

TRAVELS
IN
MESOPOTAMIA.



TRAVELS
IN
MESOPOTAMIA

INCLUDING A

JOURNEY FROM ALEPPO, ACROSS THE EUPHRATES TO ORFAH,

(THE UR OF THE CHALDEES,)

THROUGH THE PLAINS OF THE TURCOMANS, TO DIARBEKR,

IN

ASIA MINOR;

FROM THENCE

TO MARDIN, ON THE BORDERS OF THE GREAT DESERT,

AND

BY THE TIGRIS TO MOUSUL AND BAGDAD:

WITH

RESEARCHES ON THE RUINS OF BABYLON,

NINEVEH, ARBELA, CTESIPHON, AND SELEUCIA.

BY J. S. BUCKINGHAM,

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AND OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LADY HESTER LUCY STANHOPE,

ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST ORNAMENTS OF HER SEX AND STATION,

THIS VOLUME OF TRAVELS IN MESOPOTAMIA,

PERFORMED SOON AFTER QUITTING HER HOSPITABLE RESIDENCE IN SYRIA,

IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED, AS A MEMENTO OF THE HIGH RESPECT

AND UNAFFECTED ESTEEM

OF HER OBLIGED AND FAITHFUL FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

IN laying before the world the present account of a Journey through Mesopotamia, I feel a stronger assurance of its being acceptable to the generality of readers, than I could venture to indulge on either of the two former occasions on which I had to present to the public eye the result of my researches and observations in other countries of the East. The "TRAVELS IN PALESTINE" appeared under the greatest disadvantages: notwithstanding which, their success, and the almost universal commendation they obtained, was as encouraging to future labours, as flattering in its approbation of the past. The same unfavourable circumstances continued, when the "TRAVELS AMONG THE ARAB TRIBES" succeeded: but these also met with a reception so favourable, as to make me think more lightly of the obstacles which had hitherto impeded my progress than I had before felt justified in doing.

These disadvantages no longer exist. A severe and patient investigation, extended through nearly four years, into the accumulated and reiterated charges, by which the rivals as well as enemies of my reputation had endeavoured to impress the world

with an opinion of my bad faith as an author, my worthlessness as a man, and my utter incompetency as a Traveller, either to observe accurately what I heard and saw, or to describe intelligibly even the ordinary objects of curiosity or interest, has led to the most satisfactory result. Two of the individuals who first dared to give utterance to these aspersions, have, in a British Court of Justice, voluntarily confessed their falsehood, apologized for their misconduct, and submitted to verdicts being recorded against them; and the third has been convicted, before a crowded tribunal, and a jury of his countrymen, of being a false, scandalous, and malicious libeller, by a verdict which adjudged him to pay Four Hundred Pounds damages, and his full portion of the expenses of the legal proceedings, the whole of which, on the three actions tried, are understood to be upwards of Five Thousand Pounds sterling.

The details of the origin, progress, and termination of these trials, are given, for the satisfaction of the curious, in an APPENDIX at the end of the present volume. It is here thought sufficient, therefore, merely to record the fact, in order that the reader may be satisfied, before he enters on the perusal of the present Work, that its author, whatever may be his qualifications, is at least innocent of the charges framed and propagated by his accusers, and is worthy of the faith and confidence of his fellow-countrymen, as to the originality and fidelity of his descriptions and details. For the rest, he cheerfully submits this portion of his labours, as he has always readily done every other, to the ordeal of Public Opinion, to be neglected, censured, or approved, as its defects or merits may determine.

The circumstances under which this Journey was entered upon

and completed being fully explained in the Narrative itself, it is only necessary to premise that it was performed without the pleasure and advantage of a European friend, companion, interpreter, servant, or attendant of any sort; that the dress, manners, and language of the country, were adopted, and continued throughout the whole of the way; and that the utmost care was taken to ensure as much accuracy as was attainable, by recording all the observations that suggested themselves while fresh on the memory, and amid the scenes and events which gave them birth.

It would scarcely be imagined, by those who have not taken the trouble to consult the authors whose accounts of this country exist, how scanty and imperfect is the information they collectively contain on the state and condition of Mesopotamia, even at the periods in which they wrote. Whether it was, that the difficulty of penetrating across its desert tracts, which has always been considerable, occupied all the attention of travellers in providing for their personal safety—or, that journeying as subjects of a different nation, and a different faith, they were unable to escape sufficiently from the observation of those around them, to record their researches without interruption—it is not easy to determine. Perhaps both of these causes may have operated to prevent their bringing away with them the ample details which it has been my good fortune to amass, respecting the interior of this interesting region, through which I travelled under all the advantages of respect and confidence from those around me, and with sufficient leisure and safety to enjoy unmolested opportunities of recording whatever appeared worthy of observation, before one series of impressions was obliterated by a succeeding train of objects and thoughts.

The principal Travellers who have made Mesopotamia the scene of their wanderings, have been the Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, an enterprising Jew, who, as early as the year 1170 of the Christian era, visited many countries of the East, and wrote his observations in the Hebrew tongue, from which they have been subsequently translated into two of the languages of Europe; Dr. Leonhardt Rauwolff, a German, who went, by the Euphrates, from Bir to Babylon, and returned from Bagdad to Aleppo, by land, about the year 1530; Pietro Della Valle, an Italian, who was in that country about 1620; Otter, a Frenchman, who travelled in 1730; and the celebrated Danish engineer, Niebuhr, about thirty years later. Since this last period, now nearly a century ago, there has been no Traveller of eminence, with whose works I am acquainted, who has had any opportunity of examining the country between the Euphrates and the Tigris, which strictly comprises the region of Mesopotamia; though many have passed from Constantinople, east of the latter river, through Georgia, Armenia, and Koordistan, to Bagdad and Persia.

I have reason to believe, therefore, that my account of Mesopotamia will be more ample than that of the Travellers named, as I have had an opportunity of consulting each of their works, and seeing the extent of their materials; and I am not without a hope, also, that it may be found as new and interesting, as it must be admitted to be copious and diffuse. On a country, however, of which so little has been said by ancient travellers, and still less by modern ones, I considered that abundance, and even minuteness of detail, would be an error on the safe side; and, under this impression, I have permitted my observations, made

on the way, to remain with little or no retrenchment : the opportunities of writing, which I enjoyed during this protracted journey, rendering it unnecessary to wait for further leisure, for the purpose of adding illustrations, or filling up the outline of the Narrative written on the spot. Such as the Journal of the Route, was, therefore, on terminating the Journey at Bagdad, such is it now presented to the Reader ; and if he should, from this state of the Narrative, be enabled to enter more readily into the views, and participate more freely in the feelings, of the writer, it cannot fail to increase the pleasure of both.

The map of Mesopotamia, with a Sketch of the Author's Route, has been constructed by Mr. Sidney Hall, from the original notes of bearings, distances, and time, recorded on the march ; the Plan and Views of the existing Ruins of ancient Babylon are from the pencil of Mr. Rich, originally designed for his valuable and interesting Memoir, inserted in a Continental Work, under the direction of Baron von Hammer, entitled "*Les Mines de l'Orient*;" and the Illustrations at the Heads of Chapters, which embrace the most interesting of the many sketches taken on the journey, have been drawn on the wood by Mr. W. H. Brooke, whose reputation, in this department of graphic productions, is fully maintained by his present labours, and engraved by the several individuals whose names are placed opposite the respective subjects on the list ; while the peculiarly perfect manner in which the impressions are taken from the blocks, does much credit to the Printer.

Of the matter, style, and general literary character of the Work, the Public will form their own estimate. It would be affectation

in me to pretend, after the ordinary custom of the age, that I had been persuaded, by the earnest solicitations of indulgent friends, and in opposition to my own judgment, to give these materials to the world; and on that ground to deprecate criticism, and seek shelter from scrutiny. I candidly confess, that I have been induced, by two more powerful considerations, to the execution of my task; first, the general approbation with which my former labours have been received; and secondly, the desire, which never forsakes me, of contributing—as far as my opportunities of observation, means of recording them, and capacity to render them intelligible, admit—my full share towards that accumulating stock of general instruction, which is now happily so largely drawn upon by all classes of the community, through which philanthropy and patriotism alike co-operate to encourage its diffusion. If this Offering, which I now lay with pleasure, not unmixed with hope, on the Altar of Public Information, be acceptable to those who see, in the extension of Knowledge, the surest means of ameliorating the condition of mankind, I shall be abundantly rewarded.

J. S. BUCKINGHAM.

TAVISTOCK SQUARE,
FEBRUARY 5, 1827.

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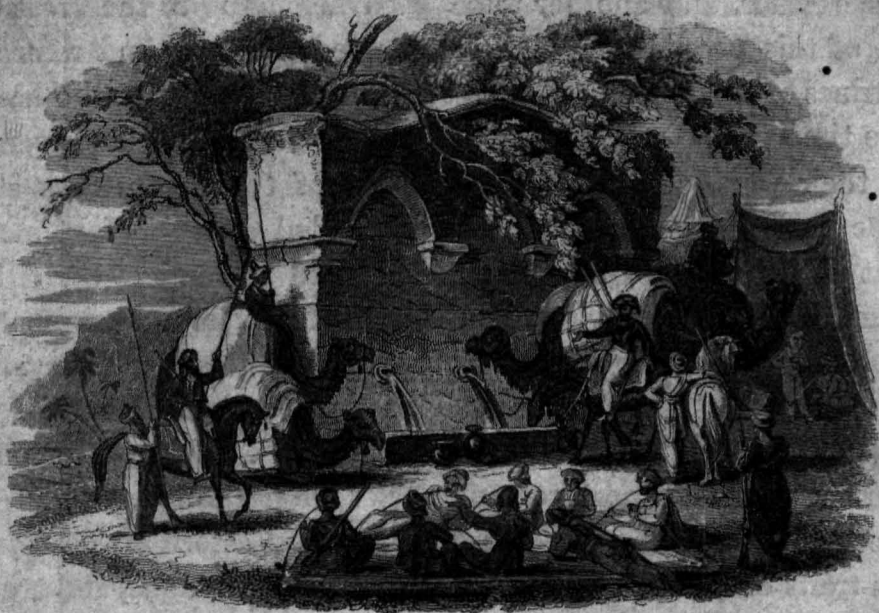
MAP OF MESOPOTAMIA.

