratulates himself on this alteration, since it corresponds more accurately with the twenty-five miles assigned to the distance between them by Arrian; and expresses great satisfaction in finding that the more correct the modern chart is, the better it corresponds with the details of his author. The alternative which D'Anville has chosen, however, of making the anchorage of the fleet at the eastern end of Kataia, so as to include the length of that island in the four hundred stadia of the run from Kataia to Ila; still remains: and if it be allowable to choose the most convenient end of one island for the point of departure; so it may equally be permitted to make the point

of arrival at either extreme of the other, so as to include its length too, if necessary; more particularly as Ila, the harbour mentioned, is only said to be sheltered by an island in the ~~offing~~, called Kaika, without saying from what winds, or in what direction; so that if the distance were the only point to be adjusted, ~~twenty~~ out of the twenty-five miles might be unobjectionably made out, even at present.

The island of Hinderabia resembles that of Kaika in its general character, being low, level, and sandy at the base; but not so well wooded, although it has some single trees and shrubs, and, it is said, good water.

As the day advanced, the wind drew more easterly; and at noon, being in latitude  $25^{\circ} 49'$  north, and longitude  $53^{\circ} 53'$  east, Charrack Hill bearing north half-east, distant at least sixty miles, we saw the Arabian shore, bearing south-south-east, rather low, and distant about twenty miles from us, our soundings being then in forty fathoms.

Neither the names of Cape Bestion, nor Certes, under any of their variations of sound, are at all known to the natives of this coast. The eastern cape they call Ras-el-Shenaz, and the western cape, Ras-el-Hhasseeni, both from towns of that name near their respective extremes. In the bay between them are the towns of Bôostana and Mogho; the first nearest to Ras-el-Shenaz, and the second nearest to Ras-el-Hhasseeni, and about equidistant from these capes, and from each other. To the eastward of Ras-el-Hhasseeni, are the towns of Charrack and Tawooné, which are described as similar to Shenaz, Linga, and Cheroq.

This cape of Hhasseeni corresponds very accurately in point of distance from Shenaz, to the Cape Tarsia of Arrian, at which Nearchus anchored, after a run of three hundred stadia, or about nineteen miles from Sididône, and before another run of the same distance to Kataia, or Kaëse. Dr. Vincént thought he could perceive this Tarsia of the Greeks in Niebuhr's modern name of Dsjerd, and refers the classical reader to the fluctuations in the

orthography of the name Tyrus, to satisfy him of its possibility. "The Phœnician word, he says, is Tsor, with the two initials T S. correspondent to Niebuhr's D S J; and Tsor becomes by the T. *Τυρός*, Tyrus; by the S. *Sor*, or *Sar*—the root of *Sour*, *Souria*, *Συρία*, Syria, and found in Virgil, 'Sarrano indormiat ostro;' where the Scholia write, 'a *Saro* murice.' By the same analogy, Tserd, Tarsia, Serd, Sertes,—Certes. Gherd, Sjerd."\* After this, no one would surely despair of finding Tarsea, or Tarsia, in the present name Hhasseeni, which, from not being known before to be the real name of the cape, has had no learning or etymological skill exercised on it to see what it might produce.

The island of Kaese, abreast of which we now were, is apparently of less dimensions than those usually given to it. Thevenot mentions it as about five leagues in circuit; and Horsburgh, from M'Cluer, states it to be as large as Polior: neither of which is correct. The extreme length of it appeared to us to be about four miles, and its general breadth about two, while Polior is at least double that size. Arrian, who, from Nearchus, describes it as a low desert island, gave its character much more faithfully than M'Cluer, who calls it a very beautiful one, and better planted with trees than any other in the Gulf. The expression of 'desert,' as used by Arrian, did not imply then, any more than it does now, a place totally incapable of producing any thing, but rather one destitute of verdure and natural fertility, though capable of supporting life, as the deserts of the Arabs do to tribes of thousands, with their still more numerous flocks, and of being made more productive by artificial means of cultivation. It is thus that, though Nearchus found it uninhabited, it was, he says, frequented by visitors from the continent, who annually brought goats here, and, consecrating them to Venus and Mercury, left them to run wild. The learned illustrator of this interesting voyage has very happily observed on this, that though the deities of the Persian or Arabian mythology here alluded to by these

Greek names, are not easy to be discovered, yet that the practice indicated the navigation of the Gulf in that age; and that if the gods were to protect the breed for a time, we might suppose it was ultimately intended for the use of man, upon the same principle that Juan Fernandez was stocked by the Spaniards in the South Seas. Nearchus, he continues, has not informed us whether he violated the asylum of these animals; but this appears the natural inducement for his leaving the coast to make this island, as he had obtained no supply either at Tumbo or Sididône; and we do not read that the sacrilege, if committed, was revenged by Mercury or Venus in so severe a manner as the companions of Ulysses were punished for feasting on the oxen of Apollo.\*

If the size, the fertility, and the beauty of Kaese, have been all exaggerated by the moderns, so has its distance from the continent been made too great. The charts and directories make the channel to be four leagues wide; and this is said in the same page to be the greatest distance at which it can be seen, from its being so low. It was necessary to assign a motive for Nearchus quitting the coast to go in search of it, and natural to find it in the one supposed, of seeking a supply from the consecrated herds and flocks of Aphrodisias, as Pliny calls this island from this circumstance of its devotions. But the channel hardly appeared to us to be as many miles as it is made leagues across, and certainly could not be passed without its very beach being distinctly seen from within. The main land here on the north is a lofty and abrupt mountain of greyish stone, whose surface is seemingly every where destitute of vegetation, and whose steep sides rise so suddenly from the sea, as to offer no temptation to approach them either for anchorage or refreshment. Nothing would be more natural, therefore, than for the Macedonian fleet to cross this narrow channel, which, supposing they sailed at a distance of only two miles from the continent, would not be a league over; and the appearance of trees and vegetation there,

\* Dissertation. vol. i. p. 364

would promise them better supplies of food and water than they could hope to obtain from the main coast.

This lofty and barren mountain is the Charrack of the charts, and is the sea-mark for approaching Kaeese; for, when this bears north-north-east, it has the island in one with it, which cannot then be distinguished from the main. The island is at present inhabited by about fifty families, and produces sufficient sustenance for them only; though ships may obtain good water there, according to the account of our visitors. Its modern name of Kaeese sufficiently corresponds with the ancient one of Kataia, and its position and local features can leave no doubt of their identity.

'At Kataia,' says Arrian, 'ends the province of Karmania, along the coast of which they had sailed three thousand seven hundred stadia.—The Karmanians,' he adds, 'resemble the Persians in their manner of living, their armour and military array are the same, and, as adjoining provinces, the customs and habits of both assimilate.\*' The opinion of Dr. Vincent, that this boundary line is not an imaginary one, but to be sought for in the Hill of Charrack, is reasonable, and supported by the appearance of this being, as he conjectured, the termination of a range, running inland, and forming a natural boundary. The fact related by Arrian of the Karmanians resembling the Persians in their manner of living, is as true at the present period as then. The physiognomy of most of these that I had had an opportunity of seeing on other occasions, was perfectly Arab; and the Arabic language was as familiar to them as the Persian; but every thing else, in their dress, their manners, and their character, was more nearly allied to Persian habits, and seemed to point out an Arabic origin.

At sun-set, having gone fifteen miles on a true course of south-east, the Persian coast still in sight, Charrack Hill bearing north by west, an island was seen from the mast-head, near the Arabian shore, bearing south by west, and our soundings in thirty-five fathoms. This was probably the island of Zara, mentioned as

\* Voyage of Nearchus, p. 38.



being near the port of Seer, about this part of the coast; but of which no particulars are accurately known. It is said, however, to be opposite to an angle or elbow of the land, from whence the coast trends away more southerly than it is marked in the latest charts.

The bay from hence to the westward is reported to extend at least a degree deeper in a southern direction than it is delineated by the best authorities, and to contain a great number of islands generally unknown to European navigators. In a recent voyage along the Arabian coast, on this side of the Gulf, made by the Honourable Captain Maude, in his Majesty's ship *Favourite*, eight of these islands were seen, and their positions tolerably well ascertained; but a still greater number remain yet unknown, as the whole of the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf has been but imperfectly explored.

The westernmost of all the islands in this bay is called *Geziret Bethoobee*, from a town of that name, abreast of which it lies. The town itself has a port, and is a place of some trade, being in friendship with the Imaum of Muscat, and receiving vessels and supplies both of merchandize and provisions from that mart. This island is placed by the latest authorities in lat.  $25^{\circ} 20'$  north, and long.  $53^{\circ} 40'$  east, and is in size nearly equal to *Polior*, extending about ten miles in length from east to west, and being about half that breadth from north to south. The town of *Bethoobee* is placed in lat.  $24^{\circ} 35'$  north, and long.  $53^{\circ} 50'$  east, and lies on a low and desert coast. There is a wide and clear passage between the island and the main, in which the soundings decrease from twenty fathoms near the former, to five near the latter. This island may, after all, be the same with the *Zara* and the *Seer* of the charts, as nothing is more easy than the corruption of *Gezireh*, the Arabic name of an island generally, into either of these forms.

The first or northernmost of the group, discovered in his Majesty's ship *Favourite*, and called, after her commander, *Maude's*

Islands, is the island of Halool; after which follow to the southward Sheraroo, Daoos, Jumaeen, Danee, Arzeneeah, Delamee, and Geziret Beni Aass, making eight in number. Of these their discoverer gives the following account:—

Halool is in lat.  $25^{\circ} 41'$  north, and long.  $52^{\circ} 23'$  east. It is high in the centre, decreasing towards each extremity; and, having a bold shore and deep water, from twelve to fifteen fathoms all around, may be approached with perfect safety. From a correspondence of latitude, this has been supposed to be the island of May, so called in the English charts, and placed about a degree further to the eastward, or nearly in the longitude of Geziret Bethoobee; but this is not certain.

