

he would have excused himself for taking it from me as a thing of little value. I therefore said it had been given to me by a friend whom I respected; and added, that I valued it so highly on that account, that I would suffer my life to be taken from me rather than part with it. This was uttered in a very determined tone, as the only method which presented itself to my mind, of escaping from extortion. It had, in part, the desired effect; but to compensate to the sheikh for his relinquishing all further claim to it, on account of the motive of my estimating it so highly, I was obliged to give him another sword, belonging to the nephew of my host, for which I engaged to pay this young man two hundred and fifty piastres, or return him one of equal value at Mardin.

After being thus literally fleeced, we returned to our camp, fatigued as much by the vexations of the day, as by the privation of our usual noon-sleep, and the bustle we had undergone in the mid-day sun. On going back, we saw the look-out boys descending from the summit of the steep hill, before mentioned, as one of the eminences of this post, and others were driving the flocks into stone enclosures, for their greater security through the night.

I had, at first, taken these enclosures for the remaining foundations of destroyed buildings; but, on a nearer examination, they appeared to be only sheep-folds, constructed of loose stones, with a door of entrance, and the enclosing walls just sufficiently high to prevent the animals escaping. There was here, however, on the south-western side of the hill, the portion of an old building, now in ruins. Its masonry was of unburnt bricks of a large size, but thin, and well cemented. I observed in it a good Roman arch, as of a recess, in the inner wall, but of what age its construction was, or to what purpose it had been applied, it would now be difficult to determine. The whole of the stones were large round insulated masses of the black porous basalt, so often described in the plains of the Haurān, on the eastern frontiers of Syria.



CHAPTER VIII.

FROM THE ARAB CAMP AT EL MAZAR, TO MARDIN.

JUNE 18th.—The confusion into which all the packages had been thrown, by the ransacking of the preceding day, occasioned great delay this morning to set them in proper order, so that it was long after sun-rise when we departed, although we had all been stirring, as usual, at the rising of the moon.

We continued our way north-easterly over the plain, in order to get into the track of the Arabs, to whom we had thus dearly paid tribute; a man of their tribe having been despatched to the chief in that direction, to acquaint him with this, and to permit us to pass in safety, without further extortions.

From all that I could learn, the usual places of encampment of this tribe of Beni-Melān were on the southern road from Orfah to

Mardin, and the more northern route from Orfah to Diarbekr; they had now, however, shifted their position, from a fear of the Annazies, who were much more powerful than themselves, and with whom their only mode of warfare would be by retreating, unless surprised and obliged to fight. These Annazies were estimated at fifty thousand horsemen at least, according to the testimony of the Beni-Melân themselves, as well as that of others who professed to be intimately acquainted with their resources.

In our progress over the plain on which we now travelled, we passed wide tracts of the finest land, producing a high grass exactly like corn. Indeed, I did not at first know it to be otherwise, until, by a comparison of it with fuller ears of grain in some sown patches near it, the difference was perceived. Even at the time of that examination, however, I still thought the first to be wheat in its indigenous state. Excepting only some few stony portions, where goats and sheep chiefly fed, the whole tract was one waving field of yellow harvest, seeming to invite the sickle; and in cleared patches of this were seen not less than five hundred tents, scattered in groups of from thirty to fifty each, in different parts of our way, with large herds of bullocks and horned cattle feeding in this luxuriant pasture.

At such of the tents as were near our path, we drank milk and coffee; and after an agreeable road of only three hours, in which, however, we were oppressed by the violent heat and the fatigue of the preceding day, we halted at noon near a pool of rain-water, to replenish the supply of the caravan.

Our situation was in itself sufficiently painful to all, but its effect was heightened to me by the forlorn situation in which I found myself here, without friend or companion, servant or interpreter; hearing every hour four or five strange languages, one of which only (the Arabic) I understood, and seeing in every individual about me a rudeness and selfishness of the most repulsive kind, however justified it might have been by the necessary dependance of every man on his own exertions.

It is true that here no one is superior to another, but by his own capacity of enduring hunger and thirst, heat and cold, watching and fatigue; and his only safeguard consists in the union of his own vigilance and courage with that of others, who are all strangers to him. The contracted and selfish interest to which this necessarily gives rise, the frequent refusal of one to render the least assistance to another, where his own benefit is not immediately concerned, and the insolence with which those are addressed who are thought in any way to delay the general progress, are constant subjects of disgust and irritation to all parties.

In the evening we were visited by two wandering musicians, of the Koordi, or Curd, people, one of whom played on a rude guitar; and the other sang some Koord songs, which were lively and not destitute of natural melody. We had, at the same time, the following striking instance of the frivolous appeals to the Deity among the Mohammedans. A man went round the caravan, crying, with a loud voice, "In the name of God, the just, and the merciful. My cup is gone from me: it disappeared while I prayed at sun-set; (and may God grant my evening prayer.) To whoever may find the same, may God lengthen out his life, may God augment his pleasures, and may God bring down affairs of business on his head!" This pompous appeal to heaven, and the prayers for good fortune to the finder of the missing utensil, were all powerless, however, in their effect. The lost cup was not found; and the consolation then assumed was, "God knows where it is gone, but it was written in heaven from of old."

As the Koordi inhabiting the hills near us had the reputation of being great robbers, we lay encamped to night in closer order than usual, every man by his horse, ready armed and accoutred,* and catching at intervals an hour's sleep upon his sword or his spear.*

* Travelling in Mesopotamia seems, even in the earliest ages of which we have any records, to have been little less dangerous than at present. In the history of Isaac and Rebekah, when Abraham sent his chief servant from Canaan to Haran, to betroth the damsel, it is said, "It was a considerable while before the servant got thither; for it

On departing from our station, we went a course of east-south-east, over the plain, which was an alternate succession of stony tracts, and fertile soil, covered with rich grass and corn. The stones were black, porous, and in separate masses of from one to five hundred pounds weight, above the surface of the ground, resembling in form, though not in colour, large masses of sponge. Some, indeed, were semi-globular above the earth; and where they were broken on the surface, shewed coatings of different lamina like the coats of an onion, while the points of such few ridges as thrust themselves above the soil, were of a more solid kind. The remarkable perforations which appeared in the greater portion of these stones, did not seem to depend on their greater or less exposure to the air; for the freshest and blackest of them were as full of these as the most decomposed; and when broken, the interior presented the same appearance as the part without. The soil was a fine brown mould, of a light colour, apparently equal in depth and fertility to that of Egypt.

After a march of about two hours, we reached a burying-place of the tribe of Beni-Melān, under the foot of a small hill, on the sides of which were enclosures of stone for the security of flocks. The graves here were of a different form from any that I had yet seen in the country, being of the usual length and breadth, but built in a strait wall on all sides up from the ground, to the height of seven or eight feet, and then closed on the top by a semicircular or convex covering of stone. At each end rose a small slab, without ornament or inscription of any kind.

There were nearly fifty of these tombs, but the principal one was that of Tamar Pasha, the father of Aioobe, the present chief of the tribe. It consisted of an octagonal outer wall, enclosing a ~~well paved~~ court, the ascent to which was by a flight of steps.

requires much time to pass through Mesopotamia, where it is tedious travelling in winter, for the depth of the clay; and in summer, for want of water; and, besides, is dangerous, by reason of the robberies there committed, which are not to be avoided by travellers, but by caution before hand."—*Josephus, Antiq. of the Jews*, b. i. c. 16. s. 1.

In the centre of this court rose an octangular building, having an open arch in each of its sides, and being covered by a well-executed dome. Beneath this, stood the tomb of the Pasha, which presented the appearance of an open grave, the sides being raised about a foot above the level of the surface, and the central part hollow to that depth. Around these sides were seen the common ornaments of the Turkish frieze reversed, as remarked on the tombs at Orfah; and at the head of the grave was raised a perpendicular stone of the common form, containing the monumental inscription in Arabic, and crowned by the high cap between the form of that worn by the Tatars and that used by the Delhis. In the paved court without this central octagonal building, were two other humbler tombs, probably those of the wives or children of the Pasha himself.

We continued our march from hence, going east-south-east, until nearly noon, when, having been in motion about eight hours, we halted near a pool of rain-water, in a hollow of the plain, and close to the foot of a small round hill called Tal Jaffer. We had now all around us a level view, broken only by little hillocks; excepting on the north, where the plain terminated at the range of hills before spoken of, as forming the insulated mass, east of Taurus. This is called in Turkish, Karaj Dag, and in Arabic Jebel el Asswad, both signifying the Black Mountain. It is probable, from its name, that it is formed of the black stone so common over all this tract.

In the evening, some Yezideeah, as they were here called, halted at our tent, on their journey from the eastward towards Orfah, and took coffee with us. These men were very different in their appearance from those I had before seen at Orfah; the individuals of the present party having round harsh features, red complexions, and stiff wiry hair. They were said, however, to be genuine Yezedis from Sinjār, so that there must be a variety of character and race among them. Out of the ten that we saw here, there was not one whose countenance did not bear the mark of great villany; such as might recommend them for the execution of any bloody

purpose, and make them fit and faithful servants of the demon whom they were said to worship.

During their stay with us, they requested a letter to be written in Arabic, by a member of our caravan, which was dictated by one of themselves aloud. Though the letter extended to nearly fifty lines, it consisted entirely of personal salutations from every one of their party, to a host of names among their friends, saying that they had arrived safe thus far, and, by the blessing of God, hoped soon to return to them, after a prosperous journey. Among the names recited, the common Arabic ones prevailed, though there were some that I had never before heard; the title of "Cowāl" was affixed to more than half of these, and was, as I learnt, the distinctive appellation of their priests, who are said to be as numerous as the rest of the community.

Among the new particulars which I heard of this people, it was said, that in their sacred books no mention is made of any superior beings, except Sheitān and Eesa, or Satan and Jesus; but they paid to the former the higher honours of the two; as they did not scruple to use the name of Jesus, while that of Satan could not, even by the most cruel deaths, be extorted from them. The interview described in the Gospels, where the Devil is said to have tempted the Messiah; the instances of his sending whole legions of his inferior spirits to torment men, and possess herds of swine; and more particularly the occasion on which the Devil is said to have taken Christ up into a high mountain, to have shewn him all the kingdoms of this world, and promised them to him if he would fall down and worship him;—are all interpreted by them as favourable to the high dignity of this Prince or Melek, as they call him. They contend, that if the assertion of the Gospel be true, that all the kingdoms of the earth are at the disposal of Satan, and the power and the glory of them delivered to him, to give to whomsoever he will, he must be a personage of the highest consideration, and one whose favour all the good kings and emperors of the earth must have won; for to his influence alone do they owe the possession of their

respective thrones. This is the orthodox doctrine in the mountains of Sinjār; and any one who should dispute it, would no doubt be treated with much the same kind of indulgence that is shewn to sceptics elsewhere.