*with the Route pursued by
MR BUCKLYGHAM,
In his Travels from Aleppo across the Tigris and Euphrates,
TO ORFAH, DIARBEEKR,
Mardin, Mossul and Bagdad.
Including all the halting places of the Caravan, and the
remains of the several ruined Cities of Antiquity
found in that route,
FROM THE CHALDEES
to Nineveh and Babylon.*

English Miles

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100





CHAPTER I.

JOURNEY FROM ALEPPO TO THE BANKS OF THE EUPHRATES.

AFTER a long and perilous journey from Egypt, through Palestine, Syria, and the untravelled countries East of the Jordan and Orontes, I enjoyed a repose of some days, in the city of Aleppo : from whence, however, I soon prepared again to depart for the equally interesting regions of Mesopotamia, on my progress to the farther East. The state of the city itself was, at this period, sufficiently tranquil ; but the whole of the surrounding country was in a state of turbulent commotion, so that travelling, either singly or in small parties, was impossible, without imminent risk of plunder, and perhaps destruction ; and the difficulty of assembling sufficient numbers, to form a caravan of strength enough to force a passage through the Desert, was such as to leave little hope of that being

accomplished till the return of more tranquil times. It was in the month of May, 1816, that hostilities had broken out between the Anazie Arabs, and another tribe, each belonging to the great division of this people which had embraced the new and reforming doctrines of the Wahābees, a sect of deistical puritans, who had, for some time past, disturbed the peace of Arabia, by their conversions and their wars. The immediate cause of this rupture was stated to be this: that one of the warm-blooded sons of Mahānna, the great Chief of the Anazies, who assumed to himself the title of Sultan of the Desert, had stolen away, by force, from a neighbouring camp, a beautiful virgin, of whom, at first sight, as is not uncommon with Orientals, he had become passionately enamoured. This Trojan treachery had roused the whole of the surrounding country to arms: and the most romantic tales of heroism, love, and self-devotion, with all the exaggerations which Eastern fancies give to such traits of character, were repeated by every tongue, and greedily drank in by every ear.

As a detail of preparations for a journey through rarely frequented countries is not only beneficial to those who may contemplate pursuing the same route at any future period, but instructive to all who desire to see the modes of thinking and the manners of acting, which prevail in distant countries, exhibited in the freshness of their original colouring; and to be transported, as it were, to the immediate scene, so as to become a co-spectator and a co-actor, as far as sympathy can effect this, with the Traveller himself, this detail will be given, and will serve at once to introduce to the reader's attention the characters in whose society, and the circumstances under which, the Journey about to be described was undertaken.

The great regular caravan from Aleppo to Bagdad, across the Syrian Desert, was not expected to leave the former city until September; but a smaller one had been formed, for the purpose of going, by a more circuitous route, to Mardin, and Mousul on the Tigris. *This caravan was, indeed, now on the point of departure.*

Mr. Vigoroux, a French gentleman, recently appointed consul for Bussorah, in the Persian Gulph, and whom I had seen some months before at Alexandria, in Egypt, had gone by the same way not more than ten days before my arrival at Aleppo; but accounts had already reached this, of certain arbitrary demands being made on him, as a Frank or European traveller, by the governors of the different stations on the road; and Mr. Barker, the British Consul at this city, spoke also of the route by Mardin and Mousul being extremely troublesome and vexatious on account of such exactions, of which he had heard much during his residence here.

My anxiety to enter upon the journey, and the faint prospect which presented itself of any better occasion, determined me, however, to accept this, whatever might be its disadvantages. I accordingly obtained an introduction to a merchant of Mousul, named Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān, who was returning by this caravan to his native city, with merchandize from the pilgrimage at Mecca. For the respect which, as he said, he bore the English nation, from having always traded with them until the decline of their commerce at Aleppo, he consented to admit me into his party, the only condition exacted of me being, that I should conform myself, in every respect, to his advice and direction, and take no servant of my own to disturb the good understanding of his personal dependants. This was readily assented to, and it was stipulated, that I should furnish my horse and its trappings only, and for the rest, that I should be considered, in every respect, as one of the Hadjee's own family, as well for our general security from interruption on the road, as for my own comfort, which was likely to be much increased by my being placed on this familiar footing.

As it was thought that Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān was a person of too great respectability to accept for himself any sum of money, as a compensation for this favor, it was agreed between Mr. Barker the Consul, on my part, and the Hadjee's Factor at Aleppo, that I should give, before our departure, the sum of 150 piastres to the chief camel-driver of the Hadjee's party, who would put my small portion of

baggage among the merchandize of his master, to be free from examination and prying curiosity, so that I should have nothing but my horse to look after; and, on my safe arrival at Mousul, it would be sufficient to make some handsome acknowledgement to the Hadjee himself, proportionate to the service he might have rendered me, with a proper distribution of presents among such of his servants as had been attentive and useful to me on the way.

My dress and arms were like those of his nephew, Hadjee Abdel-Ateef, a young man of twenty-five, who had accompanied his venerable uncle on the pilgrimage. The former consisted of the blue cloth sherwal, jubba, and benish, of the Arab costume; a large overhanging tarboosh, or red cap, falling over the neck and shoulders behind; a white muslin turban, and a red silk sash: the latter, of a Damascus sabre, a Turkish musket, small carbine, and pistols, with ammunition for each. The conveniences borne on my own horse were, a pipe and tobacco-bag, a metal drinking cup, a pocket-compass, memorandum books, and ink-stand; on one side of a pair of small khoordj, or Eastern travelling-bags; and on the other, the maraboot, or chain-fastenings and irons for securing the horse, by spiking him at night to the earth, on plains where there are no shrubs or trees. A small Turkey carpet, which was to serve for bed, for table, and for prayers; and a woollen cloak for a coverlid during the cold nights, in which we should have to repose on the ground, without covering or shelter, were rolled up behind the seat of the saddle with straps; and my equipment, for any length of route, was thus thought to be complete. The supplies I had taken with me for the journey, included a bill of exchange for 6000 piastres (then about 100*l.* sterling) on a merchant at Bagdad; and nearly 2000 piastres in small gold coin, which, with such papers as I considered of importance to me, I carried concealed in an inner girdle round my waist, called, by the people, a khummr, and generally used for this purpose, as it cannot be lost, or taken from a traveller, without his being absolutely stripped.

All my own arrangements being completed, I took leave of Mr.

Barker's family about noon, and, accompanied by his son, and one of his native assistants, named Nahoom, we assembled, with the friends of Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān, at a fountain on the public road, about a mile from Mr. Barker's country residence, in the environs of Aleppo. Having taken coffee here together, as a pledge of our future union, and watered our horses, we remounted and set out on our way. The friends of each party still accompanied us for a few miles on the road, when, at last, our final separation took place, with many warm and friendly adieus, and we now felt ourselves to be fairly on our journey.

Our route lay nearly north, along the eastern edge of the river of Aleppo, which ran on our left. The only appearance of verdure seen about its banks, is that created by the winding course of the stream itself, the borders of which are fringed with trees and gardens, very thickly planted. Beyond its immediate banks, the soil is dry, and the hills bare and stoney throughout the whole of the way to its source, which we reached about sun-set. Here several winding streams, all rising from the same spring, watered a small hollow plain in which a Turcoman horde was encamped.

The form and arrangement of the tents of these people, and the general aspect of the whole of their camp, was extremely different from that of the Arabs, among whom I had so recently sojourned. With the latter, it is the custom to have their tents mostly of an oblong form, closed on three sides, and open on the fourth; made altogether of hair cloth; and the several tents generally arranged in the form of a great circle, for the sake of preventing the escape of the animals confined within its limits. Here, among the Turcomans, the form of most of the tents seemed nearly round, instead of oblong, with a small door of entrance, instead of one entirely open front; or, when otherwise, it was open only at one of the narrow ends, and not at the side, with an awning, or porch, at the door-way. The roofs of these tents were the only parts formed of hair cloth (of which material the tents of the Desert Arabs are entirely made); the sides of these of the Turcomans being formed of matted reeds. Neither

was there any order in the arrangement of the tents themselves, as they were scattered quite at random over the plain. Besides goats and camels, the usual inmates of these camps, there were here an abundance of sheep, asses, bullocks, horses, and even buffaloes and fowls; animals which belong only to a stationary life, and which marked the people among whom they were found, as of less wandering habits than their southern neighbours, the Arabs. They were, indeed, a stouter and better-fed race; and even their dogs, the guardians of their camps, were larger, more hairy, and, altogether, characterized by the greater abundance amidst which both they and their masters lived.

In our way from Aleppo thus far, we had passed several ruined villages, leaving them all on our left, and had remarked that the houses were distinguished by a high pointed dome of brick-work, rising from the square of their base. We lost sight of these, however, as we ascended from this place of encampment over a bare rising ground, and then gradually sunk our level, by a very slow descent.

As it was now dark, and so cloudy that even the stars were hidden from our view, we soon lost the beaten track, and wandered about to the right and left, according to the directing voice which for the moment prevailed. It was in this state of confusion that we were alarmed by a sudden shout from persons whom we could not yet perceive; and this being suspected to be a signal of attack upon our party, we closed our ranks, and rushed forward together to receive it. Two muskets were discharged at us, but their balls passed without wounding any person, though not without being returned threefold by our party, seemingly with as little execution. This display of vigilance had the effect, however, of repressing any future attempt; and the men who were seen, heading the attack, speedily dispersed and fled.