Sheraroo is in lat.  $25^{\circ} 13'$  north, and long.  $52^{\circ} 18'$  east. It is from three to four miles in length from south-east to north-west, and not more than half that breadth, having two small hummocks on each extremity. About half a mile from the northernmost point is a small rock above water. To the north-west of this island, the Arabian coast may be approached; but as it is all low land in that direction, it should be done with caution.

Daoos is in lat.  $25^{\circ} 10'$  north, and long.  $52^{\circ} 45'$  east. It is six or seven miles in length from east to west, and about four in breadth. It is moderately high and rugged, with a low point extending to the north-west; and the soundings in passing it were on broken ground, and irregular.

Jumaeen is in lat.  $25^{\circ} 6'$  north, and long.  $52^{\circ} 55'$  east. It has three high hummocks, of an equal elevation, two on the north part, and one to the southward; but, on passing it, the haze prevented the extremities being seen.

Danee is a small and exceedingly low island, in lat.  $25^{\circ} 1'$  north, and long.  $52^{\circ} 20'$  east; the colour of which, in hazy weather, approaches so nearly to that of the atmosphere, that it is difficult to be distinguished on the horizon, and therefore should be approached cautiously. The passage between this island and Shera-

roo is clear of shoals, that would be dangerous to small ships; though there are sudden overfalls, on a coral bottom, from six to three fathoms and a half.

Arzeneeah is in lat.  $24^{\circ} 56'$  north, and long.  $52^{\circ} 33'$  east. It is in length about seven miles from east-north-east to west-south-west, and in breadth about a league. It is rather high and uneven, and the south side is particularly rugged. His Majesty's ship *Favourite* anchored off this island in twelve and a half fathoms, on a coral and sandy bottom; the centre of the island bearing south by east half-east, and the ship off shore from five to six miles. There are no trees on the island, and but little other vegetation; and the soil was found, on examination, to consist chiefly of metallic ore. About a cable's length from the eastern extremity of the island, and in that direction, is a rock above water, and a similar one also off the opposite, or western extreme; while from the north-east end a shoal extends for nearly a mile from the shore, composed of coral rocks and sand; and the south-west termination is a low and barren point.

Delamee is in lat.  $24^{\circ} 36'$  north, and long.  $52^{\circ} 24'$  east. Its length from north to south is about six miles, and its breadth less than half that, from east to west. It is of a moderate height, and of a darker colour than Arzeneeah. On its northern end, is a round hill, the extremity of which terminates in a low sand; and towards the southern point there are three small hummocks, which slope off in a similar way. Off the northern end of the island, a shoal extends for nearly two miles in that direction, which ought not to be approached under seven fathoms; and the passage to the southward of the island, or between it and the Arabian shore, is considered as altogether unsafe. The channel between Delamee and Arzeneeah is, however, clear of shoals; though there are in it irregular soundings and overfalls, from twenty-one to fifteen, and from twelve to seven fathoms.

Geziret Beni Aass is in lat.  $24^{\circ} 34'$  north, and long.  $52^{\circ} 40'$  east. It is rather high in the centre, very rugged, and extending to the

south-west in a low point, which nearly joins the main land, leaving a narrow channel, navigable by small boats only. The Arabian coast, to the westward of this, is very low, and the pilot stated that there were several small islands off it, but he considered them dangerous to be approached, except by boats. The channel between Arzeneeah and Geziret Beni Aass is perfectly safe.

All the islands here described have the same arid and barren appearance as Pôlior and Nobfleur, the Tombs, and other islands on the opposite shore of the Persian Gulf. The water found on them is said to be brackish; but Captain Maude, from the appearance of the soil, and from what he witnessed on the island of Arzeneeah, was inclined to suppose that good water might be procured. Safe anchorage may be obtained under any of them during the prevailing north-west winds of this sea, as a shelter from which they are conveniently situated. The currents, or tides, set through these islands from east-south-east to west-north-west; but neither their rate, nor the time of high-water, were ascertained. The magnetic variation, from a mean of several sights, was about  $4^{\circ} 30'$  west.

These islands are placed in the centre of an extensive pearl bank, which extends nearly two hundred miles in a longitudinal direction, and about seventy miles from north to south, and from this bank a great quantity of pearls are annually collected. The positions of these islands, as here laid down, were not considered by Captain Maude to be exactly accurate; the heat of the climate having considerably affected the rate of his chronometers, and the haze over the land being often so great as to prevent his estimating correctly the distance from the shore when the bearings were taken: but it is nevertheless believed that their assigned positions are sufficiently accurate to render this account of them of some use to those navigators to whom the southern side of the Persian Gulf is unknown.

From the bottom of the bay in which Maude's Islands are situated, the Arabian coast extends for nearly two degrees in a

north-north-west direction, till it reaches the point of Ras Rekkan, or Ras-el-Sharek of the Arabs, where it takes a bend round to the south-west, and forms the Bay of Bahrein. This Cape of Rekkan is in lat.  $26^{\circ} 12'$  north, and long.  $51^{\circ} 13'$  east, having the town and Fort of Zubarra about a mile or two to the south-east of it; and to the west-south-west of it, at intervals of a few miles distant, are the towns of Yamale, Agulla, Khore Hassan, and Fereyha, with the creek and port of Laghere, at twelve hours' sail beyond the Cape, to the westward. The coast from the Cape westward forms a concave semicircle, extending a few miles deeper than the line of  $26^{\circ}$  north lat. and ending at El Kateef, the eastern point to the entrance of which is in about lat.  $26^{\circ} 28'$  north, and long.  $50^{\circ} 5'$  east.

The islands of Bahrein, which are seated in this bay, are two in number; as the name, being a dual in Arabic, implies. The largest of these bears this name particularly, and the smaller retains that of Arad; an appellation of very early date, when these islands bore the names of Tylos and Arad, in allusion to the Tyrus and Aradus of the Phœnicians, on the coast of Syria. The principal island has its centre in lat.  $26^{\circ} 13'$  north, and long.  $50^{\circ} 35'$  east. Its length is about ten miles, in a direction of west-north-west and east-south-east, and its breadth about half that, in another direction, across. The general appearance of the island is low; but it is every where fertile, well-watered, and supporting an extensive population. There are estimated to be no less than three hundred villages scattered over this small island, and every portion of the soil is cultivated; producing dates, figs, citrons, peaches, and a species of almond, called loazi, the outer husk of which is eaten as well as the kernel. The principal town, which is called Minawah, or Minawee—properly, the scala, or port, like other places of the same description on the coasts of the Arabs, from mina, a port—is large and populous, and has a good bazaar, with twelve caravanseras for strangers. Many wealthy merchants reside here, and an extensive commerce is carried on in the export-



ation of pearls to India, and the importation of the manufactures and productions of that country, for the supply of all the eastern coast of Arabia, and the interior of that peninsula.

The island of Arad is of nearly the same length as the principal one of Bahrein, but is exceedingly narrow, particularly towards the centre, where it is hardly half a mile across, and at its widest parts, which are nearest each extremity of its length, it is not more than two miles over. The direction of its length is nearly north and south, and its centre is in lat.  $26^{\circ} 15'$  north, and long.  $50^{\circ} 40'$  east, making these islands to bear about south half-west from Bushire, distant one hundred and sixty-five miles. On the northernmost point of Arad is a small town among date-trees, called Semahee; and in the centre or narrowest part of the island, another village; but the principal town, which is called Maharad, or Maharag, is seated on the southern extreme, and is nearly as large as Minawah, being defended with two forts, with bastions, one at each end of the town, and a wall surrounding the whole. From this last end, over to the larger island of Bahrein, which lying nearly east and west, stands almost at right angles with the former, there is a ferry by boats, which are constantly going night and day. The strait of separation between the islands is, at least, six miles in breadth; but being full of shoals, it does not admit the passage of ships through it.

The harbour is thus formed by these two islands; one lying north and south, and the other east and west; and good shelter is afforded by them from all but north-west winds. Though the approach to the harbour is rendered difficult by the foul ground and shoals, yet, these being of coral, the water is so finely transparent as to admit of their being seen at a considerable distance, which renders the navigation comparatively easy, requiring only careful hands stationed to look out aloft, and guide the vessel through them by the eye. One of the greatest disadvantages of the port, is the distance of the anchorage for ships from the shore, which is often four or five miles. His Majesty's ship *Favourite*

anchored to the south-east of the islands, having the fort of Maharag to bear north-west, and the northern extreme of Arad Island north by west, where she was well sheltered from north-west winds. The Company's cruisers, however, usually anchor on the north-west side of the islands, with the following bearings: the town of Semahee, east half-north; the central village on Arad, east by south half-south; Maharag town, south-east half-east; Minawah, on Bahrein, south half-east; and an old Portuguese fort, on a rising ground, on the same island, south-west. This anchorage is in three and a-half fathoms water on a sandy bottom, and is about three miles off shore; but though well sheltered here from all but north-west winds, it is dangerous by its exposure to them, as that is the prevailing quarter from which they blow throughout the Persian Gulf, and there is then an extensive coral shoal, not more than a quarter of a mile to the south-east of the anchorage, which presents a lee shore to vessels riding here. The high land of Kateef, as seen from hence, bears west by north half-north, at a considerable distance. There is, however, a much more secure, convenient, and in every respect better anchorage than either of these two, within half a mile of the town of Minawah, where the dows and country vessels all lie in three and a-half and four fathoms water: the fort in the centre of the town bearing south-south-east; a patch of coral shoal without, north-north-west; the Portuguese fort on Bahrein, about west by north; and the centre of the town of Maharag, east.

The pearl fishery, of which these islands form the centre, is calculated to yield annually about twenty lacks of rupees worth for exportation, the greatest portion of which find their way to India, and the remainder are dispersed throughout the Persian and Turkish empires, by way of Bushire, Bussorah, and Bagdad, and from thence to Constantinople, Syria, Egypt, and even as far as the great capitals of Europe. The bank on which this fishery is carried on, extends from Bahrein, nearly to Ras-el-Khyma; and the finest of the pearls are found among the group

of Maude's Islands, near Haloola, (which may derive its name from loolo, the Arabic name for a pearl,) and Geziret Beni Aass. The islands of Bahrein\* furnish annually about a thousand boats; the tribes of Beni Aass at Bethoobah, or Boothabean, about five hundred; and the other small ports along that coast an equal number; besides those which sometimes come over from the Persian shore. It is said by some that any boats may fish for oysters on these banks without paying for such a privilege; but others contend that every boat found there must pay a fixed tribute to the Sheik of Bahrein. Both parties admit, however, that when any danger of capture from pirates is apprehended, the Sheik furnishes several armed vessels to protect the whole; and for this he claims a tribute of from six to ten pearls from each boat, according to her size and importance.