The Yezeedis have one large church, somewhere in the north of Mesopotamia, which they all visit at the yearly feast; and besides this, there are many smaller ones in their native hills. The brazen image of a cock is said to be set up in their temples, as an object of adoration; but they suffer no one to enter their places of worship except themselves, and are also scrupulously reserved on the subject of their religious opinions, in which particulars, as well as in their isolated situation in a range of mountains going by their name, they resemble the Druzes and Nessaries, in Syria. Their women are most carefully concealed from public view; but I could not learn whether each man confined himself to one wife or not. Blue, which is the distinctive colour of the Christians throughout the Turkish empire, is studiously avoided by them. They will neither sit upon it nor touch it, as they consider it the colour peculiarly sacred to Satan. Nevertheless, those very Christians, who are compelled to wear this distinguishing colour as a mark of inferiority imposed on them by their Turkish masters, are, in the estimation of the Yezeedis, much inferior to the Mohammedans, with whom they are generally at open war.*

* These particulars, as well as the several others already mentioned, and each gleaned from information on the spot, are strongly corroborated by the facts mentioned in the Memoir of Père Garzoni, already quoted, and especially by the two following paragraphs:—

“ Ces sectaires ont un très-grand respect pour les monastères Chrétiens qui sont dans leurs environs. Quand ils vont les visiter, ils ôtent leurs chaussettes avant d'entrer dans l'enceinte, et, marchant pieds nus, ils baisent la porte et les murs; ils croient par là s'assurer la protection du saint dont le couvent porte le nom. S'il leur arrive, pendant une maladie, de voir en rêve quelque monastère, ils ne sont pas plutôt guéris qu'ils vont le visiter, et y porter des offrandes d'encens, de cire, de miel, ou de quelque autre chose. Ils y demeurent environ un quart d'heure, et en baisent de nouveau les murailles avant de se retirer. Ils ne font aucune difficulté de baiser les

JUNE 20th.—The moon was now so far advanced in her wane as to yield us little light before the morning, so that it was broad daylight before we were all in motion. Our route was directed a point more southerly than before, but the face of the country over which we travelled was nearly the same, consisting of stony tracts, fine grass-covered plains, and some few patches of corn-land, alternately succeeding each other.

On the south of us was the Great Desert, on which the eye soon became fatigued to look, as it had all the monotony of a sea-view, without the freshness of its colouring, or the variety occasioned by the winds and waves by which this last is continually agitated. We now opened in the north-east a second range of isolated mountains, rising more abruptly, having more broken outlines, and being of a greater height than those of Karaj Dag. These were

mains du patriarche ou de l'évêque, qui est supérieur du monastère. Quant aux mosquées des Turcs, ils s'abstiennent d'y entrer."

"Le chef des Yézidis a toujours près de lui un autre personnage qu'ils appellent *kotchek*, et sans le conseil duquel il n'entreprend rien. Celui-ci est regardé comme l'oracle du chef, parce qu'il a le privilège de recevoir immédiatement des révélations du Diable. Aussi quand un Yézidi hésite s'il doit entreprendre quelque affaire importante, il va trouver le *kotchek*, et lui demander un avis, qu'il n'obtient point néanmoins sans qu'il lui en coûte quelque argent. Avant de satisfaire à la consultation, le *kotchek*, pour donner plus de poids à sa réponse, s'étend tout de son long par terre, et se couvrant il dort, ou fait semblant de dormir, après quoi il dit qu'il lui a été révélé pendant son sommeil telle ou telle décision: quelquefois il prend un délai de deux ou trois nuits, pour donner sa réponse. L'exemple suivant fera voir combien est grande la confiance que l'on a en ses révélations. Jusqu'à il y a environ quarante ans, les femmes des Yézidis portoient, comme les femmes Arabes, afin d'épargner le savon, des chemises bleues teintes avec l'indigo. Un matin, lorsque l'on s'y attendoit le moins, le *kotchek* alla trouver le chef de la secte, et lui déclara que pendant la nuit précédente il lui avoit été révélé, que le bleu étoit une couleur de mauvais augure et qui déplaisoit au Diable. Il n'en fallut pas davantage pour que l'on envoyât sur le champ à toutes les tribus, par des exprès, l'ordre de proscrire la couleur bleue, de se défaire de tous les vêtemens qui étoient de cette couleur, et d'y substituer des habits blancs. Cet ordre fut exécuté avec une telle exactitude, que si aujourd'hui un Yézidi se trouvant logé chez un Turc ou chez un Chrétien, on lui donnoit une couverture de lit bleue, il dormiroit plutôt avec ses seuls vêtemens, que de faire usage de cette couverture, fût-ce même dans la saison la plus froide."—*Notice sur les Yézidis*, pp. 197—202.

called Jebel Mardin, and near their centre the city of that name was said to stand.

In all our progress to-day, we saw neither houses, tents, nor flocks, though we passed several wells and springs, as well as pools of rain-water, preserved in natural hollows of the land, and still fresh and good.

It was before noon when we halted at one of these, named Uslam Deddé, large enough to be called a lake. Its borders were edged around by large masses of black rock and tall rushes, and its waters contained crabs and small fish, some of which were caught and eaten. On its banks was an abundance of rich grass, which furnished welcome refreshment to our horses and mules, while the camels seemed to prefer the drier herbs more remote from the edge of the lake. As its waters were deep, many of our company bathed here, and myself among the number, finding it refreshing beyond description to wash my whole body and change my inner garments; for the dirt and vermin accumulated in a few days only, by eating, drinking, and sleeping among fakirs and dervishes, with which the pious Hadjee's tent and table were always crowded, is scarcely to be conceived, without actual experience of the evil.

As we had intelligence that the Sheikh Aioobe Ibin Temar Pasha was encamped in the neighbourhood, with all his suite, it was deemed necessary for the heads of our caravan to visit him with presents, to prevent any further extortions from his tribe. The party was small, and I carefully avoided making one of the number; for though I had already contributed more than my share, I should have been, most probably, forced or inveigled into a further contribution.

It appeared, from what I could learn of this tribe, that its founder was a disgraced Pasha, who escaped the sword of the executioner at Constantinople; and bringing away with him both money and troops, forced his march down through Asia Minor, till, getting safe beyond the mountains of Taurus, he took refuge in these extensive plains. He then invited to his tent adventurers

and outcasts from every quarter, so that he soon had a numerous force about him, formed of excellent materials for his purpose. For the life he was to lead, as an independant freebooter on the territory of the sovereign by whom he had been disgraced, no man could be more fit than this fugitive chief; and, by the aid of his adherents, he soon succeeded in making himself acknowledged lord of these domains, and feared even by the established Pashas of Diarbekr and Aleppo. After a long reign, he died, and left the chieftainship of the host to his son, the present Sheikh Aioobe, who is himself far advanced in years.

This tribe is said to consist of about fifty thousand tents, scattered over the country between Mount Taurus on the north, and the Great Desert on the south, and from the borders of the sea on the west, as far as Mardin on the east. The variety of national character here brought together accounts for the corrupt state of their manners, as well as for the different styles of physiognomy which we observed among them. Their women are mostly unveiled, though but few of them are pretty. We saw none who were dressed purely as Arabs; they wear a white chemise with long and ample sleeves, tied to meet behind the neck, so as to leave the arms bare, a coloured cotton gown, and a turban or calpac, like the Turkish chaoak, covered with white cloth. Neither do they stain their skin with blue, or load their arms with heavy bracelets, after the manner of the Bedouin females.

To the north and west of their district are the Turcomans, already spoken of, with whom these people live in tolerable amity; and in the south-east, just beyond our halting station, were a small tribe of Desert Arabs, called Beni Hadideel. These were said to amount to no more than about one thousand tents; but they are represented to be all Seids or Shereefs, that is, noble, or descendants of the Prophet. On this account, they all wear the green turban, which distinguishes them from ordinary Moslems, and they are among the very few of the Desert tribes who have continued faithful to the orthodox doctrines of Mohammed, and resisted the innovations

of the Wahābees. The incursions of the Annazies, with whom, as heretics, this tribe is at war, having driven them farther north than usual, the smoke of their evening fires was pointed out to us, from hence in one of their encampments to the southward, upon the borders of the Great Desert, but we could not distinguish the tents themselves.*

JUNE 21st.—We set out at a later hour than usual this morning, as the sky was lowering, and the sun at its rising obscured by a red mist. The air was calm, but a disagreeable and suffocating heat prevailed, all which were considered symptoms of an approaching southern wind. Two hours after sun-rise the heat was insupportable, and, even from the people of the country, the general cry was to halt.

* The following description of the appearance and nature of the Southern Desert is accurately and happily expressed:—

“Le long de l'Euphrate et du Tigre, et sur les deux bords du Schatt-el-Arab qui est formé de la réunion de leurs eaux, on ne rencontre que fort peu de forêts, encore n'y croît-il point d'arbres de haute futaie; ce ne sont partout que des terrains couverts de taillis, de roseaux, et de broussailles, qui offrent les plus tristes perspectives: à gauche du premier de ces fleuves, est l'immense et aride désert de l'Arabie, borné à l'ouest et au midi par la mer, et où l'œil du voyageur n'aperçoit, ni collines, ni vallées, ni bois, ni sources, enfin aucun de ces aspects pittoresques, et gracieux ou terribles, que la nature s'est plu à réunir dans d'autres pays sous mille formes variées.

“Cependant c'est ce même désert que les grandes caravanes de chameaux traversent une ou deux fois chaque année, pour pourvoir Alep, Damas, et Bagdad, des marchandises propres à alimenter leur commerce, et leur luxe: on n'y trouve ni sentier frayé, ni chemin battu, soit parce que la route est peu fréquentée, soit parce que les sables emportés par le vent ont bientôt fait disparaître les traces des hommes et des animaux. On peut dire que c'est un océan de sable, où les Arabes se dirigent par la seule inspection du soleil et des étoiles, comme ceux qui voyagent sur mer. D'après ce qui vient d'être dit de l'aridité et de la sécheresse de ce désert, brûlé d'ailleurs par les ardeurs du soleil, on aura peut-être peine à comprendre, comment ceux qui s'y enfoncent peuvent trouver de l'eau, et ne pas mourir de soif. On a pourvu à ce besoin, en creusant de gîte en gîte des puits, dont l'eau quoique saumâtre et quelquefois même tout-à-fait corrompue, ne laisse pas de servir à abreuver les Arabes et leurs chameaux. En hiver, les pluies forment en divers endroits des lacs et des marais; alors le voyage n'est pas si désagréable, ni si pénible.”—*Description du Pachalik de Bagdad*, pp. 53—55.