It was nearly midnight before we reached the great body of the caravan; and we then only discovered its place of encampment, by sending off one of our own party to each of the four quarters of the

horizon, to shout and discharge a musket, which being at length heard, the returning of the signal directed us to the spot.

We found a tent erected for the Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān, and his suite, in which the embers of a fire were still burning; when, taking shelter beneath it, we were welcomed by a cup of coffee and the congratulations of friends, and sank, soon after, to repose.

MAY 28th.—Every individual of the caravan was seen stirring with the earliest dawn; and as this was the first morning of our departure from a station beyond the town, a considerable degree of bustle prevailed among the servants and camel-drivers, and an equal anxiety among the merchants or owners of the property embarked, to see it safely laden, and to take care that nothing remained behind.

At sun-rise we were all in motion, to the number, perhaps, of four hundred camels, which was thought rather a small caravan: the asses, mules, and horses that accompanied it, might amount to another hundred; and the whole number of persons, including men, women, and children, were about three hundred at least.

Our course had been nearly north, throughout the whole of the preceding day, but it now bent towards the north-east, in pursuing which direction we reached, in an hour after setting out, a village called Oktereen. There was a smaller one, about a mile to the north of it, which bore the same name, and both were at this moment inhabited by peasants who cultivated rich corn lands on a fine red soil, and of great extent. The style of building in both of these villages, like that of the ruined ones we had already passed, was remarkable, each separate dwelling having a high pointed dome of unburnt bricks, raised on a square fabric of stone; so that, at a little distance, they resembled a cluster of bee-hives on square pedestals.

In the village through which we passed, was a khan or caravan-serai of Mohammedan construction, and good masonry, though now seldom resorted to by travellers. Near it was a high round eminence, enclosed by a circular wall, formed of very large masses of unhewn stone, rudely put together without cement. This is called the

Castle, but over all the hill there appear no other vestiges of building than this, which I should consider to be a work of the very earliest ages of antiquity. The stones are, in general, much too large to be moved by mere manual labour, estimating the strength of man at its present standard; and yet one would conceive, that if the people, by whom they were placed here, used the aid of any instruments for that purpose, they would also have hewn them into regular forms, for additional strength. But, like most other works of ancient labour, the very simplicity of their construction excites problems the most difficult of solution.

Near the foot of the hill, but without its wall of enclosure, are deep wells, containing excellent water, of which we drank, as we passed, from the pitchers of some women of the neighbourhood. The vessels used by them are broad at the bottom, narrow at the top, and about two feet high, with a thick handle on each side. They are all of copper, tinned within and without; nor did we see a single vessel of earthenware among them. The dress of the females was mostly of blue cotton cloth; some of the younger girls were pretty, and all had fairer and more ruddy complexions than we had lately been accustomed to see.

From hence, the high range of Mount Taurus was visible on our left, to the north-west, and seemed to be nearly in a line with our route, or to run in a north-east and south-west direction. Many of its rugged summits were covered with snow; and from their appearance, as they intercepted our horizon but slightly in that quarter, it was evident that our own level was also a very elevated one.

While halting at the well of Oktereen, there came to drink a poor ass of our own caravan, who had lost from the thickest part of his thighs behind, between the knee and the tail, at least an English pound of flesh from each, and yet still walked freely, without any apparent suffering. The blood remained clotted in streams below the wounds; and, on inquiry, it appeared that he had been torn in this manner, only two nights before, by a hyæna, while the caravan was encamped at Hailân, a few hours' distance from Aleppo. Bruce's

account of the Abyssinians cutting steaks from a live ox, sewing up the wound, and driving the beast on his journey, 'had always, until now, appeared to me difficult of belief; not from the cruelty of the act, for that would weigh but little with people of their character, but from my conceiving that no animal could, after being so treated, pursue its march. Here, however, I saw before me a similar fact, one which I confess surprised me, but to which I could not refuse credence, as it was confirmed by the evidence of my senses.

In an hour from Oktercen, we came to another village of the same name, each of these being called by that of the district in which they stand. The pointed dome-tops to the dwellings were now no longer seen, all the houses being flat-roofed, with terraces. As we stopped at this place to drink milk, we had an opportunity of seeing the method followed by its inhabitants in making butter. The milk is first put into a goat's skin, without being scalded, and a small space is left in this for air and motion; the skin is then hung by cords to a peg in the side of the wall, or suspended to a sort of sheers, formed by three poles, in the open court; it is then pushed to and fro, until its motion in the skin shall have been sufficient to churn it; when the watery part is thrown off, and the thick part stirred by the hand until it becomes of the oiliness and consistency required.* Such of the women as we saw here were really handsome; all of them were unveiled, and displayed blooming complexions and agreeable features, not disfigured by stains of any kind. As an additional charm, they were remarkably clean and well dressed, with white or red trowsers, white upper garments, wreaths of gold coin across their foreheads, and their long black hair hanging in tresses over their shoulders.

* The Bedouin Arabs practise the same method.—“Dans une peau de chèvre, encore garnie de ses poils, ils mettent le lait, comme dans une outre. Une femme Bedouine, après avoir fortement noué les deux bouts, et suspendu le tout à une branche d'arbre, en secouant l'outre de toute sa force, parvient à faire le beurre.”—CASTELLAN, *Mœurs des Ottomans*. t. vi. p. 60.

In an hour from hence, we came again to a small elevation, which had seemingly been once enclosed with a wall around its base, it being now covered with narrow blocks of stone. These, however, were well hewn, and of a much smaller size than those described at Oktereen, though probably, like that mound, this might have been the site of some old fortress of a later age.

It was about noon when we reached a wide plain, in which were encamped a horde of Turcomans, to the number of about five hundred tents; and near these it was decided that we should take up our station for the night. It was on entering this plain, that we first began to perceive the black porous basalt so common in the Haurān, lying here, however, in rounded and detached masses, thickly placed, like those in the plain between Hhoms and Hhussan, and in the vallies of the Orontes and the Jordan. Our present position was nearly in the same meridian of longitude as the Haurān, though it is on a higher level; and there was a general resemblance between its soil and stones, except that the latter are here in detached or insulated masses, while to the south they are principally in continuous ridges of rock.

When our tents were pitched, we could see, from the place of our encampment, the range of Taurus to the west-north-west of us. Its highest part, which, in general form, was thought to resemble Lebanon near the Cedars, was covered with snow. It now bore from us west by north, three quarters north, distant about fifty miles, and preserved nearly the same appearance from hence, as it presents to the traveller approaching Aleppo from the west.

The place of our encampment was called Chamoorly, from a ruined Mahommedan village of that name. In this village, besides many dwellings of stone, were the remains of a mosque with pointed arches, its southern niche for prayer still perfect. Between it, and the spot on which our halt was made, rose a high, steep, and round hill, larger than either of those we had yet passed, though, like them, it was apparently artificial. Around its base were scattered blocks of black stone, probably used in its wall of enclosure,

now destroyed, and marking it as having been a fortified post. These stones were all of the basaltic kind, and the greater number of them were stuck endwise into the ground, like the perpendicular head-pieces of modern sepulchres in England.

Before us, we had an extensive plain, watered by a small stream near our halting-place, and covered with the richest pasture. In the distance, the mountains shewed their blue and pointed summits; and as the sky was clear, the northern wind fresh, and the climate as delightfully pure and healthy as could be wished, our situation united many charms.

Among the diversions of the afternoon, we caught a beautiful bird, about the size of a turtle dove, called, in Arabic, "Ghatter." It had a white breast, with dark bands across it; a granivorous beak, and a large black spot descending from the root of the beak downward on the throat; fine yellowish-red eyes, and small head; wings speckled with brown and white above, and of the purest white beneath; with a fine tail, similarly speckled as to colour, but with smaller spots and a long thin feather growing out of its centre, at least a foot and a half beyond the rest.

A lamb was killed for supper, and, for the morrow, we purchased from some shepherds near us, a fine fat sheep for a gold roobeah, or about half an English crown. We entertained some pilgrims at our tent, who were from the eastern parts of Afghanistan, and who had come all the way from thence by land to go to Mecca. One of them was from Cashmeer, and one from Lahore, the only places I recognised by name; and several of them spoke Hindoostanee, in which language I was able to converse with them, much to their joy and satisfaction. As they went onward to Aleppo, I profited by their departure, to send letters by way of that city to England.

Our tent was struck, and every thing packed up at sun-set to be ready for instant departure in the morning. At supper, we had a party of fifteen persons besides the servants, all of them apparently fed, during the journey, by the hospitable Hadjee. When the new moon appeared, all the Moslems offered up a short prayer

at the first sight of this auspicious guide, for which they have a strongly religious, as well as poetical and romantic veneration.

We slept in the open air beneath a starry canopy of unusual brilliance; and the purity of the atmosphere, with the sweet odour of the fresh young grass, was such as to make even perfumed halls and downy couches inferior by the contrast. The servants, who had slept during the day, were destined to watch in the night; and the horses and mules were all brought within a circle, formed by the camels kneeling around, to secure them from the Turcomans of the neighbouring camp.

MAY 29th.—Our departure was as early as on the preceding day, and we now directed our course nearly east over the plain. At sunrise, we came to some artificial caves in a rock on our left, probably ancient places of burial; and, at intervals of about an hour each, we passed three ruined villages, the dwellings of which were generally of sun-burnt brick, with some few of black stones, and the houses all flat-roofed.

At nine, we reached Shahaboor, a large inhabited village; and, as the caravan passed directly through it, most of the passengers halted without alighting, when all who desired it were served by the villagers with bowls of lebben, or curdled sour milk. As far as I could perceive, this was an act of pure hospitality, for which no payment was either asked or offered; though, if frequently repeated, it must form a heavy charge on those who exercise it.