The fishery is carried on during the summer months only, when the bank is covered by boats throughout its whole extent. The divers are Arabs and negro slaves, who are mostly trained to the practice from their youth. They commence their labours at sun-rise, and continue generally until sun-set. They go down in all depths, from five to fifteen fathoms; remaining from two to five minutes, and bringing up with them from eight to twelve oysters in both hands. On reaching the surface, they barely take time to recover breath, and then dive again immediately, as it is found that any length of repose between, rather weakens than recruits the diver. All the gains of the fishery are divided in the most equitable way, by shares in proportion to the capital embarked in the boats; and those who have not at all contributed to their equipment are yet paid in proportionate shares also; so that all parties are interested in the gains of the concern, and all prosecute their labours willingly. The food of the divers, during the season, is chiefly fish, dates, and a small portion of bread, rice, and oil. During the fair season, they barely earn enough to keep them through the winter, which they pass, like the sailors of all other countries when on shore, in as great a

state of indolence and dissipation as their religion and their habits will admit of. These men, as might be expected, who pass one-half of their lives in the most fatiguing labours, and the other half in dissipation, seldom live to an old age. They use the precaution of oiling the orifices of their ears, and placing a horn over the nose when they dive, to prevent the water from entering by these apertures; but when they have been long engaged in this service, their bodies are subject to break out in sores, and their eyes become blood-shot and weak; and all their faculties seem to undergo a premature decay.

The terms of conducting an adventure in this fishery, vary so much at every season, and with every individual boat, that no rule can be laid down as a general one, except that each party is allowed to participate in the gain, in proportion to the capital he has embarked, or the personal service which he renders, and that strict justice and impartiality in the division prevails.

The largest and finest pearls are brought up from the deepest water, and all of them are said to be as hard when they are first taken out of the fish, as they are ever afterwards. They are, when new, of a purer white than after they become exposed to the air; and are calculated to lose, in this respect, one per cent. annually in value. There are two kinds of pearls found: the yellow one, which is sent chiefly to India, where those with this tinge are preferred; and the pure white, which are more esteemed in Europe, and find a better market also at all the great Turkish and Persian towns. The pearl of Bahrein is considered by all as very superior to that of Ceylon. The last is said to peel off, from not having acquired its perfect consistency when first taken, and to lose constantly in colour; whereas that of Bahrein is firm, and secure from that injury, and after a period of about fifty years, ceases to lose any thing in purity of colour. Before the pearls are sent off from the island, they are carefully assorted as to size, shape, tint, &c., and being drilled through, are strung on threads, and made up into round bundles of about three inches diameter, sealed and

directed, and sent in that form to distant markets. They are then called metaphorically, 'Roomaan el Bahr,' or 'Pomegranates of the Sea,' as that fruit is in great esteem here, and these bundles resemble them almost exactly in form and size.

Bahrein is famous also for its springs of fresh-water arising in the sea. One of these rises in three fathoms, where the fresh-water gushes up through the sand of the bottom with great force. A jar is fitted to the mouth of this spring, and the person who procures the water from it, dives with an empty bag, made of a goat's skin, rolled up under his arm: this he dexterously places over the mouth of the jar, and it being filled in a few seconds, it floats up to the surface with him. There are four or five springs of this kind around the island; and the only water which is drunk at Arad, is procured from one of these, situated a few yards below low-water mark on the sandy beach there. The water from all these springs is in itself very fresh; but from want of care in fitting the skins on their orifices, the sea-water is often admitted with it, and makes it brackish. A similar spring to these, it will be remembered, was discovered at the bottom of the sea near the Phœnician island of Aradus, on the coast of Syria. The inhabitants of that place are said, however, by Strabo, to have drawn their water from thence by means of a leaden bell, and a leathern pipe fitted to its bottom—a refinement in art, to which the people of Bahrein, with all the wealth which their sea of pearls affords them, have not yet arrived. The Arad of the Persian Gulf had at least this one feature of resemblance to the Aradus of the Mediterranean Sea: and both Tylos and it were worthy of their names, from the riches which they drew from the ocean; as colonies of a state, like Tyre, whose strength was in her shipping and her commerce, and whose purple, that dyed the robes of kings and emperors in ancient days, was drawn from the same element as the pearls which went from hence to deck the crowns and diadems of queens and empresses, and serve more generally the purposes of ornament and decoration in modern times.



It has been thought that these fresh springs rising at the bottom of the ocean, as well as the plentiful fall of rains from above are favourable to the formation of the pearl. Mr. Morier says,

The fishermen always augur a good season of the pearl when there have been plentiful rains; and so accurately has experience taught them this, that when corn is very cheap, they increase their demands for fishing. The connexion is so well ascertained, (at least, so fully credited,—not by them only, but by the merchants at large,) that the prices paid to the fishermen are, in fact, always raised when there have been great rains.\* There is a curious passage in Benjamin of Tudela, relating to the supposed formation of pearls, which seems to prove that it was a belief pretty widely extended; for he speaks of the people of Kathipan, a very distant place in India, where there were fifty thousand Jews; attributing the formation to the fall of a dew at a fixed period, which they collected from the surface of the waters, and afterwards caused to descend to the bottom of the sea.†

In the bottom of this bay of Bahrein, about twelve hours' sail to the south-west of Ras Rekkan, or Ras Sharek, and from five to six hours' sail to the southward generally of Bahrein, is the creek and port of Laghere. In this creek, the boats of the pearl fishery are laid up during the winter, to the number of several hundred sail, as the creek is capacious, and extends for many miles inland. This town of Laghere is considered as the Mina, or Port of Lahsa, a large Arab town, about three days' journey by camels into the

\* Morier's Travels through Persia. 4to.

† 'C'est en ce lieu (Kathipan) que se trouve le Bdelium, qui est un ouvrage merveilleux de la Nature fait de cette manière. Le 14 du mois Nisan, il tombe, sur la superficie des eaux une rosée que les habitans recueillent; après l'avoir renfermée, ils la jettent dans la mer, afin qu'elle aille au fond. Mais au milieu du mois Tisri, deux hommes descendent au fond de la mer, attachés à des cordes, qu'on retire, après qu'ils ont ramassés de certains reptiles, qu'on ouvre ou qu'on fend pour en tirer la pierre précieuse qui y est renfermée.'—*Bergeron's Collection de Voyages*. Paris, 4to. p. 52, 53. By whatever name the pearl was known in the country of Kathipan, it is evident that this description of the manner of procuring Bdelium, can be meant of pearls only.

interior westerly, and nine other such days' journeys from Derriah, the Wahabee capital. The tribe of Arabs living there are called Beni Asareeah; and the place is reckoned to be of some strength and importance. During the expeditions of the Portuguese in these seas, Lahsa was the seat of a king, to whom both the islands of Bahrein and the port of Kateef were subject; and an account is given in the Portuguese histories of those times, of an expedition from Ormuz against Bahrein, on account of Mocrim, the King of Lahsa, having refused to pay tribute to them. Bahrein was taken by the combined arms of the Portuguese and Persians; and Antonio Correa, the leader of the former, added the title of Bahrein to his name. During the whole of the engagement, Reis Xarafo, or Asharoff, the Persian admiral, looked on from his vessel as an unconcerned spectator; but when afterwards the body of King Mocrim, who was shot through the thigh, and did not die till six days afterwards, was taken over to Lahsa to be interred, this cold-blooded and cowardly spectator went over to the town, and cut off his head, which he sent to Ormuz. What seems equally disgraceful is, that Correa, the Portuguese commander, in memory of the share which he had in this event, was authorized to bear a king's head in his coat of arms, which is still, says the historian of his own country, borne by his descendants.\*

Beyond Laghere to the north-west is the town and port of El Kateef. A plan of this place, by Captain Simmons, has been seen by Horsburgh, and he judges from it that it is a safe harbour. In his Directory, he gives the latitude of the town as 20° 56' north, but in his chart it is placed in lat. 30° 36' north,—a difference which must have arisen from an error of the press. The directions for entering this port are probably from Captain Simmons too. It is remarkable, however, that though Horsburgh says, on the authority of the principal pilots, that the coast from

*Portuguese Discovery and Conquest of India*, p. 2, b. 3, c. 1. sect. 6, from the Portuguese Asia of De Faria of Sousa, inserted in Kerr's *General History of Voyages and Travels*,—*Edinburgh*, 1812. 8vo. vol. 6, p. 188.

Graine to Katif lies south by west; and that a course from the island of Ohah, of south by west, will carry a vessel inside the islands between Graine and Kateef, and a course of south by east outside of them; yet he lays down this coast in his chart as about south-east half-south, or nearly four points different from that given in the Directory.\* In a commercial work like Mr. Milburn's, one does not expect so much hydrographical accuracy; and when we find him placing Bahrein thirty leagues west-north-west from Bushire,† an error of nearly as many leagues in distance, and of about six points in the course, one does not feel so much disappointment; but Captain Horsburgh is an authority so highly and so deservedly esteemed, that it is in every point of view desirable to see his excellent work as free of blemishes as possible.