It was about this time when the wind began to be felt by us, coming in short and sudden puffs, which, instead of cooling or refreshing, oppressed us even more than the calm, each of these blasts seeming like the hot and dry vapour of an oven just at the moment of its being opened. The Southern Desert was now covered with a dull red mist, not unlike the sun-rise skies of our northern climates on a rainy morning, and soon after we saw large columns of sand and dust whirled up into the air, and carried along in a body over the plain with a slow and stately motion. One of these passed within a few hundred yards of us to the northward, having been driven over a long tract of stony land, to a distance of perhaps twenty miles from the place of its rising. It was apparently from eighty to a hundred feet in diameter, and was certainly of sufficient force, by its constant whirling motion, to throw both men and animals off their legs, so that if crossing a crowded caravan, and broken by the interruption of its course, the danger of suffocation to those buried beneath its fall would be very great, though, if persons were prepared for it, it might not perhaps be fatal. The wind now grew into a steady southern storm, and blew with a violence which rendered our march confused and difficult, till at last we were obliged to encamp, before the usual number of hours' march had been performed.

The course we had pursued to-day was nearly east-south-east, and the distance not more than ten miles in five hours of time. Our road still maintained the same character of a fertile plain, and was covered with the same kind of black basalt, now seen in smaller pieces, of a still more porous substance, some of them resembling the ragged cinders formed by the coal and iron of a smith's fire. We passed over a piece of ground where the native rock was visible, pointing its ragged surface above the level of the soil, and forming a bed of pure stone, without any mixture of earth. It was here that I remarked the same appearances as those observed in the basaltic masses of the Haurān, namely, in some places presenting circular and serpentine furrows, as if the matter had been once a

fluid, and had suddenly cooled while in the act of a whirling motion; while in other places, where the masses were of a semi-globular form, and coated like onions, it had the appearance of a fluid matter suddenly becoming solid, while in the act of ebullition, and throwing up thick bubbles, such as are seen on the surface of boiling tar or pitch.

Towards the close of our march, we passed through some villages of Koords, all of them very small and meanly built. The dwellings were generally constructed of small stones, or unburnt bricks; they were all low, having only a door of entrance to admit light and air, and were roofed either with a sloping thatch of straw, or reeds, plastered over with mud. Some, indeed, were simply formed of two walls, with a roofing of hair-cloth, like a tent, raised over them; and others were entirely tents of the worst and poorest kind. The people make of these villages only a temporary habitation, in the sowing and reaping season of the year; so that they are deserted for a greater length of time than they are inhabited, and are, therefore, not worth the care bestowed on more permanent residences.*

The Koords occupy a tract of country to the north and east of this, extending beyond Diarbekr, in the former direction, and as far as Mousul, in the latter; so that the river Tigris may be said to form their north-eastern boundary, the Desert of the Arabs their southern one, and the Euphrates their extended western limit, few of them being found even to the westward of the great plain of the Turcomans, at the eastern foot of Taurus. They prefer the mountains to the plains, and generally make the former the place of their permanent habitations for their families and property. As they unite the pursuits of shepherds and cultivators, they descend into the plains, in the early spring, to plough the land, and in the

The following is mentioned by Otter as a peculiarity of the Koords:—
 “Comme ces gens n'ont point de maisons, ils font de grands trous dans la terre, où ils cachent si bien leurs grains qu'ils est difficile de les trouver.”—*Otter*, t. 1. p. 118.

summer to reap the harvest, leaving their fields in the interval to the care only of the few boys and women who attend upon the flocks that graze below. They are all Moslems, though they are said to be indifferent to the duties of their religion, and to be the most cunning and treacherous robbers in these parts.

The fear of communicating with them in any way was so great in our caravan, that, though many were famishing with thirst, they would not halt at a Koord's hut, for fear of being robbed; and when I did so, though without alighting from my horse, merely drinking the water brought to me, with my bridle still in my hands, I was severely reprov'd by the good old Hadjee, as having imprudently incurred a great risk, which he thought no discreet person ought to run.

The practice of these Koords is, it seems, to shew every mark of hospitality to strangers and passengers, to invite them into their dwellings, and serve them with their best fare; when, under pretence of examining and admiring, or sometimes of even purchasing, their arms, clothes, &c. they get the articles out of the stranger's sight, when some one in league with the host goes off with them in security. Instances were related to me of their having taken even the horse from his rider, and laughingly wished him afterwards a good journey on foot. All were agreed on their being rather cunning and dexterous thieves, than open robbers, like their more daring neighbours on the south.

In our way, we had seen some of those Koords from the northern hills, or those called generally Jebel Mardin, and the dress of these was nearly that of the Bedouin Arabs, the chief garments being a long and ample shirt, and an outer goombaz or caftan, of coarse white cotton cloth. The girdle of the waist was of thick leather, tightly buckled on. On the head, instead of the kaffeah, was worn a small red tarboosh, bound round by a thin blue cotton handkerchief. They wore also a white cloak of coarse and open serge, which, being thrown over their head and shoulders,

sheltered them from the sun in the heat of the day, and served for a sufficient covering at night, in a climate where we had yet found no dews, and where the atmosphere after sun-set was mild and agreeable in the extreme. Their arms were merely a sword and shield. The sword was slung by a belt, depending from the broad zennaar, or girdle, with its edge downwards, in the European fashion, and not with the curve of the blade turned upwards, after the manner of the Arabs and Turks. The shield was formed of a semi-globular piece of brass, with carved devices in the centre; and this surrounded by a broad fringe of black silk, which waved in the air, the outer part being made of a close basket-work of coloured reeds, and the whole forming a handsome appendage to the wearer.

As these Koords walked beside our caravan, singing and driving their cattle before them, with their shields slung over their shoulders, their loose robes and light cloaks blown out by the storm, and thus trudging along, with their naked and brawny legs covered about the ankle only with sandals of thongs, they formed an interesting group, and in the hands of a skilful artist would have furnished an admirable subject for a picture of costume.

The people whom we saw in the village were not all dressed and armed in the manner of these herdsmen; their costume more resembling that of the common cultivators of the country. I remarked no peculiarity of countenance which could be called general among them, except that their faces were rounder and fuller of flesh than those of the Arabs, and they had neither the long straight features nor the thick furrowed neck of the Turkish peasantry. Their complexions were in general dark, their hair and eyes of a jet black, and their forms robust and well-proportioned. Such of the women as we saw were unveiled, clean, and well-dressed, sun-burnt, yet of a ruddy colour, and many of them pretty; while their children were in better order than is ever witnessed among Arabs in the same class of life. The passion of the men for arms is not greater, it is said, than the passion of the women for

pleasure; and, as far as the modes of life they follow will admit of it, each sex indulges its peculiar propensities.*

The close of our journey among these villages was through fine corn-lands on each side, from which the people were now gathering in the harvest; and it furnished us an opportunity of seeing, that thickly as the soil was covered with large masses of basaltic rock, this formed no obstacle to its fertility; for the wide tracts seen beyond the edges of the space, quite cleared by the reapers, seemed one unbroken sea of waving corn.

About an hour before our halt, in crossing the dry bed of a torrent, we suddenly lost all appearance of the basaltic masses and loose brown mould over which they were spread, and came upon a hard light-yellow clayey ground, with small fragments of white

* Lord Bacon had before remarked the generally contemporaneous existence of the passions for arms and love in the *same* sex; when he said, "I know not how, but martial men are given to love. I think it is but as they are given to wine, for perils commonly ask to be repaid with pleasures." But where this latter passion exists in men, it is sure of reciprocity in women; and the following interesting anecdote, from M. Rousseau's *Memoir*, to which a number of equally romantic ones from other accredited sources might be added, if necessary, will shew the character of the events, and the force of the passions that give rise to them, even in these rude classes of unpolished, but not unfeeling, society:—

"Plus haut que Samerra, on voit un vieux bâtiment, en face duquel, sur la rive opposée, en est un autre presque de la même forme et non moins remarquable par sa vétusté; tous deux sont compris sous la dénomination commune d'*Acheck-maschouk*, ce qui veut dire les *Deux Amans*. Les habitans du pays racontent à ce sujet l'histoire suivante, qui a beaucoup d'analogie avec celle de Héro et Léandre.

"La fille d'un des pontifes Arabes aimoit un jeune homme des mieux faits, qui de son côté brûloit pour elle d'une ardente passion, sans avoir pourtant l'espérance de pouvoir l'épouser: car il étoit d'une naissance vulgaire, qui mettoit un obstacle à son bonheur. La princesse, douée d'un esprit fécond en expédiens, et dressée au manège de la galanterie, obtint de son père la permission de faire bâtir sur les bords du Tigre deux maisons de plaisance; et lorsque, sous prétexte de changer d'air et de jouir des agrémens de la campagne, elle alloit habiter l'un ou l'autre de ces lieux, elle faisoit prévenir secrètement son amant, qui à la faveur de l'obscurité de la nuit traversoit le fleuve à la nage, pour aller jouir avec elle, loin de tout soupçon et de blâme, des plaisirs de l'amour."—*Description du Pachalik de Bagdad*, p. 83, 84.

lime-stone imbedded in it ; and here, instead of the full-eared corn, or the high rich grass, which had before bordered our way, were only a few thick-leaved and prickly plants, with bitter weeds sparingly scattered over it, furnishing nothing more than a scanty supply of food for camels.

On passing suddenly into this, it was said, that we had now again come into the "Burreah," or "open land;" so that the idea of an uncultivated or a desert tract is implied by that term. The range of Jebel Mardin, now only three or four miles off on our left, was composed of a white stone throughout, and the horizontal form of its layers was distinctly visible in the cliffy parts of the summit, long before we quitted the black stone on the plain ; so that this sudden and immediate change of the soil did not correspond with any similar change in the material of the mountain, from the foot of which it spreads itself out.

The place of our encampment was at the base of an isolated eminence in the plain ; but as the storm still continued, we could not erect our tents, so that we were doubly oppressed during the afternoon by the violent heat of the sun, which raised the thermometer to 102° in the shade, and by the force of the wind, which filled the atmosphere with dust, so as to render objects quite obscure at the distance of even twenty yards from the observer.

At night, the violence of the storm abated, and opened to us again a serene and brilliant sky. Guards were now regularly set over the different parts of our camp, and even those who slept, lay down upon the chains by which their horses were fastened to the ground. I had myself an hour's watch assigned to me, among those of our own party ; but the degree of vigilance necessary on this occasion seemed to have been much overrated, for, notwithstanding that we had Koord villages on all sides of us, the inhabitants of some of which had come in the afternoon to sell us grain for our horses, with milk, butter, and fruits, for our own use, no discovery was made of a single intruder upon our tranquillity during the whole of the night.

JUNE 22nd.—As we hoped to reach Mardin to-day, we set out before there was any other light than that of the stars to guide us. At day-break we were again upon cultivated land, with a fine brown soil, unmixed with stones of any kind. The greater portion of it was laid out in corn, now in the act of being reaped, and the rest in plantations of water-melons, recently put into the ground, and placed in lines of great regularity.