The men at this place were dressed nearly as in those through which we had already passed. The women wore on their heads the large red Syrian tarboosh, the loose part overhanging before, while the men permit it to fall behind. These Turcoman females were much better dressed than the Arab women ever are; some of them having red and others white trowsers; striped silk upper robes, gold ornaments about their head, their hair hanging in long tresses, as in the towns; and their whole appearance neat and interesting. The language used here was Turkish; and, indeed,

scarcely any other was heard in the caravan, as the Arabs speak Turkish much more frequently than the Turks do Arabic, from the superior ranks of the military and the government being filled by Turks, who are too proud and too indolent to learn; while the necessities of the others compel them to acquire the language of their masters.

We had scarcely left Shahaboora an hour behind us, before we were alarmed by a troop of horsemen making towards the caravan, in full speed, from the southward. The camels were widely scattered, so much so, that there seemed to be a distance of nearly two miles between their extremes. The design of the enemy being to attack and cut off the rear, all who were mounted rushed towards that quarter, leaving only the men on foot, who were armed, to protect the other parts. The enemy checked their horses, advanced, retreated, wheeled, and manœuvred on the plain, with great skill; and, as they were all mounted on very beautiful animals, it formed as fine a display of horsemanship as I had ever witnessed.

On the other hand, nothing could exceed the confusion and disorder which prevailed in our train. As there was no acknowledged leader, a hundred voices were heard at once, all angry at not being attended to; the women and children shrieked, the asses brayed at the noise of other animals, and the men set up the wildest shouts of defiance. When our enemies, however, betrayed fear, it was the moment chosen by those attacked, to affect courage; and, accordingly, all who were dismounted, young and old, came out from among the camels, behind which they had before taken shelter: and those who had muskets without powder, of which there were several, borrowed a charge or two of their neighbours, and idly wasted it in the air. There were at least two hundred balls discharged in this way, in the course of the hour that the Turcomans harassed us by changing their apparent point of attack, and flying round us with the velocity of the wind.

This skirmish had, at least, the effect of exciting exaggerated ideas of our force, and of inducing the enemy to abandon their

design, though they were twice near enough for us to distinguish their features, or within short pistol-shot; but, from the rapidity of their movements, they all escaped unhurt. Their number, as nearly as we could estimate them, seemed to be about fifty; all well mounted, and armed with a short lance, a musket, pistols, and sabre. Had they persevered in their original design, and not given us time to form, their success would have been easy: for, in the whole of our party, we did not muster more than a hundred stand of arms; and these were so disunited, and so unskilfully used, that they must have failed in repelling, though they might have annoyed, the attacking force. The alarm, however, was in some degree a benefit, as it occasioned the straggling individuals of the caravan to keep closer order; for, before this, each seemed to follow his own pace, without reference to the general security, and undisturbed by any thought of danger.

In about an hour from the time of this predatory troop quitting us, we passed through a small village on an elevation, from the heights of which the women and children were viewing the attack. As there was not a single man to be seen among them, and they seemed to avoid our salutes, they were, most probably, the wives and daughters of the horsemen themselves, of whom this eminence was, perhaps, merely a temporary habitation.

It was noon when we reached a small village, of a round form, called Waadi Sajoor, through which wound a full stream, of the same name, about fifty feet wide, and so deep as to be scarcely fordable. The whole of this district was cultivated with corn, and several small villages were seen scattered over it.

As we halted for a moment to water, and to collect the animals in close order, on the opposite side of the stream, most of the people gave loose to their joy, and triumphed in their late escape. In the expression of these feelings, some danced with their naked swords and khandjars, or dirks, in their hands, singing the wildest songs at the time, like the guards of the Dolas, or chiefs of the Arab towns in the Yemen, when they precede their Governors in their

march;* and others discharged their pieces in the air. This display of warlike disposition at length terminated in occasioning two or three frays in the caravan, by exciting disputes, as to who had been the foremost and the bravest among them, in repelling the late attack: the consequences were serious, for not less than five persons were, more or less, hurt or wounded in this affair among friends; though not one had received any injury in the attack of the enemy.

On leaving the Waadi Sajoor, and ascending a gentle hill, we continued, again, our easterly course, over plains of great extent and fertility, seeing, to the north of us, low chalky hills, and losing sight of the range of Mount Taurus altogether.

About one o'clock we reached a small village called Zemboor, near which we halted on an elevated ground, and encamped for the night, for the sake of the supply of water, which the wells here afforded us. There were, at this place, nearly as many tents as houses. The chief himself dwelt in one of the former, of a very large size, supported by sixteen small poles, in four rows of four

* The habit of chaunting rude songs, on occasions of joy or of danger, has, we find, prevailed, from the remotest antiquity, among all barbarous nations. Tacitus, speaking of the ancient Germans, has the following passage:—"The Germans abound with rude strains of verse, the reciters of which, in the language of the country, are called Bards. With this barbarous poetry, they inflame their minds with ardour in the day of action, and prognosticate the event, from the impression which it happens to make on the minds of the soldiers, who grow terrible to the enemy, or despair of success, as the war-song produces an animated or a feeble sound. Nor can their manner of chaunting this savage prelude be called the tone of human organs; it is rather a furious uproar—a wild chorus of military virtue. The vociferation used upon these occasions is uncouth and harsh; at intervals, interrupted by the application of their bucklers to their mouths, and, by the repercussion, bursting out with redoubled force."—*Manners of the Germans. Murphy's Translation.* Xenophon likewise relates, in the Fourth Book of the *Anabasis*, that, on an occasion of rejoicing, the Mosynœcians, a barbarous people on the Euxine, expressed their satisfaction by dancing and singing in a wild manner:—"Cutting off the heads of the slain, they shewed them both to the Greeks and to the Mosynœcians, their enemies (the nation was divided into two hostile tribes); dancing, at the time, and singing a particular tune."

each, the points of which thrusting up the roof, appear like so many Chinese domes. In front of this, was an open place of reception for strangers, and behind it the apartment for females, enclosed all around by a partition of reeds, sewn together by black worsted, in crossed diagonal lines. The tent, and its outer porch, were furnished with beds, cushions, and carpets. The language used here was Turkish; the Arabic being scarcely understood.

As the disposition for feats of arms still reigned among the greater number of our companions, and weapons of some kind were in almost every one's hands, several parties were formed for hunting and shooting, instead of prosecuting further quarrels among each other. By the camel-drivers of our own party, we had a ghazelle brought to us from the plain. It was dressed for supper, and partaken of by many more than our own immediate circle, from its being as highly esteemed here as game is in England. Its flesh was dark, and of a strong taste and smell, but it was much relished by all present.

MAY 30th.—Our departure was delayed until the day was fairly opened, the alarm of yesterday not having yet subsided. As there was no Director of the caravan, and every one followed his own way, some were in motion earlier and others later than usual, probably both from the same motive of fear; so that, from front or rear, the opposite end of the long line of the camels, was scarcely discernible.

In less than an hour after commencing our march, we passed a village about half a mile on our left; and half an hour further on, we came to a similar one, on the side of an artificial hill, both of them having brick-built houses, white-washed on the outside. In another hour we reached a third village, the people of which sold dried black raisins and tobacco, by the way-side, to the passengers of the caravan, and gave, liberally, of milk and lebben, to all who desired it.

About nine o'clock, we reached a fourth village, larger than the

rest, where we halted for the rear of the caravan to come up with us. We alighted at the tent of the Chief, for here, as in many of the other villages that we had passed, the tents were almost as numerous as the houses, and formed by far the most comfortable dwellings. The whole of these settlements were called by the general name of Barak, from the plain on which they stood, and were all inhabited by Turkish peasants, who cultivated a fertile soil, which now promised them an abundant harvest.

This great Plain, as it is called, was under the direction of the Sheikh, who received the tax from his people, and paid it to the Pasha of Aleppo, and who pitched his tent at different periods near all the villages and wells of his territory in succession. When we alighted at his tent-door, our horses were taken from us by his son, a young man well dressed in a scarlet cloth benish, and a shawl of silk for a turban. The Sheikh, his father, was sitting beneath the awning in front of the tent itself, and when we entered, rose up to receive us, exchanging the salute of welcome, and not seating himself until all his guests were accommodated.

The tent occupied a space of about thirty feet square, and was formed by one large awning, supported by twenty-four small poles in four rows of six each, the ends of the awning being drawn out by cords fastened to pegs in the ground. Each of these poles giving a pointed form to the part of the awning which it supported, the outside looked like a number of umbrella tops, or small Chinese spires. The half of this square was open in front and at the sides, having two rows of poles clear, and the third was closed by a reeded partition, behind which was the apartment for the females, surrounded entirely by the same kind of matting.

It thus gave a perfect outline of the most ancient temples, and as these tents were certainly still more ancient as dwellings of men, if not as places of worship to gods, than any buildings of stone, it struck me forcibly on the spot, as a probable model from which the first architectural works of these countries were taken. We had here an open portico of an oblong form, with two rows of columns of

six each in front, and the third engaged in the wall that enclosed the body of the tent all around; the first corresponding to the porticoes of temples; and the last, as well in its design as in the sacredness of its appropriation, to the sanctuaries of the most remote antiquity.*

The Sheikh, whose name was Ramadān, was an old man of eighty, of fine features, combining the characteristics of the Turkish and Arabic race, with large expressive eyes. His complexion was darker than that of the people of Yemen, though somewhat less so than that of the common order of Abyssinians, and this was strongly contrasted by a long beard of silvery white. His divan was spread out with mats and cushions, covered with silk: his dress and arms were plain, yet of the best qualities of their kind; before his tent were two fine mares, well caparisoned, and every thing about his establishment wore an appearance of wealth and comfort.

Others of the caravan, seeing us halted here as they passed, alighted likewise, and took their seats without invitation, all being received with the same welcome salute, until the party amounted to twenty-six in number. While we were talking of the Turcomans, who had alarmed us on our way, a meal was preparing within; and soon afterwards, warm cakes baked on the hearth, cream, honey, dried raisins, butter, lebben, and wheat boiled in milk, were served to the company. Neither the Sheikh himself nor any of his family partook with us, but stood around, to wait upon their guests, though among those who sat down to eat, were two Indian fakirs, or beggars, a Christian pilgrim from Jerusalem, and the slaves and servants of Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān, all dipping their fingers into the same dish. Coffee was served to us in gilded china cups, and silver stands or finjans, and the pipes of the Sheikh and his son were filled and offered to those who had none.