El Kateef is situated in about lat.  $26^{\circ} 20'$  north, and long. about  $50^{\circ} 0'$  east. It is a large trading town, intimately connected with the Bahrein Islands, and sharing in their pearl fishery as well as their general commerce, though the governments are independent of each other. It has a deep bay, in which the vessels of the pearl fishery are also laid up, as well as at Laghere, during the winter season. It is a singular fact, confirmed by all those who are well acquainted with the Gulf, that no worms are found to injure vessels' bottoms, or sunken wood, throughout its waters, destructive as that cause is to ships in all other seas. On the Persian side of the Gulf, there are no coral banks, and few other shoals, the soundings being mostly regular, on a muddy bottom, and the water thick and foul. On the Arabian side, coral banks and shoals abound, as in the Red Sea, with most irregular soundings, a rocky and sandy bottom, and the water beautifully transpa-

\* Horsburgh's Sailing Directions, p. 247, 4to. We have great pleasure in saying, that in later editions of these works, these errors have been revised, and that all subsequent improvements in our knowledge of these shores are embodied in the successive editions of Captain Horsburgh's Charts and Sailing Directions as they appear. See this subject discussed in the *Oriental Herald*, for September, 1828.

† Milburn's *Oriental Commerce*, 4to. 1813. vol. 1, p. 119.

rent. In our progress through it, we had as yet seen no weeds, for which the Red Sea was so celebrated, under its title of Yam Sooph, and which, indeed, still abound there as much as ever; but floating serpents, of which I do not remember ever to have heard mention in the Arabian Gulf, are found in this of Persia, as well as on the coasts of Scind, Guzerat, and Hindoostan. Whether any, or which of these facts may at all account for there being no worms throughout this sea, to injure the bottoms of vessels, would admit of some consideration. The whole of the bottom, from Ras-el-Khyma up to Kateef, and, as some say, even as far up on this side as the mouth of the Euphrates, presents broken ground and sudden overfalls, or unequal ridges, to the lead, differing five and even ten fathoms at a cast; and the pearl-divers observe that in these pits of the bottom, the best oysters are found, under the overhanging edges, or brinks of these openings.

Proceeding upwards from El Kateef to the northward, or towards Graine, the coast of the continent is but little known to Europeans, and is navigated with great caution by the natives, who, from the abundance of shoals in it, never move but in the day-time, with persons stationed on their yards and at their mast-heads to look out, and anchoring always before sun-set, as is done on the coast of the Red Sea. In this interval of space, there is however, in the offing several islands, to the number of seven, as the native pilots say. Four of these, which were seen and visited by Captain Biddulph, of his Majesty's sloop *Hesper*, have obtained the name of Biddulph's Group, and of these he gives the following positions.

The first island is in lat. observed on it  $27^{\circ} 55' 50''$  north, and long. by lunar distances  $49^{\circ} 26'$  east. This is not more than three hundred yards long and sixty broad, being merely a sand-bank elevated only four or five feet above the surface of the sea, totally destitute of vegetation, and lying in a direction of east-north-east and west-south-west.

The second island is in lat.  $27^{\circ} 44'$  north, and long.  $49^{\circ} 31'$  east. This is nearly a mile in length, in the direction of north-east by

north, and south-east by south, and from four to five hundred yards broad. Its elevation is not more than five or six feet above the sea, and it has only some scanty vegetation on its southern edge.

The third island is in lat.  $27^{\circ} 41'$  north, and long.  $49^{\circ} 31'$  east. This is of nearly a circular form, and about half a mile in circumference. It is destitute of vegetation, and elevated seven or eight feet only above the sea.

The fourth island is in lat.  $27^{\circ} 42'$  north, and long.  $49^{\circ} 26'$  east, it being observed from the ship to bear west-south-west from the second island, distant five or six miles.

Between the second and third islands is a good passage, with ten fathoms, on a sandy bottom in mid-channel. These have each a coral reef around them, but it does not extend far off. When the third island bore west by north five miles, there were thirty-three fathoms, mud; and on the north-east side of the second and third islands, about three miles off, there were from twenty to twenty-eight fathoms, sand, in regular soundings. The first island had seventeen fathoms, sand and shells, on the west side, about two miles off. Captain Biddulph landed on three of the islands to observe, and found plenty of turtle and birds' eggs on all of them.

In Heather's chart of the Persian Gulf, there are seven islands lying scattered, with some shoals among them, nearly in this latitude and longitude; but their individual positions are most inaccurate. The whole number of seven may, and do probably exist, however; and besides this group of Captain Biddulph's, the islands of Kenn and Zezarine, as they are called, further to the eastward, may help to complete the number.

The next port above El Kateef of any note on this coast, is that of Graine, as it is called in our English charts, though known among the Arabs by the name of Kooete only. This is a port of some importance, seated in a fine bay; and the town is large and populous, though the sandy desert presses close upon its walls, and



no vegetation is to be seen around it, within the range of human view. It seems always to have preserved its independence too, even at the time when Ormuz, Muscat, Bahrein, Lahsa, and even Kateef and Bussorah, which two last were garrisoned by Turks, were assailed by the Portuguese arms,\* and they still bear the reputation of being the freest and the bravest people throughout the Gulf.

The town and bay of Graine is in lat. 29° 15' north, and about long. 48° 0' east, or nearly south-south-west from the bar of the Euphrates, at the distance of about fifty miles. The town itself is chiefly inhabited by mercantile and trading people, who engage in all the branches of commerce carried on throughout the Gulf. The port sends out, at least, a hundred sail of vessels, large and small; and the people who navigate them, as well as those for whom they sail, have the highest character for probity, skill, firmness, and courage. The bay admits of excellent anchorage, in convenient depths, from ten to five fathoms water; and it was for some time used as the station of the East India Company's cruisers, to land and wait for dispatches transmitting between India and Europe, during the temporary residence there of the Company's Agent, who had quitted Bussorah, on account of some differences with the Turkish Government.

The entrance to the Bay is covered by a group of three small islands, following each other in succession, in a line of nearly south-south-east from each other. To the southward of these, at a distance so as but just to be perceived from the mast-head of a large ship in the clearest day, is another group of three similar islands, more widely separated.

The name of the northernmost of this southern group is Koubbah, probably from having a saint's tomb with a dome on it,

\* See a detail of the operations against Kateef and Bussorah, in the very year in which the Portuguese poet, Camoens, went out to India to endeavour to advance his fortune by the sword, after it had been so little promoted by his pen.—*Portuguese Discovery and Conquest of Asia*, as before referred to in Kerr's Collection, vol. vi. p. 408—410.

for that the name in Arabic implies. This is thought to bear about south-east, from the southern point of Graine harbour or bay, at a distance of fourteen miles. The name of the second is Umm-el-Maradam, and this lies south-south-east, distant about twenty-one miles from the same point of Graine harbour. The name of the third is Gharroo, which lies from the same place about south-east, distant twenty-five miles.

The name of the three islands that form the northern group, beginning from the northward, are Moochan, Feliché, and Ukhar. They lie in a direction of south-south-east from each other at intervals of four or five miles apart, and cover the mouth of the entrance to the bay of Graine, for which they serve as sailing marks. These are all small; and Feliché, the largest, is not more than seven miles in circumference. As far as I could learn, they were in general barren, and at present uninhabited; but as they are said to possess fresh water, they might not always have been so.

Notwithstanding this long digression, a word deserves to be devoted to these islands, for the illustration of Ancient Geography. Arrian, in recording the design which Alexander the Great entertained of invading Arabia by sea, enters into a description of that part of it which borders on the Persian Gulf, beginning from the Euphrates. The extent of Arabia, along the sea-coast, according to the information given of it to Alexander, was, says his historian, not less than India; and many islands lay not far off it. There were also sundry creeks and other places there, fit for the reception of a navy; and divers convenient places to build cities, which in time might become rich and populous. Two islands were particularly reported to lie in the sea, over against the mouth of the Euphrates, one of which was not above one hundred and twenty stadia distant from the mouth of that river and the sea-shore. This was the lesser of the two, covered with thick woods, and had a temple on it dedicated to Diana; the inhabitants had their dwellings round the temple. The report was that harts and goats, and other animals, strayed

in the woods there unmolested, because it was deemed sacrilegious to take them on any other account than to offer them in sacrifice to the goddess. This island, as Aristobulus tells us, Alexander ordered to be called Icarus, from one of that name in the Ægean Sea, near which Icarus, the son of Dædalus, is said to have been drowned. The fable runs, that in disobedience to his father's orders, he attempted to fly into the upper regions of the air with wings cemented together with wax; and that these being melted by the heat of the sun, he fell into the sea, which was thenceforward called by his name, as well as the small island near the spot on which he fell.

We have here the measurement of about one hundred and twenty stadia, or from twelve to fifteen miles, for the distance of the Icarus of Arrian from the mouth of the Euphrates. Strabo mentions the same island, and most distinctly states that it would be on the right hand of a voyager who sailed from the mouth of the Euphrates towards Arabia, and consequently it would be near that coast. He calls the temple on it one of Apollo, instead of Diana; but in other particulars he agrees with Arrian.

In opposition to those two excellent authorities, as to distance and position, Col. Kinnier, in his *Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire*, has fixed on Karek as the Icarus of Arrian; though that island, instead of fifteen, is upwards of one hundred miles from the mouth of the Euphrates; and on sailing from these towards the coast of Arabia, must be on the left instead of the right, and at the distance of a hundred miles at least, so as not to be at all seen\*. The name of Karek seems in this instance to have been the only foundation for such an assumption, probably from some supposed resemblance to Icarus; but although a name given by Alexander to an island like this (for it was evidently not its native one) would last but for a short

time among the people of the country, as no settlers were placed there to perpetuate it, and though the facts of distance and position are less equivocal guides: yet, if a resemblance in names must be had, that of Ohhar, or Ukhar, (pronounced as a strong guttural in Arabic,) may be supposed to resemble the Greek, which Dr. Vincent writes Ikharus,\* quite as closely as that of Karek.

The other island, continues Arrian, is about one day and night's sail from the mouth of the Euphrates, and is called Tylus. It is very large and spacious, and not mountainous, nor woody, but produces plenty of several sorts of fruits, pleasant and agreeable to the taste.† In this we instantly recognize the present Bahrein, which retains to this day all the features here described.

It seems highly probable that the present town and harbour of Graine was the Gerrhæ of the ancients. Strabo says, that the Sabæans furnished Syria with all the gold which that country received formerly; but that they were in after-times supplanted in this trade by the inhabitants of Gerrhæ, near the mouth of the Euphrates.‡ Its position is quite as favourable for such a supply to Syria, as the country of the Sabæans could be; but, from whatever source the gold thus transported by them was then procured, that metal is no longer an article of trade, or even of remittance in any quantity, from the same quarter.