It was soon after sun-rise that we passed some fields which had been suffered to lie fallow since the last harvest, in which was a profusion of small flowers resembling the common daisy in form and size, but being, within and without, of a bright yellow colour, and having the thick yellow tuft in the centre of a larger size. This was called, in Arabic, "Werd el Shems," or the "Flower of the Sun," and was said to turn always to that luminary, whether rising, setting, or on the meridian. I regretted that we were not here an hour earlier, to see if there was any perceptible motion in these flowers at sun-rise; it is certain, however, that, among the whole of them, every one now turned his golden cup towards the God of Day, as if to drink in more fully the principle of life and nourishment from his invigorating beams.

We soon reached the town of Koach Hassâr, seen by us, from the level nature of the road, and from some tall minarets which rose from amidst it, ever since the noon of yesterday. This place had been evidently once of greater consequence than at present, judging from some fine-Arabic ruins which it contained.

The principal of these was part of a large mosque covered by a central dome of good brick-work, as well executed as the vaulted roofs of the Romans, and of the same materials. The exterior of the northern front presented three fine pointed-arched door-ways, highly ornamented, the central one of which was equal in beauty to the celebrated door-way near the Ezbekeeah in Cairo, or to the fine gateway of the principal caravanserai in Damascus, and greatly superior to any thing of the same kind that I had seen in Aleppo. Between these doors were perpendicular chains of a large size, well

sculptured in high relief, and crowned by a richly ornamental device. The mosque itself had been surrounded by a court and outer wall, which was strengthened by buttresses, and from the north-east angle of this arose a lofty minaret of a square shape, from a hundred and fifty to two hundred feet in height. It was similar in form, equal in elevation, and superior in execution, to that of the great mosque at Aleppo. Its sides were divided into storys, each of which was ornamented by sculptured arches and other devices in relief; and, in a wide band near the centre, running round the whole of the building, was an Arabic inscription of well-formed letters, in high preservation, but which I could prevail on no one to stop to read. It was, upon the whole, one of the finest fragments of Arabic architecture and sculpture that I remember any where to have seen.

Beside this ruined mosque, were the minarets of two others, little inferior in size to the first, and each also of a square form. One of these only was crowned on the top by a small cupola in the centre of the square, but this was scarcely perceptible at a short distance off.

The present town of Koach Hassâr may contain about five thousand dwellings, all of a humble kind, and low and flat-roofed. The inhabitants sleep either on their terraces, or on raised benches of hardened earth before the doors, in the open air. The population is chiefly Christian, and those of the Armenian church; there being only a few Syrians, and still fewer Mohanmedan residents.

At a short distance from Koach Hassâr we crossed a small stream of good water, and in a little more than an hour beyond it came to the village of Soor; where our party made a halt, while the rest of the caravan pursued its way to Mardin, the ultimate place of their destination.

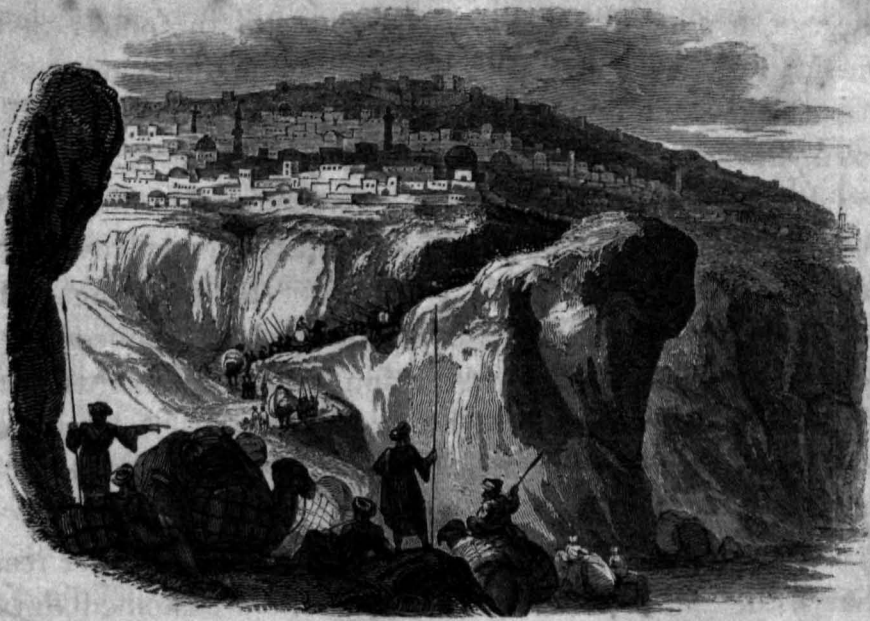
The ascent to that city is over so steep a hill, that goods merely passing by it on their route to other places are never carried up

there, nor is it thought that laden camels could at all ascend to it.* The merchandize of the Hadjee was therefore lodged at Soor, in the warehouse of a general receiver, who was also the officer of the government for the collection of the custom-dues on transit, amounting to two and a half per cent.

I was at first at a loss to understand why we had halted here at all, since the Hadjee had no business to transact at Mardin, and the bare act of touching there for an hour was attended by such a demand; but there were ample reasons for his so doing. The chief of these was, that the state of the roads is so uncertain on this edge of the Desert, as to make it important to obtain the most correct information respecting them, because the going by any one particular route of the many which lead from here to Mousul, or the setting out a day too early or a day too late, might be attended with the loss of all the property embarked. Another reason was, that if he omitted to halt and pay the accustomed duty of transit on this occasion, he would be sure of being burdened with some arbitrary and heavy contribution, if he should ever again pass this way during the reign of the present governor, for having, as he would say, on a former occasion, defrauded him of his acknowledged dues.

The village of Soor appears to contain about two thousand dwellings of the same kind as those at Koach Hassâr, and the inhabitants here are all Christians, partly Syrian and partly Armenian, each sect having its respective church. They wear the white cloak and the dress and arms of the Koords, and though most of them speak Arabic, the Koordi, which bears no resemblance to either this or Turkish, is the language in common use among them.

* M. Rousseau says, "Il n'y a de chemins pour entrer dans Mardin, que quelques mauvais sentiers raboteux, où les chevaux le plus vigoureux ne se traînent qu'avec peine."—p. 95.



CHAPTER IX.

ENTRY INTO, AND STAY AT, MARDIN.

JUNE 22nd.—Having been entertained at Soor with an abundant meal, and passed away the oppressive heat of the day in sleep, we set out from this village on our way to Mardin, leaving all the merchandize behind us, and suffering the camels to feed and repose on the plain. We were about an hour in getting to the foot of the hill, on a course of nearly north, and found, close to its very base, a rich brown soil, laid out in corn-lands, and yielding an abundant harvest.

A great portion of the ground that we had traversed on our journey from Orfah, or, as it is called here, Rahah, to Mardin, resembled, in many of its features, the plains of the Haurān; more particularly in the general aspect of its surface, the quality of its

soil, and the nature of the rock scattered over it. As both these tracts are equally fertile, and abundantly supplied with water, they are likely to have been equally well peopled in those days of antiquity of which the Mosaic history treats; when the land of the Chaldeans and the plains of Mesopotamia were as celebrated as the land of Canaan. A neighbouring desert, such as that on the south of this, inhabited no doubt in the earliest ages by a race of needy wanderers like the Bedouins of the present day, existed also on the eastern edge of the Haurān, beyond the stony district of Lejah, and the rising land of the Druses there.

The same mode of constructing their habitations is likely to have prevailed among the occupiers of each of these tracts, and from the same cause; for in each there is scarcely a tree to be seen throughout their extent, and not sufficient brush-wood even for fuel, the dung of animals being used by the inhabitants of both for that purpose. Stone was, therefore, the only material that presented itself for the construction of such buildings as were suitable to a civilized people, or calculated for durability; and either loose earth for brick-built huts, or the hair of flocks for tents suited to wandering cultivators and shepherds, such as are used by the people of these districts at the present day.

These considerations suggested the question of "Whence is it that the Haurān is full of the ruins of stone-built dwellings, which may be assigned to a very high antiquity, while Chaldea and Mesopotamia, equally celebrated in the same remote age, and traditionally considered to be the Paradise inhabited by the first parents of mankind, shew not a vestige of such buildings, even in those parts, which, from the features of resemblance between them and the Haurān, already enumerated, were equally calculated to produce them?"

The difficulty of answering this satisfactorily, inclined me to believe, that in both these countries, as well as in the equally ancient and woodless land of Egypt, earth dried in the sun was the only material used in the construction of *private* dwellings, at least,

and tents of hair or wool for the herdsmen and peasantry. This would account, in a great measure, for the existence of such unbaked brick buildings in Egypt, where all classes of its inhabitants were necessarily included in a narrow space, in consequence of the Desert hemming them in on both sides, and confining them to the banks of their river; while in the greater part of the Haurān and the open country of Mesopotamia, chiefly peopled by cultivators and shepherds, and having fewer large towns, the dwellings of the people were principally in tents, and therefore no vestige of very early buildings would be found in them.

The conclusion suggested by this is, that the numerous ruins of stone-edifices in the Haurān are all of them the remains of *Roman* works, and mount no higher than the age in which Syria and Palestine were colonies of that vast empire. It is true, there is a marked difference in the style of many of these edifices: some of the best, such as the temples, theatres, and castles, resembling the Roman works of the west, while the small square towers, and private dwellings, have a different description of masonry, peculiar to the Haurān itself. It may be supposed indeed, that as these towers were sepulchral, like similar ones at Palmyra, and the dwellings those of private settlers in the country, the pure Roman style might have been confined to the great national buildings; and the mixed and often capricious orders of masonry and decoration, seen in the rest, have been the work of private individuals, who followed the bent of their own fancy, when architecture began to decline, and the standard of fixed rules and just proportions to be accordingly disregarded.

The Romans, among whom architecture was pursued with a passion, rather than cultivated merely as an art calculated to increase the security and augment the comforts of man, arriving in a country, the conquered subjects of which were their slaves, and where the best materials for building presented themselves abundantly at hand, would naturally apply these resources to the indulgence of their favourite pursuit; and hence it has happened, that in Syria

there are more remains of Roman architecture than are to be found in an equally small space in any other part of their extended empire; or indeed in any other portion of the globe,—India, Greece, Italy, and even Egypt, not excepted.

We began to ascend the hill on which Mardin^{*} is seated, and had a steep and rugged road before us, which we were a full hour in accomplishing, passing in the way a well of good water, some fragments of an old paved road, and some parts where the path had been cut down through the solid rock—all now in a most neglected state, and greatly in want of repair.*

On my departure from Aleppo, I had been furnished with a letter for the Syrian Patriarch of Mardin; and learning from some Christian passengers on the road that he was not in town, but at his Convent of Deer Zafferany, a short ride from this place, I parted from the Hadjee, and proceeded thither with a guide. In our way towards the convent, which lay to the eastward of the city, we passed some deep valleys on our right, where, in cliffs of the bare lime-stone rock, were seen a considerable number of excavated grottoes—without doubt, ancient tombs. In different parts of the mountain were not less than a hundred of these, and among them I saw the fragment of a plain sarcophagus. The whole, however, were so evidently sepulchral, and so like the many others with which the East abounds, that, as at Orfah, I had really no desire to visit them for the purpose of more minute examination.