If there could be traced a resemblance between the form of this tent, and that of the most ancient buildings of which we have any

* See the representations of the primitive huts, in Vitruvius.

knowledge, our reception there no less exactly corresponded to the picture of the most ancient manners, of which we have any detail. When the three angels are said to have appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre, he is represented, as sitting in the tent-door in the heat of the day.* “And when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himself towards the ground.” “And Abraham hastened *into* the tent, unto Sarah, and said, ‘Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.’ And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them, and he *stood by them* under the tree, and they did eat.” When inquiry was made after his wife, he replied, “Behold, she is *in* the tent.” And when it was promised him, that Sarah should have a son, it is said, “And Sarah heard in the tent-door, which was *behind* him.” The angels are represented, as merely passengers in their journey, like ourselves: for the rites of hospitality were shewn to them, *before* they had made their mission known. At first sight they were desired to halt and repose, to wash their feet, as they had apparently walked, and rest beneath the tree, while bread should be brought them to comfort their hearts. “And after that,” said the good old Patriarch, “shall ye pass on, for *therefore* are ye come unto your servant;” so that the duty of hospitality to strangers seems to have been as well and as mutually understood in the earliest days, as it is in the same country at present.

The form of Abraham’s tent, as thus described, seems to have been exactly like the one in which we sit; for in both, there was a shaded open front, in which he could sit in the heat of the day, and yet be seen from afar off; and the apartment of the females, where Sarah was, when he stated her to be *within* the tent, was immediately *behind* this, wherein she prepared the meal for the guests, and from whence she listened to their prophetic declaration.

I have noted these points of resemblance, chiefly because the

* See Genesis, chap. 18, where the interview is described.

tents of the Turcomans here are different from all those of the Arabs that I have ever seen in the countries of the south: these latter being of an oblong form, and divided in the middle, so as to form two compartments by the side of each other, both of them open in front, and closed at the back and sides, but without either a shaded porch or door before them, or an apartment of any kind behind.

The Turcomans, on the borders of Turkey, seem to hold the same position as the Bedouins on the borders of Syria. They dwell chiefly in the plains, south of the range of Mount Taurus, and extend from the sea-coast, near Antioch, to the borders of the Euphrates. They are, however, more wealthy than the Arabs, from having richer pastures, and more numerous flocks, and from being cultivators, as well as shepherds. They are, therefore, also more fixed in their stations, and live both in tents and in villages. There are among them peculiar tribes, as among the Arabs, some remaining almost stationary, and others mounted on fleet mares, scouring the plains, and living more by depredations on caravans, and even on single passengers, than by agriculture or pastoral labours.

Some of their customs and opinions are too singular and peculiar to be passed over in silence. Their horror of a certain indiscretion is said to be so great, that the most violent pains, occasioned by a suppression of it, will not induce them to commit so heinous an offence. Mr. Maseyk, formerly the Dutch Consul of Aleppo, related to me, that being once on a journey with another Frank, of the same city, they halted at a Turcoman's tent. The latter, from fatigue, a hearty meal, and a cramped attitude, had the misfortune to be unable to prevent the sudden escape of a noise loud enough to be heard. Every one looked with astonishment on each other, and, from that moment, shunned communication with the offender. About four years after this event, one of the men who were of this party, coming to Aleppo on business, called on Mr. Maseyk, when, by accident, his friend was with him. The Turcoman blushed on

recognizing this disgraced individual, when Mr. Maseyk, asking him if he had known him before, he replied with indignation, "Yes, is it not the wretch who defiled our tent?"*

Their custom of curing a fever, is to sew the patient tightly up in the hot skin of an ox, freshly flayed for the occasion; afterwards to cover him with blankets and carpets, and then, sometimes, even to sit upon him until he is in danger of suffocation. It often happens, however, from the strength of his constitution, that the patient recovers even after this rude treatment.

Their women, who are in general fair, ruddy, and handsome, neither disfigure themselves by blue stains, nor veil themselves, after the manner of the Arabs. The jealousy of the men, regarding their honour, is, however, still stronger. Mr. Maseyk, who, it should be added, is a Dutch merchant of the highest respectability, and has resided at Aleppo for forty years, and made journeys through every part of the surrounding country, told me an instance in proof of this, which I should scarcely have believed, if I had not heard it from his own mouth.

Two young persons of the same tribe, loved each other, and were betrothed in marriage: their passion was open and avowed, and known to all their friends, who had consented to their union, and even fixed the period for its celebration. It happened, one evening, that they met, accidentally, alone, but in sight of all the tents: they stopped a moment to speak to each other; and were on the point of passing on, when the brothers of the girl perceiving it, rushed out, with arms in their hands, to avenge their disgrace. The young man took to flight, and escaped with a musket-wound; but the

* D'Arvieux and Niebuhr both allude to this singular trait of manners among the Arabs. The latter, in his "*Description de l'Arabie*," 4to. p. 27, gives a very extraordinary anecdote of an opposite kind: but he adds, in alluding to the general abhorrence excited by this indiscretion, or offence,—"*Dans quelques tribus entre Basra et Hâlep l'impolitesse dont je parle est si choquante, que celui à qui elle échappe une fois, sert pour toujours de jeu et de risée aux autres: on assure même, qu'un des Bellâdsjes, sur les frontières de Perse, fut contraint de quitter sa tribu par cette seule raison.*"

poor girl received five balls in her body, besides being mangled by the daggers of her own brothers, who had aimed to plunge them in her heart; and, when she fell, they abandoned her carcase to the dogs!

The young man gained the tent of a powerful friend, the chief of another tribe, encamped near them, and told his story; begging that he would assist him with a troop of horse, to enable him to rescue the body of his love from its present degradation. He went, accompanied by some of his own people, and found life still remaining. He then repaired to the tent of her enraged brothers, and asked them why they had done this? They replied, that they could not suffer their sister to survive the loss of her honour, which had been stained by her stopping to talk with her intended husband, on the public road, before her marriage. The lover demanded her body for burial; when her brothers, suspecting the motive, exclaimed, "What, is she not yet lifeless?—then we will finish this work of death;" and were rushing out to execute their purpose, when the youth caused the troop of horsemen, sent to aid his purpose, to appear, and threatened instant death to him who should first stir to interrupt his design. The young girl was conveyed to his tent, and, after a series of kind attentions, slowly recovered.

During her illness, the distracted lover, now expelled from his own tribe, came, under cover of the night, to see her; and, weeping over her wounds, continually regretted that he had been so base as to seek his safety in flight, and not to have died in defending her. She as heroically replied, "No! No! It is my highest happiness that I have suffered, and that you have escaped; we shall both live, and Heaven will yet bless us with many pledges of our lasting love." This really happened; the girl recovered, was married to her impassioned swain, and they are still both alive, with a numerous family of children.

So romantic a tale of love, jealousy, revenge, fidelity, and heroism, would have been incredible, were it not that all the parties were

known to Mr. Maseyk, who related it; that he did so in the presence of many other persons born in Aleppo, and acquainted, by report, with the fact; and that the veracity of the narrator may be regarded as unquestionable.

When we remounted, to quit the hospitable tent of the Sheikh of Barak, we continued our way, on a course of east-north-east, over an unequal plain of less fertility than usual, being composed of a whitish dry soil, interspersed with scattered eminences of a chalky appearance. From some of these we again saw the high range of Taurus, now seeming to stretch from west to east, more lofty than before, and, in some parts, completely sheeted over with unbroken snow; so that these points, at least, were probably higher than any part of Lebanon.

In about an hour, gradually descending, we came to a valley through which ran a stream called Nahr-el-Kahareen, having its sources in the northern mountains, and flowing from hence, south-easterly, into the Euphrates. It was here about thirty feet broad, its current running at the rate of a mile-and-a-half per hour, and its stream too deep to be forded. Its waters were of a dull yellowish colour, from the soil over which their course lay; but soft, and of a sweet taste.

We crossed this river by a lofty and narrow bridge, of three pointed arches, apparently a modern work; after which we continued to ascend, for half an hour, over a white dry ground, when we came again to a plain, of great extent and fertility, the soil of which was a fine brown mould, and nearly the whole of it covered with corn. When at the summit of this gentle ascent, which brought us to the top of the plain, we saw a Turkish tomb, with two white domes, on the left of the road; and, on the right, directly opposite to it, were some humbler graves, the upright stones of which were marked with a cross, deeply cut, so that they probably contained the bodies of some Christian passengers, who had died on the road, and whose surviving friends had placed no other memorial of them there, than the emblem of the faith in which they had lived.

In pursuing our way across this plain, we passed a party of husbandmen gathering in the harvest, the greater portion of the grain being now fully ripe. They plucked up the corn by the roots, instead of reaping it, a practice often spoken of in the Scriptures,* though reaping seems to be made the earliest and most frequent mention of. On seeing the caravan, one of the labourers ran from his companions, and, approaching us, danced, stood on his hands, with his feet aloft in the air, and gave other demonstrations of joy, when he presented us with an ear of corn and a flower, as an offering of the first-fruits of the year; another remnant also of a very ancient usage in the "wave offering" of the sheaf and the ear of corn, commanded to the Israelites by Moses.† We returned for it a handful of paras, or small tin coin, and answered the shout of joy which echoed from the field, by acclamations from the caravan.