If an apology were deemed necessary for so long an interruption of the narrative of my voyage, it might be replied, that the information here detailed, regarding the western side of the Persian Gulf, is almost altogether new, and must be considered as at least a valuable addition to our hydrographical knowledge of this coast. The facts have been drawn from various sources, and these all authentic:—the manuscript journals of officers now in our squadron, kindly furnished to me for inspection; and the verbal information of our Arab pilot, Jeomah, a native of

\* Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients.

† Rooke's Arrian, 8vo. London, 1814, b. 7. c. 20. vol. ii. pp. 166, 167.

‡ Strabo, lib. 16.

Bahrein, and one whose life had been passed in sailing on these seas for the last fifty years. They have been thought the more worthy of preservation, as they are in general unknown to even the present navigators of the Persian Gulf, who are all afraid to approach this shore, from having no charts or information regarding it; though the Arab pilots assert the possibility of making a passage up through all the islands, and inside most of them. As, from the excessive heat of the low and barren deserts, even in the depth of winter, the land and sea-breezes prevail on the Arabian shore, a vessel might possibly make a passage by the aid of these; while the strong north-west winds, which prevail for nine months in the year on the opposite coast, are exceedingly difficult to beat up against.

At sun-set on the evening of the 24th, after seeing the Arabian coast, we tacked off it in thirty-five fathoms; and, going seventeen miles to the northward, tacked on again, in forty-two fathoms water, on a moderately soft bottom.

Nov. 25th. — At sun-rise we had gone about six leagues on a true east-south-east course, when we saw the small island of Surdy, its centre bearing north half-west, distant three leagues, and our soundings in thirty-five fathoms water.

This island is in about the latitude of  $25^{\circ} 50'$  north, nearly nine leagues to the westward of Bomosa, and eight leagues to the southward of Polior, according to Horsburgh. It is said to be about six miles in length, from north-east to south-west, and not more than four miles broad. From the north-west end, a reef of rocks is reported to run out two miles from the shore; but the southern part of the island, on which the town is situated, is said to be clear, and safe to approach. There are three hills on the island, two of them near each other; and the third, which is the highest, at a considerable distance to the southward of them. Off the town, at the southern side of the island, there is said to be good anchorage; and it is added, that water and refreshments may be obtained at a cheap rate.



All this cluster of islands, occupying nearly the mid-channel of the Gulf between the Arabian and Persian shores, but mostly nearer to the latter, including Surdy, Nobfleur, the Great and Little Tomb, and Polior, which is the largest of the whole, would seem to be the Pylora islands of antiquity, as they correspond nearly in number and position, and retain nearly the same name in the principal one, from which the whole group might have been originally called.

The Great Tomb is a low island, little more than a league in length from east to west, and somewhat less than that in breadth from north to south. The northern extreme is the highest, and the southern shelves off to a flat beach, near which the water is shoaler than elsewhere; but as the soundings are regular, and there are no rocks known around it, the whole of its shores may be said to be safe to approach by the lead. Near its western end is a small bay, convenient for landing; and not far from this are some trees, close to which, it is said, fresh water may be procured. The island is at present uninhabited; and I could not learn that it had ever been otherwise, though its name is thought to be Portuguese in its present form, and derived from the appearance of some sepulchres there. Sir Harford Jones gives to this island, and a smaller one near it, called the Little Tomb, the Persian names of Gumbad-e-Bousung and Gumbad-e-Kutcheek, or the 'great and little dome,' from the domes which usually crown the sepulchres of Mohammedan Imaums; but we could perceive no vestige of buildings at present on either of them; nor could I learn from the Persians and Arabs on board, that these had any other names than simply 'islands,' in either of these languages; or if there were any, they were not acquainted with them. It is mentioned as the place of anchorage of the fleet of Nearchus, after the grounding of the galleys on the shoal of Oarakhta, and is known by the identity of its situation, at the distance of three hundred stadia from that island, though it is there mentioned also without a name.

It is among the towns opposite to this, on the Persian coast, that the Sidodône of Nearchus is to be sought for, the place where he watered his fleet, after their coming from their anchorage at the island of the Great Tomb. It is as likely to have been Shenaz as any of the others; for at this they might procure good water, and fish at least, and this it seems was all they could obtain. This, too, would correspond more accurately than either of the others with the course of the route, and the distances given. The passage of the journal is, 'In the morning they weighed again (from the Great Tomb), and keeping an island, named Pulora, on their left, they proceeded to a town on the continent, called Sidodône, or Sisidône: it was a poor place, which could afford no supply but fish and water; for the inhabitants here also were Ikhthuophagi, and had no means of support but what they derived from their fishery.\* Dr. Vincent had great difficulty in fixing on this town, from the discordant testimonies of different voyagers along the coast; and it must be confessed, that a comparison of the names and positions of the authorities he has quoted, would be alone sufficient to discourage a man of less perseverance than the learned Dean from the tedious and often unsatisfactory task of endeavouring to reconcile and harmonize them.

This island of Froor, though upwards of two leagues in length, and more than one in breadth, is not inhabited, nor was it known to any of whom I could enquire on board, whether it possessed water or vegetation. Its appearance was favourable to the conjecture that it had both; but this is always liable to error. There can remain no doubt of this island being the Pulôra which Nearchus is described to have had on his left hand, when sailing from the desert one of the Great Tomb, where the fleet had anchored, to the town of Sidodône, where it procured water. It seems singular, in this instance, that the ancient Greek and modern English name should so nearly resemble each other in their varia-

\* Vincent's Nearchus, 37, vol. 1, p. 59.

tion from the original native one, unless one might suppose Polior to have been rather derived from Pulôra subsequent to the knowledge of its being the island so called by the Macedonian admiral; but both of them are so nearly allied to Froor, when analysed and compared, that they may both have been written down from a native mouth, so difficult is it to catch with accuracy the sounds of a foreign language, and still more difficult to express them in writing. The Greeks have been loudly complained against for their errors in this respect; and it is true that many of their names are difficult to be traced to their source, or to be recognized even as corruptions of original native ones. But the moderns, at least those not skilled in the languages of the countries of which they write, commit errors of equal magnitude. The German, the French, and the Italian orthography and pronunciation of Oriental names, have often no resemblance to each other; and while our own countrymen, even in India, (who, navigating, like Near-chuś, a shore previously undescribed in books, call the Joassamee Pirates the tribe of 'Joe Hlassim,' and the Wahabee sect of Mohammedans, the 'War Bees,') have aimed to express in a foreign name, some known idea in their own tongue, one can hardly wonder at the Tylos and Arathus, the ancient names of Bahrein, being converted into Tyrus and Aradus, and derived from those islands of the Tyrians on the coast of Phœnicia,\* or at Sidodône being made a colony of the Sidonians,† particularly among a people who, from mere resemblance of sounds, connected Media with the Medéa, and Persia with the Perseus, of their prolific mythology.‡

At noon, we were in lat. 25° 23' north, and long. 54° 38' east, the low land of the Arabian coast being then in sight, bearing from east to east-north-east, distant about fifteen miles, and our soundings in fourteen fathoms water, on a sandy bottom.

We had light, variable winds throughout the afternoon, with which we steered easterly; and had at sun-set a portion of the

\* Strabo, p. 766.

† Gronovius and Ortelius.

‡ Vincent's *Diss.* vol. 1. p. 353.

low coast of Arabia, appearing like an island, bearing south by east, about three leagues off; and its other extreme bearing north-east by east, somewhat more distant; our soundings in thirteen fathoms.

When the day had well closed, we had a land-wind off the coast, blowing nearly from the southward. With this we stood along-shore, to the eastward, shoaling our water gradually to seven fathoms at midnight, when we cautiously hauled off a little to deepen our soundings.

The whole of our sea-voyage from Bushire down the Gulf having afforded no view sufficiently interesting for a vignette to the present chapter, I have profited by the kindness of my excellent friend, Mr. James Baillie Frazer, whose works speak sufficiently of his intelligence and talents, to present the reader with a view of the Ruins of Ormuz, from one of the unpublished sketches contained in his portfolio. I had hoped, indeed, that in the course of our voyage we might have had occasion to visit this spot, rendered interesting by its history and associations, and immortalized by the verse of Milton:—

‘ High on a throne of royal state, which far  
Outshone the wealth of ORMUZ or of Ind,  
Or where the gorgeous East, with richest hand,  
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold.’\*

But not having had this pleasure, I content myself with subjoining a short notice of its rise and fall, from the History of Persia, as one of the most remarkable places in the Gulf; and without some mention of which, no account of these parts could be considered complete.

‘ Of the numerous settlements which Albuquerque had made on the coast of Persia, Ormuz was the first. This island lies at the entrance of the Gulf, and is only a few leagues distant from Gombroon. It has neither vegetation nor fresh water. Its cir-

cumference is not twenty miles. Both its hills and plains are formed of salt; and that mineral is not only impregnated in its streams, but crusts over them like frozen snow. The nature of the soil, or rather the surface of the earth, renders the heat of summer more intolerant at Ormus, than in any of those parched islands, or provinces, with which it is surrounded; and unless we consider the advantages which it derives from its excellent harbour and local situation, it appears to be one of the last spots on the globe which human beings would desire to inhabit. The first settlers on this island were some Arabs, who were compelled by the Tartar invaders of Persia to leave the continent. These gave it the name of Hormuz, or Ormus; being that of the district which they had been obliged to abandon. One old fisherman, whose name was Geroon, is said to have been its sole inhabitant when this colony arrived. They remained masters of Ormus till conquered by Albuquerque; and it had been in the possession of the Portuguese for more than a century. It had become, during that period, the emporium of all the commerce of the Gulf: merchants from every quarter of the globe had flocked to a city\* where their property and persons were secure against injustice and oppression, and from whence they could carry on a profitable commerce with Persia, Arabia, and Turkey, without being exposed to the dangers attendant on a residence in these barbarous and unsettled countries.