In our way we passed also several fountains of pure and excellent water, and some agreeable spots, where large and full-foliaged trees yielded a refreshing coolness in the air of their rustling boughs, and a welcome shelter from the heat of the sun. In two of these we saw parties of Turkish women, enjoying the delights of the

* “*Mardin*, dont la latitude est de 36° 14' N., et la longitude de 37° 35' E., se trouve à l'extrémité du Pachalik de Bagdad, et lui sert de bornes du côté du nord. Cette ville, située sur une haute montagne, a un château bien fortifié, et des maisons bâties en pierres, qui s'élèvent en amphithéâtre les unes au dessus des autres, le long d'une pente extrêmement roide et hérissée de rochers.”—*Description du Pachalik de Bagdad*, p. 94.

shady retreat. A small village, inhabited chiefly by Christians, lay in our way, in which were gardens, vine-grounds, and a number of pomegranate trees now in full bloom.

On our arrival at the convent, my letter procured me a favourable reception from the Patriarch, who was a handsome and polite young man, and had been advanced unusually early to the dignity he enjoyed, as he was but little beyond thirty years of age. Our evening was passed in a large party, consisting chiefly of pilgrims belonging to Mardin, who had returned from Jerusalem, and had come from Aleppo in our own caravan. The supper served to them consisted of the choicest dishes; and not less than twenty jars of arrack were drank by about as many persons,—all of them, too, before the meal, as a stimulant, and not a single cup after it. The party was continued until a late hour, and our enjoyment was then terminated by the delicious luxury of clean linen and a clean bed.

JUNE 23rd.—It being Sunday, I attended the morning service of the church, with the rest of my companions, where every one stood for about four hours in succession, without even the indulgence of the crutches in use among the Christians of the Greek communion. The service was performed by the Patriarch in person, very splendidly dressed in robes of gold-embroidered satin, and waited on by the inferior priests in garments of corresponding splendour. As every thing was read and sung in the Syriac language, except the exhortation to the people, which was delivered to them in their native tongue, the service was unintelligible, not only to me, but to almost all the congregation.

The ceremonies resembled those of the Catholic church; but one of them was inferior in solemnity, and produced almost a ludicrous effect. While the Patriarch, most sumptuously clad, officiated before a rich altar, loaded with gold, silver, and a glare of lights, there stood behind himself and the congregation a grown lad, dressed in the big breeches, or sherwal, of the Turks, with a coarse jacket,

patched with many colours, after the fashion of Romelia, and a large overhanging tarboosh covering his shoulders. This lad leant on the crosier of the Patriarch with one hand, and perfumed his holiness by an incense pot which he held in the other, at the same time that he sung the responses alone in a voice ~~at~~ the loudest and harshest kind. On each side of him were other lads, equally as unfitly robed for the dignity of the offices they performed, and contributing rather to the noise of the service than to its solemnity. As all the offices of the priesthood were performed in a deep recess, entered by folding-doors, a curtain was drawn across the opening when any thing like a shifting of scenes was required, in order to prevent the audience from seeing what was going on behind, and thus to preserve the necessary stage-effect.

During the elevation of the host, all the people uttered loud groans, the boys within screamed most vociferously, so as to drown entirely the voices of the priests, and all this confusion of tongues was still further increased by one behind the scenes, clashing a pair of brazen cymbals, and so shaking them after the first concussion, as to resemble the reverberated rattlings of loud thunder.

When the service was ended, the pilgrims were called forth, and all of them having their heads bared, were invested in succession with a robe of one of the officiating priests. A cross was then placed in the right hand, and a taper in the left of each, and all the congregation, except the female part, who stood aloof at a respectful distance, walked before them uncovered. They first encompassed the altar, kissing the curtains, the book, the candlesticks, &c. as they passed; and then kissed the cross in the hand of each of the pilgrims, beginning with the eldest, an old man of eighty, and ending with the youngest, a boy apparently not more than ten years of age.

This convent of Deer Zafferany enjoys an agreeable and healthy situation, being seated on the side of a hill, with high rocky cliffs,

pierced with ancient tombs, behind it, and commanding an extensive view of the southern plain to Jebel Sinjār, and the edge of the great Southern Desert.

The church itself appears to have been a work of the lower empire, perhaps of the Empress Helena, the great founder of religious establishments all over the East. Its order is an overloaded and corrupt Corinthian, of which the arches and pilasters of recesses, facing each other in the form of a Greek cross, still remain perfect; but in the part now used as the church, no columns appear ever to have been placed. The doors of entrance, the windows, and a portion of an exterior frieze, are all of the same kind; but the building has evidently undergone so many repairs, that the original work is now much less in quantity than that which has been since added.

The convent consists of a central square court, with domestic offices around it; above which are the chambers of the priests, furnished with carpets and cushions after the manner of the country; the whole is encompassed by a high stone wall, and is secured with a small door of entrance, faced with iron plates, and carefully guarded.

The establishment consists of a patriarch, six matrāns, and twelve catzees, for these are the titles they bear. The former, though only thirty years of age, neither tastes flesh, wine, spirits, nor tobacco, neither can he marry. The second class, or the matrāns, fast every Wednesday and Friday only, then abstaining from flesh, butter, milk, and eggs; but even on these days, they eat fish when it is to be had; though, during the forty days in Lent, this is forbidden to them. These are permitted to marry one wife; but, if she dies, the husband cannot take another. The last class, or the catzees, fast on Fridays only, and may take fish during the Lent; they also are permitted to marry, and on the death of their first wife they may take a second, provided she be a virgin.

The duties of these men consist in the performance of their church-service, seven times in the day: that is, at day-break, at

three hours after sun-rise, at noon, at El Assr, about three o'clock ; at Muggrib, or sun-set ; at three hours after sun-set, and at midnight ; the due performance of which, as the services are of long duration, scarcely leaves them time for food and sleep.

The families of all these live in the convent, and on Sundays, and days of festivity, crowds of female visitors and their children come here to divert themselves, free from the more rigid observation of the town. There were here, on this Sabbath, no less than fifty women, who were all unveiled, and as full of frolic and gaiety as young girls of fifteen. They were occupied throughout the day in going from one part of the convent to the other, and in freely indulging themselves in every liberty allowed them. The Deer, or Convent, seemed to be exactly to the Christian females what the bath is to the Turkish ones : a place of recreation, free from the fetters of their husbands, rather than for the performance of religious or devotional duties.

Among the books I saw here, was a copy of the Gospels in the Syriac language, admirably written in large and beautiful characters on a fine and stout parchment. The portraits of the Evangelists and the heads of chapters were painted in rich body-colours, and highly illuminated. The date at the end of it shewed it to have been written in the year of Christ 1150, at the Convent of Deer Zafferany ; and as it had Greek marginal notes, evidently as old as the book itself, it might be inferred that the priests then here were of that communion. It formed a volume of a larger size than the largest of our church-bibles, and was highly valued by the Patriarch and his flock.*

The two highest orders of the Priesthood have circular, dome-like turbans, of the same shape as those worn by the Ulema of the Turks, resembling in size and shape a large water-melon. The

* This was, probably, one of the bibles shewn to Tavernier in 1644, as it agrees with the description of them given by him, except when he says, that they were written in Chaldaic, in which it is possible for him to have been mistaken.—See the *Voyages of Tavernier*, London, 1678, folio, c. iv. p. 69.

Turks wear them of white muslin; but the Christians commonly have them of the same material in blue. All the Christians subject to the Turkish government are prohibited from wearing any but dark colours, and the boots and shoes of the clergy must be absolutely black, while red is permitted to the laity, though yellow can on no account be worn by either; and green in the turban is even prohibited to all Moslems, except the immediate descendants of the Prophet, or Shereefs. At the same time that these restrictions exist in full force, Christians are permitted to ride on horseback, a favour which, in the days of the Mamlouks, was not granted even to the Franks in Egypt; and, at Mardin, the Patriarch's having a green bridle and martingale gives no offence, though even now, in Damascus, such an invasion of the privileges of a true Mohammedan would probably cost an infidel his life.

I was here assured, by persons who had travelled over the greater part of the Turkish empire, that nothing could be more variable than the rules for these restrictions, as to colours, in the different cities of Asia Minor. At Mardin, Christians give the salute of "Salām Alaikom," and receive its answer, even from Shereefs; in other places, this would be deemed the highest possible outrage. In some towns, the turban is the only part of the dress in which particular colours may not be used; in others, the boots only; while, in some, again, every garment has its specified shade. In many places, the colours of the dress are not at all regarded, and even green may be worn; but a horse or an ass cannot be mounted, nor can the salute of peace be exchanged between a Mohammedan and a Christian, of any class or sect.

In the evening we quitted the Convent of Deer Zafferāny, and returned to Mardin, approaching the town on its eastern side, and, just before sun-set, reaching the residence of the Patriarch.

On entering this, we had to salute a venerable old Matrān, now one hundred and two years of age, with a long beard of silvery white, possessing all his mental faculties in full perfection, and reading even letters and other writings without the aid of glasses.

A large party were assembled here also, but not of pilgrims ; they were all residents of the town, and the purport of their meeting was an interesting one, it being the prelude to a marriage intended to be consummated to-night.

It was the custom of this place, half a century ago, to celebrate the marriages of the Christians in their churches, and to perform the festivities as openly as they wished ; but repeated insults and interruptions, offered to them by the Turks, occasioned this to be discontinued. The practice now is, when an espousal has been contracted between the parties, and the day of marriage fixed, for the bride to be prepared at her own house in the morning. The friends of both parties then assemble at the house of the priest, and break bread together before him, which is received as a confirmation of their intentions, and at midnight, the bride being taken to her future lord's house, the marriage is solemnized by a union of hands in prayer. Festivities follow, in proportion to the wealth of the parties ; but these seldom end, even with the poorest, before the expiration of three days.

It was this breaking of bread that had called the evening party, in which I found myself, together. Three large flat loaves, made in the convent, and bearing upon them the holy seal, were placed on a salver, covered with an embroidered cloth, and on them was laid a gilded paper full of fine white sugar. The Patriarch, holding the jewelled cross, which he constantly carries with him, in his right hand, waved it over the bread, and gave it his blessing. All then crossed themselves, and the bread being broken by one of the party, a morsel of it was given, with a still smaller portion of sugar, to each of the witnesses. On this being ended, a Syrian hymn was sung, in which the chorus of "Halleluia" was frequently heard, and the air was lively and well adapted to the occasion. After this, copious draughts of arrack, without which no meeting of friendship or of joy can be complete among the Christians of the East, was distributed to all, and they departed in peace, according to the word.