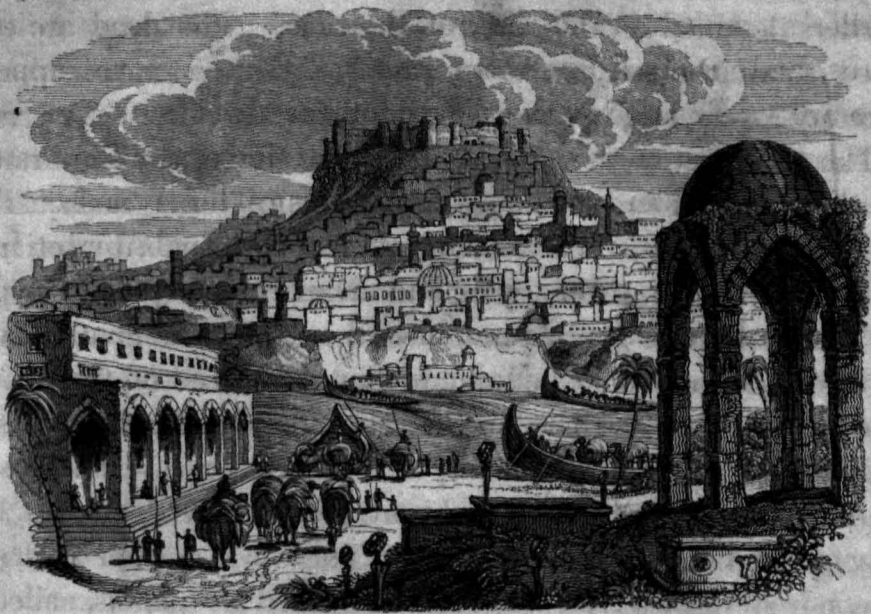
We continued across this plain for nearly three hours, seeing several large wells in the way, but no dwellings, though the soil was cultivated throughout, and the harvest nearly ripe for gathering; when, soon after noon, we reached the village of Humbārak, seated on a little hill, beneath which we halted to encamp.

Notwithstanding the danger from which we had so narrowly es-

* Psalm 129, v. 6.—Maundrell, in his "Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem," in the same month of the year as the present, though upwards of a century ago, (May 11, 1697,) noticed the same practice, in the following passage: "All that occurred to us new in these days' travel, was a particular way used by the country people in gathering their corn: it being now harvest-time, they plucked it up by handfuls from the roots; leaving the most fruitful fields as naked as if nothing had ever grown on them. This was the practice in all places of the East that I have seen, and the reason is, that they may lose none of their straw, which is generally very short, and necessary for the sustenance of their cattle, no hay being here made. I mention this, because it seems to give light to that expression of the Psalmist, 129, v. 6, 'which withcreth before it be plucked up,' where there seems to be a manifest allusion to this custom. Our new translation renders this place otherwise; but in so doing, it differs from most or all other copies; and here we may truly say, *the old is the better*. There is, indeed, mention of a mower in the next verse; but then it is such a mower as fills not his hand, which confirms rather than weakens the preceding interpretation."—p. 144, Oxford, sixth edition, 8vo.

† See the Jewish offerings, in Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

caped on the preceding day, in consequence of our being so widely scattered, the caravan had made to-day an equally straggling and disorderly march. One division of it halted at least two miles before us, and another part was nearly half that distance behind us; while we preferred the vicinity of these dwellings, for greater safety, and the supplies of a peopled spot. Here, as we had noticed in other Turcoman villages, were as many tents as houses; a burying-ground, with turbanned tomb-stones, and inscriptions in the Turkish language; and, near the village, in the plain below, was a high, oblong, artificial mound, like an ancient tumulus, from the summit of which we obtained the first sight of the bed of the Euphrates, a few miles only to the eastward of our halting-place.



CHAPTER II.

PASSAGE OF THE RIVER EUPHRATES, AT BEER.

WE quitted our station with the dawn, and going, for about half an hour, over a fertile plain, opened a full view of the Euphrates, winding in its course to the southward.

Descending gradually for an hour more, and going nearly east, over a dry white soil, we came near the water's edge, close by a small hamlet of about twenty dwellings. There was, at this place, a ruined Turkish building, with a domed top and four open arches in its square walls, one on each side; it was probably an old well or fountain, as the tombs of the Mohammedans are mostly enclosed.

We went up from hence to the northward, along the west bank of the river, for another half hour, over a flat shelving land, when we came immediately opposite to Beer, which stands on the east

side of the stream. We halted here for some time, in an extensive burying-ground, near which is a khan, for the accommodation of travellers detained on this side of the river. The dead are transported across the stream for interment, and their graves appeared to occupy a very large portion of the plain.

The transport of the caravan, from one side of the Euphrates to the other, was long and tedious, occupying us till nearly noon. There were six large boats, each about forty feet in length, by ten broad, only two feet high at the stern, and about fifteen feet at the prow. The shape of these boats resembled the half of a gourd, divided longitudinally, and hollowed out within; the head of the fruit representing the head of the boat, and the stem of the fruit its stern. The floor or platform was nearly level, and the side timbers rose almost perpendicularly, or at right angles with the floor ones, being many in number, and of a small size. There was neither keel, stem-piece, nor stern-post; the bottom was formed by planks, nailed beneath the cross timbers of the flooring, which, on reaching near the head of the boat, were bent upwards in a rounding form, till they reached the stem, generally tapering away there in breadth, and offering an overhanging bow to the stream, while the stern was merely a gradual rising up of the bottom planks, till they were well cleared of the water, when the trunk of a tree was placed across their ends, like a ship's transom, its top being only two feet from the water's edge.

The stern of the boat being presented to the beach, and from the flatness of its bottom, and little draft of water, almost overhanging the sand, the beasts of burthen got into it with ease, after they were lightened of their loads. Each of these boats carried about two tons of merchandize, besides four camels, a horse or two, three or four asses, and eight or ten passengers, but they were then almost dangerously laden. The crew consisted of four men and two boys; three persons being placed at each extremity, and the cargo and passengers a-midships. Over the high prow went one long oar, formed of the trunk of some slender tree; and this

having to be managed by one person, its thickest end remained in-board, while to its other extremity were nailed two flat pieces of plank, for the blade. This oar was used chiefly as a rudder; and on both bows were smaller oars of the same description, as well as on the quarters, so that they were used either on one side or the other, as occasion required.

When we pushed off from the shore, the lee-oars with regard to the current, or those on the south only, were pulled to impel the boat across the stream; but this was so rapid in its course, as to whirl the boat round four or five times in her passage over, and occasion her to fall at least a quarter of a mile below the point immediately opposite to that from which we started.

We landed on a steep beach, and passed under the arch of one of the buildings close to the water, where we were all detained for examination at the Custom-House, a refinement in which the Turks are inferior to no people in Europe. When this duty was over, we were suffered to pass through the town unmolested; and repairing to a sort of wharf without it, and close to the southern walls, the goods were there landed for examination. This occasioned us another long detention, so that it was nearly evening before all was ended, when we went up through the town, and, going out of its eastern gate, encamped close to the walls for the night.

The town of Beer, which is the Birtha of antiquity,* is seated on the east bank of the Euphrates, at the upper part of a reach of that river, which runs nearly north and south, and just below a sharp bend of the stream, where it follows that course, after coming from a long reach flowing more from the westward. The river is here about the general breadth of the Nile, below the first cataract to the sea. It is considerably larger than the Orontes or the Jordan, and is at least equal to the Thames at Blackfriars-bridge.† Its eastern

* D'Anville, *Comp. of Anc. Geog.* vol. i. p. 426. 8vo.

† Rauwolf says, that the Euphrates, when he crossed it at Beer, about the year 1575, was a mile broad; Maundrell, that it was as broad, in his time, as the Thames at London. When Otter crossed it, in 1734, its breadth, according to his conjecture.

bank being steep, and its western one flat where we crossed it, the rapidity of its current was very different on opposite sides. On the west, its rate was less than two miles an hour; in the centre, it was full three; and between that and the eastern shore, it ran at the rate of more than four miles an hour. Its greatest depth, as judged by the immersion of the large oars, which often touched the bottom, did not seem to be more than ten or twelve feet. Its waters were of a dull yellowish colour, and were quite as turbid as those of the Nile; though, as I thought at the time, much inferior to them in sweetness of taste. The earth, with which it is discoloured, is much heavier, as it quickly subsided, and left even a sediment in the bottom of the cup, while drinking; whereas the Nile water, from the lightness of its mould, may be drank without perceiving such deposit, if done immediately on being taken from the river.

The people of Beer are, in general, aware of the celebrity of their stream, and think it is the largest in the world. It still preserves its ancient name, with very little corruption, being called by them *Shat-el-Fraat*, or the River of Fraat.*

exceeded not two hundred common paces; though lower down, upon the plain, it spread, he observes, to the width of five or six hundred paces, at the time of its increase. Travels, vol. i. p. 108-112. The same traveller mentions a tradition, which ascribes the building the fortress of Beer to Alexander the Great; and adds, that there were, in his time, three other remarkable fortresses in the neighbourhood. Nedgem, to the east; Souroudge, to the north-east; and Kalai-Roum, a day's journey to the west. He observes, also, that the Vale of Olives, not far from the town, abounded in springs of water, and in fruit-trees.

* Josephus says, in his description of the four rivers of Paradise; "The Euphrates and the Tigris fall into the sea of Erythras; the Euphrates is called Phora (ΦΟΡΑ), which signifies, by one derivation, *Dispersion*, and by another, a *Flower*; but the Tigris is named Diglath (ΔΙΓΛΑΘ), an appellation which indicates *sharp* and *narrow*." Ant. Jud. lib. 1. c. 4. s. 3. On this passage, which is given in the translation of Dr. Vincent's "Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients," that writer has the following note.

"Phora, however, in some manuscripts, is written Phorath, like Diglath, and is in reality the modern name Phoráth, Phōrāt, Forát, F'rat. It has two derivations from the Hebrew פָּרַץ or פָּרַץ, *Phar* or *Pharatz*, to *spread*, which indicates (σχεδασμὸν or) *dispersion*, or פָּרַח, *Pharash*, to *produce fruit* or *flowers* (ἀνθος).