‘Abbas saw with envy the prosperity of Ormus: he could not understand the source from which that was derived, and looked to its conquest as an event that would add to both the glory and the wealth of his kingdom. Emaum Kooli Khan, Governor of Fars, received orders to undertake this great enterprise; but the king was well aware that it would be impos-

\* This city was at one time very large: little is now left, except the ruins of the numerous reservoirs, which had been constructed to preserve the rain that fell in the periodical season for the use of the inhabitants.



sible to succeed without the aid of a naval equipment. The English were ready auxiliaries. An agreement, which exempted them from paying customs on the merchandize they imported at Gombroon, and gave them a share of the duties taken from others, added to boundless promises of future favour, were the bribes by which the agents of the East India Company were induced to become the instruments of destroying this noble settlement. A fleet was soon collected: Persian troops were embarked, and the attack made. The Portuguese defended themselves bravely; but, worn down by hunger and fatigue, and altogether hopeless of succour, they were compelled to surrender. The city was given over to the Persians, by whom it was soon stript of all that was valuable, and left to a natural decay. Abbas was overjoyed at the conquest; but all the magnificent plans which he had formed from having a great sea-port in his dominions, terminated in his giving his own name to Gombroon, which he commanded to be in future called Bunder Abbas, or the Port of Abbas.\*

‘The hopes which the servants of the East India Company had cherished from the expulsion of the Portuguese from Ormus, and their other possessions, were completely disappointed. The treaty which Abbas entered into to obtain their aid, by which it was stipulated that all plunder should be equally divided, that each should appoint a governor, and that the future customs both

\* If the English ever indulged a hope of deriving permanent benefit from the share they took in this transaction, they were completely disappointed. They had, it is true, revenged themselves upon an enemy they hated, destroyed a flourishing settlement, and brought ruin and misery upon thousands, to gratify the avarice and ambition of a despot, who promised to enrich them by a favour, which they should have known was not likely to protect them, even during his life, from the violence and injustice of his own officers, much less during that of his successors. The history of the English factory at Gombroon, from this date till it was finally abandoned, is one series of disgrace, of losses, and of dangers, as that of every such establishment in a country like Persia must be. Had that nation either taken Ormus for itself, or made a settlement on a more eligible island in the Gulf, it would have carried on its commerce with that quarter to much greater advantage; and its political influence, both in Persia and Arabia, would have remained unrivalled.

of Ormus and Gombroon should be equally shared, was disregarded from the moment the conquest was completed. The sanguine anticipations of one of their chief agents, who wrote to England "that their dear infant" (this term was applied to the commercial factory at Gombroon) "would receive new life if the king but kept his word,"\* soon vanished: and we find the same person, after the fall of Ormus, stating, that no benefit whatever can be expected from that possession, unless it be held exclusively by the English. But every expectation of advantage that had been indulged, was soon dispelled by the positive refusal of Abbas to allow the English either to fortify Ormus, or any other harbour in the Gulf.†

\* Letter from Mr. Edward Mounox to the Company, dated Isfahan, 1621.

† History of Persia, vol. i. p. 545—548.

To this may be added the following striking description of this celebrated mart, by a very early writer, who, in the antiquated but forcible language of his times, thus portrays the fall of this now silent and desolate heap of ruins:—

‘ Ormus is an isle within the Gulf; in old times known by the name Geru, and before that, Ogiris (but I dare not say from a famous Thæban of that name); its circuit is fifteen miles; and procreates nothing note-worthy, salt excepted, of which the rocks are participant, and the silver-shining sand expresseth sulphur.

‘ At the end of the isle appear yet the ruins of that late glorious city, built by the Portugals, but under command of a titular King, a Moor. It was once as big as Exeter, the buildings fair and spacious, with some monasteries, and a large bazaar, or market.

‘ Of most note and excellence is the castle, well-seated, entrenched, and fortified. In a word, this poor place, now not worth the owning, was but ten years ago the only stately city in the Orient, if we may believe this universal proverb—

‘ Si terrarum Orbis, quaquæ patet, Annulus esset,  
Illius Ormusium gemma, decusque foret.

‘ If all the world were but a ring,  
Ormus the diamond should bring.

‘ This poor city was defrauded of her hopes, continuing glory, such time as Emangoly-Chawn, Duke of Shyras or Persepolis, took it with an army of fifteen thousand men, by command of the King of Persia, who found himself bearded by the Portugall. Howbeit, they had never triumphed over them, had not some English merchant ships (then too much abused by the bragging Lusitanian, and so exasperated) helped them, by whose valour and cannon the city was sacked and depopulated. The captains (serving the East India merchants) were Captain Weddall, Blyth, and Woodcocke.

‘ Their articles with the Persian Duke were, to have the lives of the poor Christians a

their disposal, some cannons; and half the spoil; and accordingly when the city was entered, after a brave and tedious resistance, forced to yield by plagues, fluxes, and famine, every house of quality, magazine, and monastery, were sealed up, with the signets of the Duke and merchants. By which good order, the Company had no doubt been enriched with two millions of pounds (though but their share), had it not been prevented by a rascal sailor's covetousness, who, though he knew the danger of his life and loss of the Christians' credit, yet stole in a monastery sealed with both consents, commits sacrilege upon the silver lamps, chalice, crucifixes, and other rich ornaments, and stuffed so full, that in descending, his theft cried out against him, was taken by the Persians, led to the Duke, confessed, and was drubbed right handsomely. But the greatest mischief came hereby unto the English, for the perfidious Pagans, though they knew the merchants were not guilty of his transgression, and consequently had not broke the order, - notwithstanding, the soldiers went to the Duke, saying, Shall we sit idle, while the English, by stealth and secrecy, exhaust all our hopes of benefit and riches? Whereat the Duke, glad of such advantage, replied, If so, then go and have your desires. Whereupon they broke open the houses and store of what was valuable, and made themselves masters of all they found; whilst the confident sailors lay bragging of their victories a-shipboard. And when they were possessed of what was done, they exclaimed as men possessed, but the Persians understood them not, nor cared they what their meaning was, seeing they verified the adage, Give losers leave to prate.

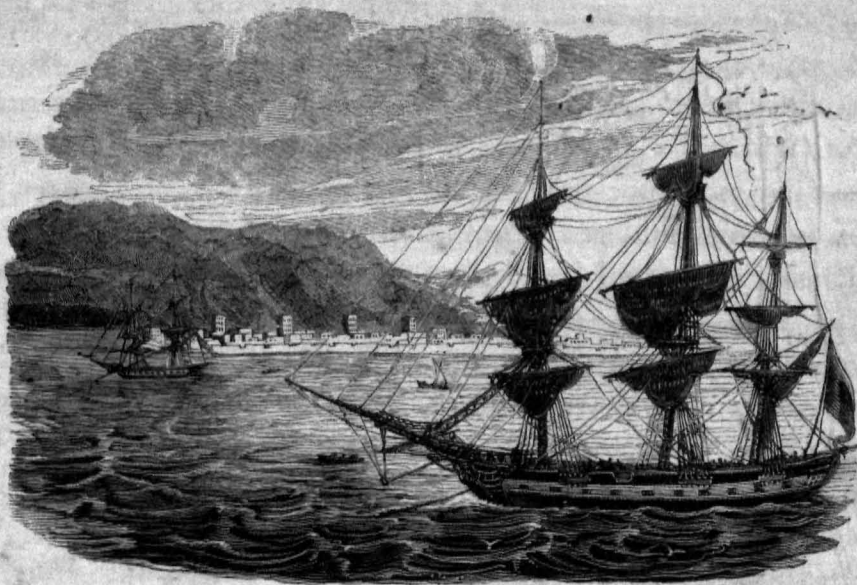
' Yet they found enough to throw away, by that small, sufficiently showing their luxurious minds and prodigality, if they had gotten more: dicing, whoring, brawling, and tipping, being all the relics of their husbandry and thankfulness.

' Only Captain Woodcocke had good luck and bad: lighting upon a frigate that stole away, unwitting to the enemy, loaden with pearls and treasure, that he took for prize, and kept all to himself, perhaps worth a million of rials, or better. But see ill fortune. The Whale (of which he was captain), rich laden with his masters' and his own goods, hard by Swally Road without the Bar, sunk, and was swallowed by the sands, occasioned by a hole, neglected by the carpenter, and failing to carine or mend her, the ports were open and took in water, which, to prove that even whales are subject to destruction, perished in that merciless element; Woodcocke, not long after, overwhelming his life with too much care, too unable to moderate so great misfortunes.

' This poor city is now disrobed of all her bravery; the Persians each month convey her ribs of wood and stone, to aggrandize Gombroone, not three leagues distant, out of whose ruins she begins to triumph.

' Ormus Island has no fresh water, save what the fruitful clouds weep over her, in sorrow of her desolation, late so populous; those are preserved in urns or earthen jars, and are most comfortable to drink in, and to give bedding a cool and refrigerating sleeping-place; to lenify scorching Phaëton, who is there potent in his flames and sulphur.' \*

Herbert's Travels in Persia, p. 46, 47.



## CHAPTER XXV.

VISIT TO RAS-EL-KHYMA—NEGOTIATION WITH THE PIRATES—  
BOMBARDMENT OF THE TOWN.

Nov. 26.—THE morning opened clearly, and we had a moderate breeze off the land, from the south-west, with smooth water. In the course of the night, we had passed the port of Sharjee, on the Arabian coast, which is not an island, as laid down in Niebuhr's chart, the only one in which it is inserted; but a small town, on a sandy beach, containing from five to six hundred inhabitants. It is situated in lat.  $25^{\circ} 34'$  north, and lies eleven leagues south-west of a small island, close to the shore, called Jeziret-el-Hamra; and three leagues south-west of Sharjee is Aboo Hayle. Both of these send boats to the pearl-fishery of Bahrein, during the summer months; and for their subsistence during the



winter, they have abundance of fish, with dates, and the produce of their flocks, in milk, &c. though corn is rarely seen among them; and rice, their only substitute for it, is brought by them from Muscat and Bahrein, to which ports it finds its way from India and the Persian coasts.