At night we slept on a wooden stage in the open air, after the

usual manner of the inhabitants; but it was exceedingly cold, and a heavy shower of rain falling, occasioned us some annoyance. The climate, however, is so pure and healthy, that though we were well wetted, and lay afterwards on the damp beds, no one seemed even to apprehend the least evil consequences.

JUNE 24th.—On inquiring after our caravan, in order to learn the probable time of its departure, the usual answer of “Bokera, an ish Allah!” or, “To-morrow, if it please God!” was returned; but, on more minute examination, it appeared probable that its detention here would extend to a week at least. The roads were so bad, from being infested with robbers, that all the caravans for Mousul had, within the last three months, gone round by way of El Jezeret, a large town on the Tigris, between Mousul and Diarbekr, and five days’ journey in an east-south-east direction from hence. There were neither Tartars* nor caravans here for Bagdad at the present moment, nor were there any soon likely to be formed. As Diarbekr, from being the seat of government and the chief central town in the passage from Constantinople to Bagdad, has generally Tartars in waiting there, I determined to set out for that place, having been furnished with an order from Mr. Barker of Aleppo, directing any English Tartar I might meet with on the way to take me to my destination.

It was late in the day before this determination was taken; and then it was with inconceivable difficulty that I could find a companion or guide to go with me thus far, so that the whole day was occupied in this pursuit.

We had engaged to set out in the evening before sun-set, and to travel during the night, as the road from hence to Diarbekr was said to be so well frequented as to be considered safe at all hours. My guide, however, who had part of the money agreed to be given

* The Turkish and Arabic pronunciation of this word is the same, both omitting the first *r* used by us in Tārtar, and both spelling and pronouncing it Tatār.

him already paid in advance, did not make his appearance at the appointed hour, and the journey was therefore delayed until the morrow's dawn. This left me a leisure evening, which I devoted to recording the following observations made on this place, during our stay here.

Mardin is, according to some authors, the ancient Marde, or Miride, of which little is known except the name. Its position is most erroneously given in the "*Bibliothèque Orientale*," where it is called a Town of Mesopotamia, situated on the banks of the Tigris, between Mousul and Bagdad.* We learn from the same work, however, some particulars of its history which are more accurate. The town itself was taken and plundered by Tamerlane, in the year of the Hejira 796, but its castle was then sufficiently strong to sustain a long siege from the same army, and to oblige them indeed at one time to raise it. This conqueror, however, rendered himself at last the master both of the town and the citadel, and made prisoner the Sultan El Mālek el Dhaher, who commanded there; though, according to the report of Ibn Arabshah, he afterwards gave him his liberty. Hulākou, the grandson of Jenghiz-Khan, who, in the partition of the Mogul empire, was charged with the government of Persia, attacked Mardin about the middle of the fourteenth century, but without success, according to the report of Assemani. But Osman Beg, who has given the name of Osmanlies to the present Turks, made himself master of this place during his reign, which ended A. D. 1326, after a period of twenty years.† In the early travels of De Haiton, this place is noted under the name of Meradin, and it was then said to be peopled by a race of Sarazins, who were good arbelétriers, or cross-bow-men, and were called, in the language of the country, Cordinis, or perhaps Curds.‡ It has also produced many Moham-medan authors, who have been called, from this place of their birth,

* Vol. ii. p. 563. 4to.

† D'Anville, sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre, p. 53. 4to.

‡ Travels of De Haiton, in Bergeron's Collection.

Mardini, in addition to their usual names;* and it is equally known as the place where was born the Lady Maani Gwerida, the first wife of Pietro della Valle, so well known by his Travels.†

Mardin is seated near the top of a high hill, about the centre of a long range, bearing the same name. Tradition says, that some centuries ago, a Koord of the plains erected his dwelling here, for security against the intrusion of his neighbours. Some women, who were searching among these hills after the strayed sheep of their flocks, happening to arrive at the place of his abode, were struck with surprise at the motive which could have induced any man to retire to a spot so difficult of access; and in a conversation with him on this subject, called him “Mare-deen,” which is translated from the Koordi into the Arabic, by the words “Rajul-majnoon,” or, as we should say in English, “a mad-man.” “Since you think so then,” he replied, “I shall disclose to you that the advantages of my position will soon be so highly envied, that a city will rise around me, and the compliment which you have bestowed on my choice shall be its name; for I will henceforth call my own, the only dwelling yet here, “Khallet-el-Mare-deen,” or the “Mad-man’s Castle.”‡

The summits of almost all these hills have a large mass of lime-

* Bibliothèque Orientale, vol. ii. p. 563.

† Voyages of Tavernier, c. iv. p. 69. folio, London, 1678.

‡ “Josaphat Barbano, who had performed a journey to the Crimea and several parts of Muscovy and Tartary, (towards the close of the fifteenth century,) was selected, (by the States of Venice,) as one accustomed ‘to endure and deal with barbarous men,’ for the mission to Persia. He landed at Cencho, (Cenco,) in Caramania, where, passing through Tarsus and Adama, he directed his route to the Euphrates. He notices nothing remarkable till he crossed that river, and arrived at Orfah. His next stage was Mardin, which appeared to him to be *the most extraordinary city in the world for situation*. It is ascended by a stair cut in the rock, more than a mile high, at the top of which is the gate; but there is no wall except the walls of the houses, the defence of the place being trusted solely to its inaccessible site. The Turks hyperbolically assert, *that the inhabitants never see a bird flying above them*. It contains three hundred houses, and several manufactures of silk and cotton.”—*Murray’s Discoveries in Asia*, vol. iii p. 10.

stone rock, the material of which they are composed, broken into cliffs for a short depth from their summits, and from thence the soil forms a steep but smooth descent, so that the square masses thus left on their tops look at a distance like so many elevated fortresses.

Advantage has been taken of this, in constructing the Castle of Mardin, which is simply a wall raised up from the perpendicular cliff all round, and is thus exceedingly difficult of access. It appears, from below, to be a Mohammedan work, and it is more formidable from its natural situation, than strong from artificial means of defence. There are but few cannon there, and about fifty soldiers, forming the personal guard of the Motesëllem, who resides there himself, and who permits the families of all those in his immediate service to dwell within the citadel.

The town of Mardin is built chiefly on the eastern and southern sides of this hill, below the castle, and is surrounded by a wall leading down from it on two sides, and going along in front of the town below. The whole circuit, including the castle, may be little more than two miles; and the figure formed by it is necessarily irregular, from the nature of the ground on which it stands.

The houses are placed in ranges above each other, like the seats of a Roman theatre; and the streets, which run along the side of the hill, are, for the same reason, so many successive terraces or causeways; while the smaller lateral intersections of these are literally flights of steps, like similar cross streets at Malta. The houses are built of stone, though but few are of good masonry; they are generally small, and without ornament. The terraces are all flat; and in the paved courts of the upper storys are large wooden stages railed around, serving for evening supper-parties, or for sleeping on at night, during the summer months.

There are eight mosques here, five of which are very small and inconsiderable, and only one of the remaining three is large. Among these, however, I saw in the doors and windows some specimens of Arabic stone-work, as rich and chaste as any thing I had yet seen in

that style. The minaret of the Great Mosque is also a fine one : it consists of a circular shaft, raised on a square base, on each front of which is a large pointed arch ; the shaft itself is then ornamented on the exterior by sculptured arches and other devices, in separate compartments from the base upwards, when an open stone-work gallery and a pointed top terminates the whole.

In the dome of this, as well as of the other principal mosques, a striking peculiarity is observed in their being ribbed or guttered in their masonry from the summit downwards, like rays spreading from a common centre. These furrows are not round in the sunken part, and flat in the raised, as in the flutings of Corinthian columns, but are all sharp and angular, the raised parts being so thick at the base, that their lower edges only leave the smallest space between them, and their upper ones come away to a sharp edge, forming a succession of trilateral ribs. It is said here, that the Great Mosque was once a Christian church ; its exterior, however, presents no such appearance, but its interior I had no opportunity of examining with safety.

There are three baths, each of which are said to be badly attended, and scantily supplied with water, though one of them bears the title of Hammām el Ameer, or the Prince's Bath. Neither the coffee-houses nor other places of recreation are so abundant here as they are generally found to be in Turkish towns, and those few which are seen are but poorly furnished and thinly attended.

The only caravanserai which I saw was small, and this was said to be the best of them. The bazārs, though tolerably numerous, and vaulted over by arched roofs in the usual way, are very narrow, and barely supplied with even the necessary articles of consumption for the town ; all which deficiencies are attributed to the general poverty of the inhabitants, and to the want of trade, for which the situation of this place is unfavourable.

The population is thought to amount to twenty thousand, of which, two-thirds at least are Mohāmmédans, the remainder are composed of Christians and Jews. Of the Syrians, there are

reckoned two thousand houses, of the Armenians five hundred, of the Armenian Catholics one thousand, of the Chaldeans or Nestorians three hundred, and of the Jews four hundred. Each of these have their respective churches and priests, and the Syrians have two churches in town, and two convents a little way out of it, beside many churches in the neighbouring villages.

The Syrians differ from the other sects of Christians, in believing the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father only, and not from the Son, and in paying even higher adoration to the Virgin Mary than either the Greeks or the Catholics. They do not acknowledge the authority of the Pope, not scrupling to call him an impostor; and their chronology makes five thousand five hundred years between the creation of the world and the coming of the Messiah.

There is, besides, another religious sect inhabiting here, called *Shemseeah*. These, as their name implies, are thought to be worshippers of the sun, which they have been seen to reverence at his rising, by taking off their turbans. When Sultan Murad came this way, and found by their own confession that they were not "people of the Book," that is, neither Jews, Christians, nor Mohammedans, he ordered them all to be put to the sword. The Syrian Patriarch of that day took them, however, under his protection, by owning them as part of his flock, and they have been, politically, so considered ever since, though, as a religious sect, they are quite distinct, both in belief and practice.

The same Patriarch, after an intimacy of many years with some of the heads of these people, could never obtain from them any disclosure on the subject of their religion, as they all agreed, that death from the hands of their fellows would be the penalty of such a crime. The details given of this people by Niebuhr are acknowledged to be only from vague report; for he confesses, with all others who have spoken of them, that nothing positive could be learnt either of their opinions or their ceremonies.* This was

nearly the same case with myself. The particulars related to that traveller were also repeated to me; and the number of the Shemseeahs was stated to be ~~now~~ about one thousand families; but every one admitted that the greatest care was taken by them to prevent the disclosure of their real tenets.

All these different sects of Christians are looked on by the Turks in nearly the same light, being considered in the mass as infidels; and as they are all heavily taxed for their heresies, their equal contributions to the treasury of the governor makes him indifferent to the distinctions which exist among themselves. This place was formerly governed by a Waiwode, dependant on the Pasha of Diarbekr. The title of the present is that of Motesëllem, and he is a dependant of the Pasha of Bagdad. The details given to me of the government of this place were precisely the same as those related to Niebuhr; and though its resources are lessening rather than increasing, the same despotism is exercised as in all other Turkish posts, to exhaust those sources of wealth rather than to improve them.