It is known, also, as one of the four rivers of Paradise; and the only one, seemingly, which has preserved its name. The river Gihon, which is mentioned also in the Koran, was thought, by an Indian pilgrim of our party, to be the Gunga of the Hindoos; and the rest

“Diglath is derived, in this form, from קלל, Khalal, *to go swift* (ὀξύ μετὰ σφοδρότητος). This is a coarse etymology, for ὀξύ is not swift, (but ὠκύ), and we have nothing to represent μετὰ σφοδρότητος. Perhaps, Josephus and his countrymen were as bad etymologists as the Greeks.

“Pherat is used frequently in Scripture with the pronoun, as Hu-Pherát פֶּרַת הוּא, the Pherát, or that Pherát, by way of pre-eminence; and is derived by the commentators from פָּרַח, Pharah, *to produce fruit*, on account of its fertilizing the country by canals, &c. from פָּר, Phar, and פָּרַץ, Pharatz, *to burst or spread*, because it overflows its banks, and from פָּרַד, פָּרַט, פָּרַם, Phras, Phreth, and Phred, *to divide*, because it separates or bounds the Desert. The Greeks, as Hoffman justly says, *more suo*, derive Euphrates from εὐφραίνειν.

“Hid-Dehkel is written הִדְקֶל, Kid-Dekhel, and by the Samaritan manuscript הִדְקֶל, Hid-Dekhel, (or rather Hhid-Dekhel, and Ed-Dekhel,) as we are informed, from הִד, *to dart forth*, הִדֵּר, *loud*, or from הִד, Hhed, *to penetrate*; with the addition of קלל, Khalal, which implies *swift motion*; a sense agreeable to the opinion of the Greeks, who interpret the Tigris sometimes *swift*, and sometimes from the Persick, Teir, an arrow.

“If Dekhel had been written with a *g* in Hebrew, like Degel in Arabic, or the Diglath of Josephus, דגל, Dagal, signifies *to dazzle*, or *glitter*, &c., an idea not inconsistent with a swift and agitated stream; but all the authorities tend to קלל, Khalal.” 4to. 1807; vol. i. p. 420, 421. Notes.

To this may be added, that the name of the Euphrates, which is written فُرَات in Arabic, signifies also *very fine sweet water*, and both it and the Tigris are called in the dual, فُرَاتَانِ Phratān, or the two Phrats; so that this signification would well apply, but it would be difficult to prove, whether the name was given to these rivers from their containing this fine sweet water, or whether this last was not subsequently expressed by a term, derived from the name of the river itself.

By Richardson, the name of the Tigris is written in Arabic تَجَلْ but it is pronounced Dejjala. Now, تَجَلْ Dejal, signifies *gold—the glittering of a sword—a large caravan—liquid pitch*, the first of which might be indicative of the wealth produced by it; the second, the appearance of its rapid stream; the third, the commerce carried on upon it; and the last, the springs of bitumen and naphtha, which abound as much on the banks of this river as on those of the Euphrates. Whether the Arabic or Hebrew etymologies are to be preferred in point of antiquity, or even of appropriateness, is a question that would admit of dispute. In Armenia, where the Tigris rises, the word Tiger is said to signify an arrow.

assented to its being in Hind-el-Juāny, or the Innermost India. It is true, that it is said "to compass the whole land of Ethiopia;" but Herodotus speaks of Indian Ethiopians in his time; and, among the early writers, the word Ethiopia was applied to the country of the black people generally.*

The Euphrates seems to have been thought even superior to the Nile, by a writer, the scenes of whose history were occasionally on both. In describing a communion between Abraham and his God, amid the darkness of the evening, he says,—“In the same day God made a covenant with Abraham, saying,—Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the *Great River*, the river Euphrates.”† It deserves this distinctive appellation, in contrast with rivers generally, though not with the Nile; which may be considered as equally great, whether from the length of its course, or the celebrity of the ancient cities which stood upon its banks.

I made many inquiries here, after the ruins of Hierapolis, now called Yerabolus, but no one knew of such a place, although it is certainly less than a short day's journey from this town. I should have thought it might have been at a spot called Khallet-el-Room, or the Roman Castle,‡ said to be four hours' distance up the river, were it not that, from the course of Maundrell's journey from Aleppo to that place, it would appear to have been to the southward of this.

The principal stations spoken of, between this and Bussorah, are Anah, the ancient Anatho,§ Hit, and Hillah; the former, perhaps, the country of the Anakites—the second, of the Hittites—and the

* “Can the leopard change his spots, or the Ethiopian his skin?”

† Genesis, chap. xv. v. 18.—The Kennizzites, spoken of in the next verse, may possibly be the great tribe of the Annazies, who occupy all the western banks of the Euphrates, and the eastern frontier of Syria, to this day.

‡ This is said to be the ancient Zeugma, so called from the Grecian term, signifying a Bridge, and not a Bride, as erroneously printed. This was the great passage for the Roman armies into Mesopotamia; and opposite to it, on the east side of the river, was a small town called Apamea.—*Kinneir's Persia*, p. 316. It is the Kalai-Roum mentioned by Otter.—See Note, p. 29.

§ Gibbon, vol. iv. p. 164.

last, now recognized as the site of the ruined Babylon. There is, at present, no communication by water from Beer, either up or down the Euphrates; partly from the want of proper boats, and the unskilfulness of the people to build them, and partly from the banks being, on both sides, occupied by tribes of Arabs, often at war among themselves, and always in hostilities against strangers who pass that way. The stream is called Shat-el-Fraat, from its source in the mountains of Armenia, until its junction with the Tigris, below Bagdad; when they are jointly called Shat-el-Arab, or the river of the Arabs, to its outlet into the sea.

Just below the town of Beer, the stream divides itself into twenty smaller channels, running between low grassy islets; and opposite the town itself was now a dry bank of mud: but all these, no doubt, change their form, their size, and even their situation, at different periods, according to the state of its waters, as in the Ganges, and the other great rivers of India. The stream undergoes some variation in its height during the course of the year; but this is not regular, as the rains without the tropic are not fixed in the periods of their fall; and if, in winter, these give an accession of waters to the tributary streams, the melting of the snows on Mount Taurus, in the summer, contributes, perhaps, an equal portion.

The banks on both sides, where steep, are of a chalky soil, as seen from hence, and, where flat, they are fertile, and covered with trees and verdure. About two hours below Beer,* and on the eastern bank of the river, is an extensive grove, not of palms, but of some fuller foliaged trees, and near it, on the river's brink, is a high artificial mound, like the site of a fort. To the north, also, are seen woods and green fields; but immediately opposite to the town, is a plain, of bare soil, with a broad beach of fine dark sand, covered with pebbles of white quartz, and other hard stones; and, at the town

It should be noted here, that the practice of the Orientals is to estimate distances by the time in which a strong and healthy man could walk over them, rather than by any more definite measure. Wherever this standard is used in these pages, an hour's distance may be understood to imply, generally, from three to four miles.

itself, the bank is, in some parts, a steep beach of broken fragments of stone, and in others a high chalky cliff.

The town of Beer may contain about four hundred houses, and from three to four thousand inhabitants. It has five mosques, with tall minarets; a public bath, a caravanserai, a few coffee-houses, and a small, but ill-supplied, bazār. Its western front is washed by the edge of the river, so that the walls of the houses form its defence on that face; and on the other three sides, towards the land, it is encompassed by a good wall of Saracenic work, disfigured in some places by later Mohammedan repairs. As this has been, no doubt, a general pass from Syria into Mesopotamia, for many ages, it was necessarily an important position, both in a military and commercial point of view; and sufficient marks of fortification and building remain, to shew that it had long been so considered.

As the town itself stands on the side of a very steep hill, there are perpendicular cliffs within and around it, in different directions. In these are a number of large caves, and smaller grottoes; none of which, as far as I could examine them, appeared to be sepulchral; so that they may be carried up to as high an antiquity as any other Troglodyte habitations. The cliffs are in general of a hard chalky substance, and have furnished the materials for the buildings in the town; many of the quarries being now caves, closed with a wall of masonry in front, and used as dwellings by the present inhabitants. The houses, and the rocky slope on which they stand, present, from the opposite side of the river, a mass of glaring white, which is painful to look upon in the sun.

In the centre, on a height of the rock, stands an old ruined fortification; and all along the north end of the town, where a perpendicular cliff faces the water, are the walls and towers of a large castle, incorporated with the cliff itself, and presenting, even now, in its state of great dilapidation, an imposing aspect. These are said, anciently, to have contained some curious engines of war, and other antiquities, hastily seen and described by Maundrell. Some of the persons to whom we addressed our inquiries here, regarding

them, contended that they had been since carried away ; others, that they had never been there ; and others, again, that they were still remaining to be seen ; all swearing by their beards, and appealing to God and the prophet for the truth of their opposite statements. My mortification was the greater, inasmuch as I was unable to visit it myself, from the necessary attention which I had to pay to my horse, my baggage, &c. ; and from the many other troublesome duties which fall on every individual of a caravan, on entering a new district. I saw, however, in the porch of one of the gates of the town, two large iron axles for wheels, each of them about six feet long, and nine inches diameter in their thickest parts ; and these were among the articles which Maundrell enumerates.*

The streets of Beer are narrow ; but, from the steepness of the site, and the materials of the buildings, the town is generally clean. Some of the houses are plaistered and white-washed in front, with painted figures, in the Turkish style, over the doors ; and the inscription of ماش الله (Mash-Allah), a common exclamation of wonder and reverence for the Almighty, with the date of their erection, as frequently seen at Aleppo.

The walls appear to have been built of a hard yellow stone, of which there is only a small portion in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, unless time, and the effects of the air, may have changed the colour and texture of the surface. They are of excellent masonry, and are constructed in the rustic manner, in imitation of Roman work. There are towers at the angles, and other parts ; and some portions of the wall climb over very steep acclivities, as at Antioch. Through all parts of it are loop-holes for arrows, and a battlement going all around the summit.