Next in order to Sharjee is a small town, called Fisht, which is less than two hours' sail to the north-east of it, and whose population is scanty and poor.

Eiman is another small town, near the shore, a few hours' sail to the north-eastward of this, and, like Sharjee, containing a population of four to five hundred souls. These, however, do not send boats to the pearl-banks of Bahrein, but live chiefly by fishing on their own coast, and the produce of their date-trees and flocks on shore, being as destitute as the others of corn, rice, or other grain.

In the interior of the country, which is here a flat sandy plain, extending for several leagues inward, to the foot of a low range of broken hills, are Arab families, of the tribes of Beni Chittib and Naa'im, both of which are numerous, and live in hair-tents, and ride on camels, which form their principal property, as they have no horses, and but few goats. Beyond this, in the interior, past the line of mountains to the westward, are Arabs of the tribe of Beni Aass, who are still more numerous than both the former combined, and whose state of existence is still more rude. These are described as living even without tents, lying on the bare earth, and having no other property but camels, of whose hair they make their garments, and on whose milk they entirely subsist. Their sandy wastes do not furnish them even with dates, and rice and corn are almost unknown to them. The flesh of the camels that die is sometimes eaten by them; but this is seldom, so that the various preparations of milk, in the form of cheese, butter, lebben, &c. may be said to constitute their common food. It is added, that throughout their territories there is but barely water enough for their camels, who drink no oftener than once in two or three days, and



subsist on the scanty supply of bitter and thorny plants scattered over these desert regions; and that this water is of so brackish and repulsive a taste, as to be drinkable only in moments of extreme thirst. All these people are Mohammedans, of the Wahabee sect, enthusiastically devoted to their religion, and ready, on all occasions, to array themselves in battle against its enemies.

From Eiman, north-eastward, in the line of the coast, and distant about two hours' sail, or about ten miles, is Oom-el-Ghiewan, which we just discovered at sun-rise, and stood in for it on an east-north-east course. In running towards Oom-el-Ghiewan, we had a clear soft bottom, and regular soundings, shoaling from twelve fathoms at seven miles off, to seven fathoms within three miles of the shore. The coast itself presented a line of white sandy beach, with date-groves on the plain; and at the distance of twenty to forty miles within this, rose a ridge of lofty and broken hills, running almost north and south in the direction of the shore.

A large fleet of boats, to the number of more than twenty sail, were seen standing after us astern, probably bound either to Ras-el-Khyma, or some other port along-shore; but as we carried all sail, we soon lost sight of them. Other smaller rowing-boats pulled off from different parts of the coast, as if to speak with us; but these also, for the same reasons, were unable to come within hail.

At nine P.M. we had approached within three miles of the shore, and were then nearly abreast of Oom-el-Ghiewan, having it to bear south-east on our starboard bow, as we now steered north-east along the line of coast itself. The appearance of this place was that of a square enclosure, forming a walled village, as the dwellings within it were visible; a number of circular towers at unequal distances along the beach, and fragments of a former connecting wall; with detached houses and scattered huts, mingled with clusters of date-trees. On one of the round towers a flag-staff was seen, on which the Arab colours were displayed for a short while, and then hauled down again. We noticed also three large boats at anchor in a creek or back-water to the north-east, their masts

appearing over a low tongue of sand, and several other boats dismantled and hauled up on the beach. The appearance of four English vessels had apparently created some surprise, if not alarm, as most of the population were collected in a crowd on the beach as we passed.

We now hauled north-east along the coast, with a light breeze right aft, and had regular soundings of six and seven fathoms, on a sandy bottom, at the distance of three miles from the shore.

At noon, we had sailed about ten miles along a flat sandy coast, with but few trees on it; and were then just abreast of an isolated dwelling of some size, probably once a fortified post, seated amid a thin grove of date-trees, and called Beït Salin-el-Khamees, alluding, perhaps, to some story connected with the place. We were now in latitude  $25^{\circ} 38'$  north, by observation, and longitude  $55^{\circ} 22'$  east, by account; with the house described, bearing south-east, distant about three miles, in seven fathoms water, and the town of Jeziret-el-Hamra, just rising in sight, bearing east-north-east, distant seven or eight miles.

We stood on north-east, along the line of the coast, and having a fine leading breeze, were abreast of Jeziret-el-Hamra about three o'clock, our soundings continuing at six and seven fathoms throughout. This town is seated on a small low island of sand, separated from the main by a strait, which is at all times fordable, and never admits a passage for the smallest boats.

At the period of the first expedition against the strong-holds of the Joassamees, in 1808, this was destroyed; and since that period it has never recovered itself, the few who saved themselves by flight having added to the population of Ras-el-Khyma for mutual strength and security. At present, however, this place still presents the appearance of many perfect buildings, with round towers and walls, all seemingly of white stone, though only a few fishermen resort here in the fair season.

The wind now slackened, and it was not until four P.M., after sailing about two miles on a north-east course, with the same

soundings, that we perceived the town of Ras-el-Khyma, rising from the water-line at the foot of the lofty mountains in the east-north-east. We hauled immediately towards it, going little more than two miles an hour, and shoaling our water gradually from eight to six fathoms.

At sun-set, having gone about eight miles on a north-east by east course, we anchored in the last named depth, on a sandy bottom, with the following bearings: northern extreme of the town, south-east quarter south, three and a-half miles; town of Ramms, north-east by east, three-quarters east, eight miles; Jeziret-el-Hamra, south-west quarter west, ten miles; Rash Shahm, north-east half north, twenty-five miles; Ras Khassab, north-east three-quarters north, thirty-five miles; high land of Gombroon, north by east, three-quarters east, eighty miles; islands of the Great and Little Tombs, north by west half-west, thirty-five miles.

As the arrival of the squadron had excited a considerable degree of alarm in the minds of the natives, since they had been prepared to expect hostile measures, the whole of the night appeared to have been passed by them in preparation for defence, and we witnessed a continual discharge of musketry in different quarters of the town, and even of cannon, from the towers and forts.

Nov. 27th. — At day-light in the morning, a boat was sent from the Challenger, under the charge of Mr. Wimble, second lieutenant, to take on shore Mr. Taylor and the Arab Mollah, as bearers of a letter from Mr. Bruce. The purport of this letter was briefly this: It stated the firm conviction of the British Government, that the capture of the vessels in the Red Sea, under their flag, was committed with a knowledge of their being English property; and waived all further discussion on that point. It insisted on the immediate restoration of the plundered property, amounting to about twelve lacks of rupees. It demanded also, that the commander of the piratical squadron, Ameer Ibrahim, should be delivered up for punishment, and that two of the sons of their chiefs should be placed in the hands of the Bombay Government as hostages for their future conduct. A refusal to comply with all, or

any of these requisitions, it was added, would be considered as a defiance of the British power; and therefore noon was fixed for the return of a definitive answer, by which the future movements of the squadron would be regulated.

On the return of the bearers of this letter to the ship, they reported that they had landed on the beach, and made their way to the gate of the town, which was guarded by persons within, who opened it only a few inches to receive the letter brought; that the gate was then closed in their faces; so that they were obliged to return to the boat, without having been permitted to enter any part of the town, or to go in any other than a straight line to the beach.

As Captain Bridges did not feel perfectly assured of the letter having reached its destination, and suspected that its not having been delivered into the hands of the Chief himself might be afterwards urged as an evasion of the requisitions it contained, he was desirous of ascertaining the fact more clearly, as well as of reconnoitring more closely in person the place of landing, the soundings, fortifications, &c. This wish was expressed to me by Captain Bridges himself, and my opinion of its practicability asked, which was followed up by a request that I would accompany him to assist in that duty, and serve him at the same time as interpreter, to which I readily assented.

We quitted the ship together about nine o'clock, and pulled straight to the shore, sounding all the way as we went, and gradually shoaling our water from six fathoms, the depth in which we rode, to two and a-half within a quarter of a mile of the beach, where four large dows lay at anchor, ranged in a line, with their heads to seaward, each of them mounting several pieces of cannon, and being full of men. We were hailed in passing these, gave the necessary reply, and passed on.

On landing on the beach, we found its whole length guarded by a line of armed men, some bearing muskets, but the greater number armed with swords, shields, and spears; most of them were negroes, whom the Joassamees spare in their wars, looking on them

rather as property and articles of merchandize, than in the light of infidels or enemies. It at first appeared to us that this line would oppose our progress, since they were evidently placed there to cut off any approach to the town; but, on beckoning to those immediately opposite to our place of landing, a party of them came near. To these I communicated, in Arabic, our wish of being conducted to the presence of Hassan ben Rahma, the Chief himself, as we had some communications to make to him personally. This was instantly complied with, and we proceeded, under their escort, myself perfectly unarmed, and Captain Bridges wearing only a sword. As we were led through narrow passages, between lines of grass huts and small buildings, great pains were taken to prevent our seeing any thing to the right or the left, or making any observation on the plan of the town; while men, women, and children, who had all collected to see us pass, were driven before us by the spearmen, and made to fly in every direction.

When we reached the gate of the principal building, which was nearly in the centre of the town, we were met by the Pirate Chief, attended by a retinue of about fifty armed men. I offered him the Mohammedan salutation of peace, which he returned to me without hesitation, believing me to be, as represented, a merchant of Egypt, on my way to India, who had given my services to the English captain, as an interpreter, because I understood his tongue as well as my own, and wished that no blood might be spilt through ignorance or misconception of each other's meaning. After a few complimentary expressions on either side, he bade us be seated. As we were in the public street, there were neither carpets, mats, nor cushions, but we all sat on the ground. I then observed to him, at the request of Captain Bridges, that as the messengers by whom the letter was sent to him in the morning, had not found access to his presence, we had come to ascertain from his own mouth, whether the letter had reached his hands, whether he perfectly understood its contents, and whether an answer would be given to it within the time specified, or at noon of



the present day. He replied in the affirmative to all these, offered us repeated assurances of our being in perfect safety, and expressed a hope that the affair would be amicably accommodated. We repeated our assurances also, that no breach of faith would be made on our parts; and after some few enquiries and replies exchanged between us, we rose to depart, and were escorted by armed men, who cleared a path for us to the boat in the same way as we had come from it.