The dress of the merchants is light and gay, but the lower orders are more coarsely and plainly clad than in most other places. It may be remarked, as one of the caprices of fashion, that while at Orfah, where the heat is great, it is usual for all ranks of people to wear a heavy woollen abba over their other garments; here, where every house has a chimney for fire in the winter, and where the summer even is cool and temperate, it is the custom to wear the smallest possible quantity of clothes, and the heaviest garment known among them is a jubbe or benish of Angora shalloon.

The women, both Moslem and Christian, cover themselves with the blue chequered cloth used in Egypt, which gives a general air of meanness to the whole dress. The former of these content themselves with covering the mouth only, and the latter go entirely unveiled. Among them I saw but few that were handsome, though all had fine complexions: and it was here that I first noticed

the nose-ring among the female ornaments, as marking an approach to more Eastern modes of adorning.

All the boys, and many grown young men, wear ear-rings; though most of them content themselves with one of a large size in the right ear. The eruption in the face is seen here, in about the same degree as at Aleppo, though less so than at Orfah; and it would thus seem to be the effect of some cause not locally confined to a small space, at least.

At sun-set, I received a message from the Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān, requesting my attendance at a supper-party, given to him by his friends, in the open court of a large house. Our entertainment was really bountiful, and it was followed by a dessert of choice fruits, the produce of the neighbouring gardens. I departed from them, with many kind expressions of regret at this sudden separation, and a thousand wishes for an agreeable journey and a safe and speedy return.



CHAPTER X.

JOURNEY FROM MARDIN TO DIARBEKR.

JUNE 25th.—Had my guide appeared at the appointed hour, it would have been worthy of remark, as a singular instance of Eastern punctuality; but it was high noon before he came, and then other causes delayed us still longer.

This man, whose name was Hussein, was one of the most notorious robbers among the Koord horsemen belonging to the different independant chiefs in this neighbourhood; and, by some of those who exercised their kind offices for me in the affair of engaging him for the journey, he was chosen as the safest passport I could have through my intended route; though, by others, it was prophesied, as certain, either that he would pilfer me, under the pretence of presents due to himself, or that he would cause me to

be well fleeced by others with whom he would place himself in league. The former was the confidence of the many, the latter the fears of the few. The very existence of these, however, induced us to take all possible precaution in the affair, and it was determined that I should conceal what money I had in my khomr, or girdle, and pass as an unfortunate merchant of Egypt, who had no property, but was going to Bagdad under the hope of amending my fortune.

The Patriarch and Chiefs of the convent, with their mercantile friends of the city, all approved of this measure, so that such duplicity must be common in the country, and the necessity for it very strong to induce such men to advise it. The Koord pledged himself, by all that was sacred, to protect my person from the open insult of strangers, and to die in my defence; adding, that this was the only danger to be apprehended, for, as to being pilfered, we were going the whole of the way among his friends and companions, who were men much too honourable to be guilty of such treachery.

We set out together about an hour after noon, and going to the western quarter of the town, passed through the Bab el Room. It could be seen here, that the whole of the wall of enclosure, going from the extremities of the castle-rock around the town, was of Mohammedan work, and of the most inferior kind.

From this gate we descended over the steep side of the hill, into a broad and deep valley, drinking at a fountain in the way, and leaving on our right a small village called Allipoor, seated beneath the castle, on its northern side, amidst gardens and wild brush-wood. We went nearly north through this valley, and, ascending over its boundary-hill in that quarter, came in about two hours to a beautiful winding vale, called Waadi Zennaar, or the Valley of the Girdle. Its name was most appropriate, as it formed a narrow belt of the richest verdure, between two bare ridges of rock, and was watered by a small rivulet following the course of its centre.

Descending into this, we halted at a delicious spot, and reposed

for an hour upon a carpet of green turf, beneath the shade of lofty and wide-spreading trees, in the midst of which reared some tall and stately cypresses, whose dark and thickly-interwoven foliage formed an impenetrable veil to the sun declining in the west behind them. We were served here by a Pilgrim Shereef, one of Hussein's best friends, with coffee and fruits, among which were cherries and apples, equal to those of England, and produced in the Shereef's own garden.

An Indian Dervish, who had been thirteen years from his home, on a journey to Mecca, and had reached thus far on his way back again, joined us here; and, after partaking of our fare, sung both Arabic and Hindoostanee songs, to the sound of a tambour, with which he measured his time. Some of these men, I was told, spend the best half of their lives in making only one pilgrimage to the Caaba, and the city of their Prophet. We heard indeed of one who had been thirty years thus employed, and who only six months since had set out from Mardin towards Mousul.

These Pilgrims begin their pilgrimages at the age of manhood, from various parts of India, and as they carry nothing with them but their scrip and staff, and subsist entirely by charity on the way, they are often three or four years before they reach the object of their devotion, making long halts at every town they pass, and travelling always on foot. On their return from Mecca, however, their progress is still more tardy, for being now honoured with the title of Hadjee, and highly respected as the holiest kind of Dervishes, they are well treated and well fed wherever they go. This life of indolence and good living is found by them so superior to that of their early days in India, that it is scarcely to be wondered at if they should wish to perpetuate it, by prolonging their stay in the countries in which they enjoy it. Some, therefore, end their days in their journey back. If any reach their own land again, it is that, going always farther and farther on, to keep up the pretence of moving homeward, after a length of time they find themselves getting out of the great Mohammedan world, upon the confines of

their own country, where infidels and idolaters pay them no such honours as had strewed their way thus far, and they hasten to end their pilgrimage among such of their friends as are of their own faith, and such of their relatives as may be still left alive to welcome their protracted return.

On remounting our horses, we followed the course of the Waadi Zennaar to the north-west, having water, wood, and gardens, all the way, and seeing many small red squirrels playing on the branches of the trees. It was here, that I first saw the common magpie, a bird not before remarked by me in any part of Turkey, and even here seemingly rare, as this solitary bird was the only one that appeared.

We continued to go through the valley for about an hour, when, passing over the ridge of hills that bounded it on the north, we entered into a second valley, called Waadi Bermān, equally fertile and well wooded with the former, and having in it several well-cultivated corn-fields still green, though the grain was fully formed in the ear. There were two villages, Awēna and Bermān, each consisting of about fifty dwellings of Koord families, and both under the government of an independant chief, called Tamar Aga. The situation of these was, in every respect, agreeable, and their inhabitants seemed to enjoy at once security, health, and abundance.

The residence of my companion Hussein being at Bermān, we alighted at it just as the sun was sinking behind the hills by which the villages on the west are hemmed in, and we were received, by his wife and children, with a respect bordering on fear. A clean cotton mattress and cushions being placed for me on the terrace, my guide absented himself for some time, leaving me alone to receive those who came to pay their evening visit to the stranger; but, as not one of these spoke Arabic, and I myself did not understand the Koord tongue, we could not communicate with each other.

Hussein soon returned, however, with an invitation from his

chief, Tamar Aga, to visit him. I at first declined, suspecting the extortion of a present at least ; but though I strongly objected, it was insisted that it was impossible to pass without visiting the chief, and that, in short, I could not be suffered to depart without performing this necessary duty.

We accordingly waited on the Aga, and were received by him with that mixture of dignity and ease, which belongs even to the lowest classes of the Turks, who display, on all occasions, great self-command and natural politeness. The chief was surrounded by his armed followers, in all the pomp of feudal authority ; and though these men would each of them use liberties in conversation with their lord, which would scarcely be tolerated between equals among us, yet no one dared to seat himself in his presence.

As not even my guide was aware of my being an European, I was introduced to the Aga as a merchant of Aleppo going to Bagdad with the caravan now at Mardin ; but who, having some affairs to transact at Diarbetr, had profited by their halt, to go up to that city, and, in a day or two, intended returning again by the same route. Our conversation was at first general, but soon turned towards the dangers of the road, and the important benefits conferred on travellers, by those whose vigilance kept the roads clear of the robbers which usually infested them. This was followed by a commission to procure certain articles from Diarbetr, in lieu of paying the usual tribute exacted from passengers who went this way ; and after some ineffectual remonstrances on my part, I was obliged to yield to the demand, and to promise obedience.

In the true spirit of the people of this country, the chief first exacted an arbitrary contribution, as a tribute to his local authority, and then entertained me with all the liberality of a friend of long standing. We all supped together, from rich dishes mostly prepared for the occasion ; the house of the Aga was offered for my use, as long as I chose to remain in it, and the protection of his name or of his people for the remainder of my journey. I was glad to have the power of declining this last, however, as the price of such safeguards is often more than their value. I therefore retired

to the house of my guide, that we might set out alone from thence in the morning.

We were mounted at least an hour before day-break, and went from this valley, in which we had passed the night, up over hills of lime-stone, which were in general steep and craggy, though their faces being covered with brush-wood gave them an agreeable appearance. When the day first dawned, we were on the summit of these hills, and after continuing over uneven ground, again descended over a slope, covered, like the former, with brush-wood, and reached the valley just as the sun rose.

There was here a small village, called Galleen, which was seated on the side of a hill facing towards the north, and the most conspicuous object in this was a castellated dwelling, built on the edge of a cliff, and commanding the whole of the plain. This was the residence of another chief, named Hassan Aga, who ruled over only a small portion of territory, but, like the one from whom we had just escaped, never failed to fleece all who were worth pillaging, whenever they passed through his possessions without a strong escort. We therefore carefully avoided going into this village, and as it was about the hour when most of the inhabitants were taking their first meal after morning prayers, it was favourable to our passing by without being observed.

Nothing could be more beautiful than the general aspect of this valley, or more romantic than the situation of the village of Galleen, at the entrance of it. The hills, by which it was hemmed in so closely on all sides, were sufficiently broken in their outline to be picturesque, and the narrow plain which skirted them at their feet was clothed with the richest verdure. Corn-fields were seen in different stages of growth, from the earliest appearance of the green blade, to the development of the ear on the yellow stalk, and the full ripe grain of the red wheat now ready for the sickle.* The

* Similar variety in the progressive states of vegetation, all seen at the same time and nearly on the same spot, is described as common about Quito, in Peru, in the voyage of Don Ulloa to South America; and by Bruce, in his account of the ascent of Lamalmon in Abyssinia.

gardens and vineyards, occupying distant portions of the valley, gave a great luxuriance to the picture ; and a stream of fine clear water, which here meandered between banks lined by full-foliaged trees and bushes, completed the union of fertility and usefulness with wealth and beauty.

We halted at this stream to refresh, as we had now gained a sufficient distance from the town not to be observed from thence, and conceived that we might therefore eat our bread in peace. Here we washed and prayed : for my guide, though a professed robber, did not neglect this common duty ; and after enjoying a hearty repast from our own scrip, and reposing for an hour on the green sod, while the horses grazed by our side, we quitted this delightful spot, to renew our way.