The front of the eastern gate presents many architectural decorations, in good taste, among which are the fan-topped niches, so fashionable in Roman times, and afterwards imitated by the

* Maundrell's visit to Beer was made in the year 1699, and is appended to his Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem.

Saracens. They were always executed by these last, however, with an approximation to the pointed arch, and in a way to be easily distinguished from those of the Roman age. Around the battlements, I observed, also, a sort of frieze, formed of large fleur-de-lys reversed; but whether this ornament had any reference to the defeat of the Christian powers, who bore it among their emblems during the time of the crusades, it would be difficult to determine.

There were here, also, as in most old Mohammedan fortresses, many circular stones jutting out from the walls, like guns projecting through the closed port of a ship's side; and on all these were inscriptions in relief, for which purpose they seemed to have been placed there. In the oldest buildings this is the use to which they are applied, and this was, no doubt, their original intention; though in some, perhaps later buildings, fragments of granite and marble pillars have been used, to project from the walls in this way, when the buildings were erected near the site of any ruined city, and were thus already formed to the builder's hands; but their ends were not then used as inscriptive tablets.

Around the whole of the front of the eastern gate was a long band of smooth stone, containing an inscription in characters of high-relief, and well cut; but it was in such ancient complicated forms that none of our party could understand it, although we had many who could read the old Cufic character with facility, and who understood the most learned style of Arabic in use at the present day.

Beer is under the dominion of the Pasha of Orfah, and is governed by an Aga, who has only a few personal attendants, and no troops. The sum paid on the entrance of goods from Syria, is four piastres and a half, or about half a Spanish dollar per camel-load, of whatever commodity; one hundred paras, or about half-a-crown sterling per head, is also demanded from all Christians returning from the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and crossing the Euphrates into Mesopotamia, of which there were several in our caravan.*

* According to Olivier, the passage of the Euphrates at Bir (as it is spelt by him)

Without the eastern walls, where we encamped, was a large cave, supported within by columns, left in the rock; and it appeared to have been once used as a place of shelter for cattle. In the sides of the rock itself, and in every one of its pillars, were holes and bars hollowed out for fastening the halters of the beasts; and these had certainly been used for this purpose during many years, as the originally rough stones were worn quite smooth by continued friction, though it had long ceased to be appropriated to such a purpose.

At this place I saw none of the boats, formed of rafts buoyed up by inflated skins, with which the river Euphrates was anciently navigated from Armenia to Babylon, as described by several of the Greek writers; though an application of the principle still remained in use, probably as a last vestige of its gradual decay.* The stream is often crossed by men and boys, who, stripping off their clothes, place them on their heads, and throw their bodies along on a sheep or goat-skin, tightly filled with air. They completely embrace this highly-buoy-

was performed, in his time, in a large boat, directed by a helm and a long pole. The river, he observes, seemed to resemble the Rhone in size and rapidity; while its volume is considerably increased in the beginning of spring, and in autumn, by the melting of the snows, and the rains which fall in those seasons. The town of Bir contained, according to his conjecture, about three or four thousand inhabitants.—Vol. ii. p. 327. In the time of Otter, Bir was under the jurisdiction of the Pasha of Aleppo.

* In the “Description du Pachalik de Bagdad,” by Mons. Rousseau, formerly Consul for France at that capital, the following passage alludes to this decay:—

“Sans remonter jusqu’à leurs sources, et sans vanter la bonté de leurs eaux, je commencerai par dire que si l’Euphrate et le Tigre eussent traversé la Grèce, ou l’Italie, on auroit vu les poètes s’empresser de chanter à l’envi leur magnifique aspect, et se plaire à célébrer les grâces naïves, et les jeux folâtres des divinités imaginaires, dont auroient été peuplées leurs ondes argentines: alors, ils n’auroient cédé en rien pour la renommée au Pactole, ou au Tibre. Au reste, les deux fleuves dont il s’agit produisent en abondance d’excellens poissons, et sont également navigables, l’Euphrate, depuis Bir, à cinq journées d’Alep, et le Tigre, depuis Moussol, jusqu’à Bassora. Il y a quarante ans que les communications par eau, entre Bir et Hilla, étoient très-fréquentes: elles sont aujourd’hui totalement interrompues, par la négligence des habitans du premier de ces lieux, qui ont laissé périr tous leurs bateaux, sans vouloir se donner la peine d’en construire de nouveaux, propres à cette navigation.

ant vessel by clasping their arms around it, near to one extremity, till their hands lock together beneath it, throwing their thighs more loosely over the sides near the other end. By the simply propelling motion of the feet, and the occasional use of one of the hands, as an oar or rudder, they get across faster than the largest boats, and with much less loss of way from the force of the stream.*

The language of Beer is almost entirely Turkish, by far the greater portion of the inhabitants not even understanding Arabic. The dress of the men is nearly the same as at Aleppo; and among them are quite as great a proportion of green-turbanned Shereefs.† It would seem remarkable that these immediate descendants of the Prophet should be so numerous throughout the northern parts of Syria, where neither himself nor any of the family of his own times ever reached, while they are so comparatively few in Yemen and the Hedjâz, his native country, and the scene of his principal exploits, were it not known that this honour is as frequently purchased by money as any other distinction in the Turkish empire. The women of Beer dress like those of Asia Minor, and among the few that I saw loosely veiled, were some as fair as the women of southern Europe, with more healthy ruddiness of colour.

We passed our evening on the summit of the hill above the

On this singular practice, Monsieur Rousseau has the following passage:—

“Tous les voyageurs ont parlé avec surprise de la coutume qu’ont les Arabes de ces contrées, de faire de très-longes trajets à la nage, au moyen d’une outre enflée qu’ils s’attachent au ventre. Cette outre n’est autre chose qu’une peau de chèvre dont ils cousent exactement toutes les ouvertures, excepté celle d’une jambe, par laquelle ils soufflent cette peau jusqu’à ce qu’elle soit remplie d’air et bien tendue; ensuite ils tortillent cette partie, et la tiennent bien serrée. Après cette préparation, ils se dépouillent nus, font un paquet de leurs habits qu’ils attachent sur l’épaule, et se posent à plat sur l’outre; de cette manière ils voguent très-lestement à fleur d’eau, en remuant les pieds et se gouvernant avec les mains, tandis qu’ils tiennent à la bouche leur pipe toute allumée. Ce que je viens de dire ne regarde pas les hommes seulement, on voit aussi très-souvent des troupes nombreuses de femmes et de jeunes filles, se transporter d’un rivage à l’autre sur leurs ballons enflés, et faire retentir l’air de leurs chants pendant la traversée.”

† Pretended lineal descendants of the Prophet Mohammed.

town ; where, while we smoked our pipes on the grass, and drank the cool freshness of the western breeze, we were gratified with the most agreeable prospect. Immediately before us were the walls, the towers, and the broken turrets of the Saracenic Town and Castle, with a bright moon throwing her silver touches along the line of its battlements, and producing the finest contrast between the dark outline of their ragged points, and the clear blue sky, on which they were so distinctly traced. Beyond the eastern wall, the camels of the caravan were dimly seen, the twilight of the broad shade in which they reposed, being still more darkened by the smoke of the fires, around which their drivers had assembled to sing away their cares. Behind us, was a white chalky valley, with abrupt cliffs on either side, and well wooded throughout with thick foliaged trees. Before us, at our feet, flowed the majestic Euphrates, winding its way through innumerable little islets. The stream was bordered, on its eastern side, by a narrow slip of plain, filled with productive gardens ; but from its opposite bank, towards the horizon of the west, the eye ranged over a level tract of land, without a marked feature or a prominent object to be seen throughout its illimitable extent.



CHAPTER III.

FROM BEER, ACROSS THE PLAINS OF THE TURCOMANS, TO ORFAH.

JUNE 1st.—We quitted Beer with the dawn, though it was long past sun-rise before all the caravan had cleared the hill above; not so much from its steepness or its length, as from the unfitness of the camel, particularly when loaded, to tread any roads but level ones.

As we were among the last in motion, we were surprised by a party who had been despatched from the Aga to seize a Janissary on his escape from Aleppo, and who laid hold of me as the person in question. It had been observed at the Custom-house, that I had no merchandise in the caravan, and it was therefore concluded that I was not a trader. As I wore the Musulman turban, it was decided that I was not a Christian pilgrim from Jerusalem; my

person being unknown to the different douaniers who were acquainted with all the people that usually pass from Syria into Mesopotamia, I must, they thought, have been a military man of some kind; and my being well armed, and riding a horse, instead of a mare or gelding, tended rather to confirm this opinion. My ignorance of the Turkish language was thought to be a pretext, merely to protect myself from suspicion: and the conclusion on all these facts was, that I could be no other than a Janissary of Aleppo, flying for some crime, either of a public or a private nature.

I was about to shew my passport, as an Englishman, from the Pasha of Aleppo; but Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān, whom I consulted privately on the affair, advised me, in a whisper, by no means to do so. It would be certain, he thought, of leading to a large demand of entrance-money on coming into the territory of the Pasha of Orfah, as this chief was independant of the Pasha of Aleppo, and even courted opportunities to show how much he despised his authority. To relieve myself from this detention, I endeavoured to persuade them that I really was not a Janissary, but a Muggrebin Trader, who had been unfortunate in the west, and was now seeking to repair my losses by new adventures in the east.

I think that this tale was believed, though the first accusation was still persisted in, until it was at last told me, that if I chose to pay fifty gold roobeahs to the Governor's people, I might depart and join the caravan; but if not, that I should be detained here until I could give some better account of myself. I desired a moment for consideration, and it was granted me; when, consulting with the Hadjee, he assured me that he could not possibly wait, as his goods and attendants were gone on, and that if I was detained here alone, I should no doubt be ill-treated and greatly distressed. He offered even to pay the sum himself, rather than suffer this to take place, but advised immediate decision. I accordingly returned, agreeably to his advice, and no longer denied the charge of being really a Janissary, who had lately entered the service, and had come from Cairo, where Turkish is but little spoken. As they had