The Chief, Hassan ben Rahma, whom we had seen, was a small man, apparently about forty years of age, with an expression of cunning in his looks, and something particularly sarcastic in his smile. One of his eyes had been wounded, but his other features were good, and his teeth beautifully white and regular, his complexion very dark, and his beard scanty, and chiefly confined to the chin. He was dressed in the usual Arab garments, with a cashmeer shawl turban, and a scarlet benish, of the Persian form, to distinguish him from his followers. These were habited in the plainest garments, with long shirts and keffees, or handkerchiefs, thrown loosely over the head; and most of them, as well as their leader, wore large swords of the old Norman form, with long straight blades of great breadth, and large cross handles, perfectly plain; short spears were also borne by some, with circular shields of tough hide, ornamented with knobs of metal and gilding.

The town of Ras-el-Khyma is situated in lat.  $25^{\circ} 47'$  north, and long.  $55^{\circ} 34'$  east, by the joint observations of the squadron on the first expedition here, and confirmed by our own at present. It stands on a narrow tongue of sandy land, pointing to the north-eastward, presenting its north-west edge to the open sea, and its south-east one to a creek, which runs up within it to the south-westward, and affords a safe harbour for boats. The town is probably half a mile in length, from north-east to south-west, and a quarter of a mile in breadth, from the beach of the sea to the beach of the creek. There appeared to be no continued wall of defence around it, though round towers and portions of walls are

seen in several parts, probably once connected in line, but not yet repaired since their destruction. The strongest points of defence appear to be in a fortress at the north-east angle, and a double round tower, near the centre of the town; in each of which, guns are mounted; but all the other towers appear to afford only shelter for musketeers. The rest of the town is composed of ordinary buildings of unhewn stone, and huts of rushes and long grass, with narrow avenues winding between them. The present number of inhabitants may be computed at ten thousand at least, of whom probably three thousand may be males, capable of bearing arms, and certainly more than half of these are negroes, of African birth. The government is in undisputed possession of Hassan ben Rahma, the Chief; and his kinsman, Ameer Ibrahim, is considered as the commodore of their maritime force. They are thought to have at present about sixty large boats out from their own port, manned with crews of from eighty to three hundred men each. Forty other boats, of a smaller size, may be counted among their auxiliaries, from the ports of Sharjee and Ramms on the Arabian coast. Charrack and Linga, on the Persian coast, and Luft, on the inside of the island of Kishma, are subject to their authority. Their force, if concentrated, would thus amount to at least a hundred vessels, with perhaps four hundred pieces of cannon, and about eight thousand fighting men, well armed with muskets, swords, and spears. No circumstances are ever likely to bring these, however, all together; but on an invasion of their chief town, at Ras-el-Khyma, they could certainly command a large reinforcement of Wahabees, from the Desert, within ten or fifteen days' notice. The cannon and musketry of these pirates are chiefly procured from the vessels which they capture; but their swords, shields, spears, and ammunition, are mostly brought from Persia.

The country immediately in the vicinity of Ras-el-Khyma is flat and sandy; but on the south-east side of the creek spoken of, and all along from thence to the eastward, there appear to be extensive and thick forests of date-trees, the fruit of which forms the

chief article of food both for the people and their cattle. At the termination of this flat plain, which may extend, in its various windings, from ten to twenty miles back, there rises a lofty range of apparently barren mountains. The highest point of their broken summits was estimated to be about six thousand feet above the level of the sea, and their general aspect was that of lime-stone; but we could obtain no specimens or fragments of it. White strata were seen running horizontally near the summits, preserving every where a perfect level, though the summits themselves were ragged and uneven. The highest point of these hills was nearly behind Ras-el-Khyma, in a south-east direction; to the north-east the ridge fell gradually, until it terminated in the capes of Khassab and Shahm, set in the bearings of our anchorage: and to the south-west it tapered away almost to a level with the plain, and lost itself in the Arabian Desert.

In these mountains live a people called Sheehcheen, who are distinguished from all around them by having fair complexions, light hair, and blue eyes, like Europeans, and by speaking a distinct language, which no one but themselves understand, and which has been compared by those who have heard it to the cackling of a hen. They live both in villages and in tents, and acknowledge a Sheik of their own body as Chief. They have three towns near the coast, between Ras-el-Khyma and Cape Mus-sundom, called Shahm, Khassab, and Jaadi, each of which gives its name to the nearest headland. These, however, are hardly considered to be ports, since the Sheehcheen possess no trading or war-vessels, and only use the sea in fishing for the supply of their own immediate wants. Most of them speak Arabic, besides their own language, and they are all strict Mussulmans of the Soonnee sect, having hitherto successfully resisted the efforts of the Wahabees to effect their conversion.

The anchorage off Ras-el-Khyma is an open roadstead, exposed to all the fury of the northerly and north-west winds, which prevail in the Gulf, and throw a heavy sea into this bay

which then becomes also a lee shore. In approaching it from the offing, we shoaled our water gradually, on a sandy bottom, to six fathoms, within three miles of the beach, where our squadron anchored. In our way from the vessels to the beach, in the Challenger's boat, we sounded as we went *along*, and carried two fathoms and a half to within bare range of gun-shot from the houses: just beyond this, a ridge, or bank, with only ten feet on it, formed a sort of breakwater, running along parallel to the shore, at the distance of half a mile from the beach. Within this, the water deepened again to two fathoms and a half, and here the lights rode in smooth water, within a hundred yards of the shore, being sheltered from the sea by the ridge spoken of. The mouth of the creek, or back-water, in which they haul up their vessels for greater security or repair, appeared to us to be about a mile and a half to the north-east of the extreme point of the town, along the line of the beach. The entrance to this creek is impeded by a bar, over which there are only eleven feet at high-water; so that it is impassable at all other times but by vessels of very easy draught.

The tides along this shore set from north-east to south-west, in the line of the coast; the north-east being the ebb, and the south-west the flood: the former winding round Cape Mussunndom, out of the Gulf, and the latter flowing up the Arabian shore. The rise and fall, while we lay there, was about six feet, and the rate not more than a mile and a half per hour, or just sufficient to swing the vessels in a light breeze; but no accurate observations were made to ascertain the time of high water at full and change.

About seven miles from Ras-el-Khyma, to the north-eastward, is a town called Ramms, which shows some towers and dwellings, and has also a creek, with a bar across its entrance. This place affords good shelter for boats, and is a dependency of the former, as well as Jeziret-el-Hamra, already described, lying south-west by west half-west, eleven miles from the town.

Captain Bridges and myself having returned to the Challenger,

we waited until the hour of noon had passed, when a gun was fired, the topsails sheeted home, and the signal made to prepare to weigh anchor. This was instantly followed by the whole of the squadron, though it was intended to wait another hour of grace for the answer from the shore. In the mean time a boat arrived, with deputies from the Chief, bringing a reply to the requisitions sent. In this, he stated the impossibility of restoring either the property demanded, since that had long since been divided and consumed; or paying the amount of its value in money, as this was more than their whole wealth at the present moment could furnish. He peremptorily refused to deliver up the Amcer Ibrahim, who was his kinsman and near friend; denying also that this chief was guilty of any thing which deserved punishment, in capturing, with the vessels under his command, the persons and property of idolaters and strangers to the true God. Deputies were offered to be sent to Bombay to treat on the affair, but not in the light of hostages, as demanded,—since safe protection would be required for their going and returning. It was added however, that, as all things were of God, deliberation might possibly accord better with his councils, than hasty determination; and it was therefore requested that time might be granted until the next day's noon, to know what His wisdom had decreed to take place between them.

The Letter of Public Instructions from the Government of Bombay had ordered that, on the refusal of the Joassamee Chief to comply with the requisitions therein stated, the squadron was to quit the place, but not without signifying to him that he might expect the displeasure of the British Government to be visited on him and his race. Notwithstanding this, however, and the insolent as well as evasive answer of the Chief, it was determined to allow him until the following noon to deliberate; and our sails were accordingly furled, and the signal for weighing anchor again for the present annulled.

At sun-set the wind having freshened from the north-west, and a heavy swell setting into the bay, it was deemed imprudent to



continue at anchor there during the night: the squadron therefore weighed in company, and stood out to sea, the wind increasing to a gale towards midnight.

Nov. 28th.—It was intended, on our leaving Ras-el-Khyma, to have returned again to the anchorage there at sun-rise this morning; but the gale having obliged us to keep the sea, we found ourselves at day-light nearly over with the island of Kishma, on the Persian coast, having gradually deepened our water in mid-channel to forty-five fathoms, and from thence progressively shoaled again.

At eight A. M. we had closed in with Kishma, and had the smaller island of Angar under our lee to the north-east. The land had broken off the heavy swell of the sea; and finding ourselves, in smooth water, the signal was made for the Mercury to lead in and anchor in the bight between the islands.

We accordingly stood in-shore, gradually shoaling our water to ten fathoms within about three miles of the southern edge of Kishma, where the soundings are erroneously marked in Arrow-smith's chart of 1810, as five fathoms, at a distance of six miles.

Bearing up from hence east-north-east along the line of the coast, and shoaling from ten to five fathoms as we approached the island of Angar, we anchored at noon in that depth, on a muddy ground. Our place of anchorage, by careful observation, was found to be in lat.  $26^{\circ} 40'$  north, and long.  $55^{\circ} 41'$  east, with the following bearings:—western extreme of Kishma, west by south, twenty miles; eastern visible ditto, east half-south, ten miles; southern extreme of Angar, closed in far over Cape Mussunndom, south, five miles; northern extreme of Angar, east by south, three miles and a half; ruins of a town on Angar, east by south half-south, three miles; nearest part of Kishma, north, two miles.

The island of Kishma is the largest of all those in the Persian Gulf, being about sixty miles in length from north-east to south-west; and nearly twenty miles in its greatest breadth, from near Luft, on its northern shore, to the point near Angar, on its southern one. It is called by the Arabs, Jeziret Tuweel, or Long Island,