After going for two or three hours over rugged hills of limestone, sparingly clad with brush-wood, and keeping always a north-westerly course, we reached a small village called Shoasheef, just as the sun was on the meridian, or in time to perform in public our noon-day prayers. This village, seated on the side of a gentle ascent, was peopled chiefly by Koords, and its population was said to consist of sixty families, or little more than two hundred persons, who were all peasants, and lived by the produce of their fields and flocks. We were received by one of the elders, who furnished our horses with food, and set before us some sour milk, the most refreshing beverage to be obtained in these countries, and always a welcome one in the summer of such a climate.

After sleeping for an hour, we remounted soon after one o'clock, and still went north-westerly over the same bed of hills, which is composed of many smaller ridges, crossed transversely, in the direction in which we travelled, as they stretch generally from south-west to north-east. The whole mass appears to be composed of limestone, and to be bare of wood, except in some few places where stunted trees and bushes clothe their sides. Their average height above the level of the plain of Mardin is less than a thousand feet ; but even the valleys which are found among these ridges, of which

the great chain is composed, are at least five hundred feet above that plain; and some of them are as high as the site of Mardin itself. As they, therefore, enjoy a temperature highly favourable to vegetation, are amply watered by brooks and springs, and receive the soil of the hills, as it is washed down into them by the winter rains, they may easily be conceived to be charming little spots, when contrasted with the sterile aspect of the hills by which they are generally encompassed.

At El Assr, we reached the termination of this bed of hills, and by a very short descent came into a valley, through which ran a small stream of water. In this stream we noticed some of the same kind of tortoises as are found in the rivers of Syria, but they were here of a smaller size. The plain itself was on a higher level than most of the valleys through which we had come, and but little below the height of Mardin, though that is seated on the summit of a hill. At the entrance of it we observed a village called Shukra Tuppé; which we left about a mile to the right, or north-east of our path.

In continuing our way, we found this apparent plain to have, at first, a gentle ascent, and then to be formed of wavy land, the inequalities of which are not perceptible at a distance. There were no eminences throughout it that could deserve the name of hills. The soil was every where abundant in quantity, and of sufficient depth for cultivation. It seemed too of a fertile kind; for such portions of it as were now sown with corn offered the prospect of an ample harvest, the wheat being formed in the ear, and ripening daily under the influence of an unclouded sun.

In about two hours after our quitting the foot of the range of hills described, and first entering on this wavy land, we came to a small village called Akh Tuppé. This, though now having a population of not more than thirty families, had been at some former period evidently a place of more importance. Among the ruins of ancient buildings, I noticed the remains of a mosque, with the masonry in intermediate layers of lime-stone and basalt,

so that, as the blocks were well hewn into square forms, alternate layers of black and white were produced; this is a caprice of taste to which both Arabs and Turks are very partial, if one may judge from the frequent instances in which it is met with in their masonry, as well as others in which it is imitated by painting. The minaret of this mosque was still standing, and perfect; but the mosque was without a roof, and seemed to have been uncovered from the beginning. Beyond this was a deep well, at which some damsels of the village watered our horses, and permitted us to drink from their vessels, when, after an exchange of inquiries and benedictions, we pursued our journey.

It was sun-set when we first came in sight of the Tigris, an elbow of which here bent towards the west, and came within less than a quarter of a mile of our path. The river appeared from this distance to be narrow, sluggish, and low in its bed.* It was here that we first saw the black porous basalt, so common in the Haurān and the plains east of the Euphrates, all the hills that we had traversed from Mardin thus far being of lime-stone. The basalt appears here, however, on the river's bank, and is said to follow the course of the road all the way down to Jezeeret and Mousul, and to be still found upon the banks of the Tigris upward beyond Diarbekr, to near its source. It evidently extends westerly also from hence, probably falling into the Kara Dagħ, or Black Mountains,

Of the two rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, which enclose Assyria, and give it the name of Mesopotamia, the channel of the Tigris, lying much *lower*, receives the water of the latter by many trenches; and, several streams also falling into its own bosom, it becomes a great river before it glides into the Persian Gulf, insomuch that it is every where impassable by a ford, for it spreads not out in breadth so as to diminish its depth, the land on both sides being much higher than the water; and it is not dispersed into other channels, nor conveyed into other rivers, but takes them into itself. But the Euphrates glides along a much *higher* channel, and is, in many places, of equal height with the lands on each side, so that several streams are cut from it; some constant ones, which supply the inhabitants with water, others only occasional, when the neighbouring countries happen to be parched up with drought, for rains seldom fall in these parts.—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* b. vii. c. 7. v. 2. p. 138.

and then joining the basaltic basis of the great plains, over which we had journeyed since leaving Orfah.

It was not yet dark when we reached a village called Poorang, where we halted to pass the night, as there was no hope of reaching Diarbekr in time to be admitted within the gates. The chief of this village received us very readily; and while the younger part of his family took care of our horses, and set about to prepare our supper, he himself spread carpets and cushions for us on the terrace of his house, and sat to entertain us with such civilities as he conceived most agreeable to us after our journey. The population of this village, to the number of about a hundred families, were wholly Koords, descendants of early settlers in the plains, who had originally come down from the opposite mountains of Koordistan. The physiognomy of such as we saw seemed to be different both from the Turks and the Arab countenance. The form of the head and face was rounder, the features in general flatter, the complexion fair and ruddy, and the eyes dark and expressive. The abodes of these people were cleaner and neater than the habitations of the same class of peasantry are found to be either in Egypt or Syria, and the furniture and conveniences of the household establishment are, in every respect, superior.

In addition to the hospitable treatment which we received from our host, we were entertained by a party who were called in by the old man expressly for our amusement. This consisted of a robust mountaineer, who wore a pointed bonnet and a fantastic dress, an effeminate youth dressed in female apparel, and decked with ornaments, and three men who played on musical instruments, including a rude guitar, a reed or pipe, and a drum, beaten on by the palm of the hand and the fingers. The man exhibited some extraordinary feats of strength and agility; the boy danced, and placed himself in such lascivious and wanton attitudes, as to draw forth shouts of approbation from all beholders.* The music-

* See the Note on these Eastern dances in a former chapter, at page 58.

was rude, but very skilfully varied, from the abrupt and hurried measure to which the *Athleta* moved in his exercises of strength, to the rapturous softness and languishing cadence of the airs to which his effeminate companion danced.

This entertainment was so perfectly suited to the taste of the people here, that, in less than an hour after the exhibition began, every individual in the village, man, woman, and child, had gathered upon the house-tops to enjoy as much of it as they were able, our own terrace not being sufficiently large to contain more than about fifty persons, and this was already so crowded as to make us apprehensive of its falling in. The festivity continued until a late hour, it being long past midnight before the party had dispersed or the music ceased.



CHAPTER XI.

DESCRIPTION OF DIARBEKR.

JUNE 27th.—Notwithstanding that we were now within three hours only of Diarbekr, it was thought so unsafe to go from hence to that city alone, that two horsemen had been waiting here the whole of the preceding day for the protection of additional companions, before they would venture to continue their journey. They had, during the entertainment of the last evening, solicited permission to join us, and as they were known in the village, we readily consented to their proposition.

We quitted Poorang together at day-light, being all four well mounted and well armed; and the road being now unobstructed by hills or rocks, we scoured over the plains, as if we were ourselves bent on some plundering expedition.

In less than an hour we reached the Tigris, which here came from the south-west on our left, and flowed to the north-east on our right, making a great westerly bend as it goes by the town of Diarbekr; and here taking an easterly bend, so as to get again in the proper line of its descent to the sea, which is from north-west to south-east. The banks of the river were shelving, and its bed a mixture of earth and sand. Its breadth across was not more than a hundred feet, and it was so shallow as to be fordable by our horses without wetting their riders. The waters were tolerably clear, and sweet to the taste, and the rate of the current seemed not to exceed two miles per hour.*

After crossing the river, we came on a fine light soil, now used as corn-land, and, as we rode past, started large flocks of black starlings, to the number of several hundreds in each flight. Continuing on a course inclining more northerly, we came, in another hour, to the banks of the Tigris again, the river here coming from the north-east on our right, and flowing to the south-west on our left, or exactly the reverse of what we had found it before, from its making the serpentine bend described.

It was on the moment of our coming on the brow of the slope, which here formed the southern bank of the river, and gave us the view of the stream flowing by, that we caught the first sight of Diarbekr, which burst upon us all at once, and presented a picture of so much interest, that I involuntarily checked the bridle of my horse to dwell upon the scene; while my companions, to whom it was a familiar one, dashed across the river without heeding it for a moment, and stemmed together a broader, deeper, and more rapid stream than we had crossed before.†

* While the Ten Thousand were encamped between the mountains of Curdistan and the Tigris, before they struck off among the Curds, they had the curiosity to attempt ascertaining the depth of the river. On one side of them, says Xenophon, were exceeding high mountains, and on the other a river so deep, that, when they sounded it with their pikes, the ends of them did not even appear above the water.

† Pliny says, that the Tigris, in Mesopotamia, is reckoned among the rivers that go under ground and re-appear again.—*Nat. Hist.* b. 2, c. 103—b. 6, c. 27.

The aspect of Diarbekr, at this first view, is that of a walled and fortified city, seated on a commanding eminence, appearing to be strongly defended by its position as well as its works without, and splendid, and wearing an air of great stateliness and opulence, in its mosques and towers within. The country, amid which it is seated, is every where fertile and productive. Lofty mountains in the distance, while looking eastward toward Koordistan, give an outline of great grandeur; in that direction, gardens and bridges, and pleasant summer-houses, seen nearer at hand, add softer beauties to the scene; while the passage of the Tigris, at the foot of the hill on which the town is seated, offers a combination of picturesque beauty, agricultural wealth, domestic convenience, and rural enjoyment.

After passing the Tigris a second time, we went up a steep road on the side of the hill, having gardens below us on our right, and extensive cemeteries, in more abrupt valleys, on our left, till we approached the gate called, by the Turks, Mardin Kaupusce, and by the Arabs, Bab el Mardin, from its being the gate leading to and from that town. A mass of the basaltic rock, on which the whole city of Diarbekr is built, having recently fallen away, exposed to view an extensive cluster of distinctly-formed basaltic columns. These were in general of a pentagonal form, some of them shewing a length of ten or fifteen feet, and appearing to be about a foot or fifteen inches in diameter. The stone was of a dark colour, close-grained, and was the same kind of basalt as that we had seen, in all its different degrees of firmness and porosity, from the valley of the Jordan to this place.

On entering Diarbekr, by the gate of Mardin, we passed through paved streets and crowded bazārs, till we came nearly into the centre of the city, where we alighted at the house of a certain Yuseff, a Christian merchant, to whom the Syrian Patriarch, at Mardin, had given me a letter. He received us with great kindness, and offered his utmost assistance during our stay. The whole of his family and dependants were called in, to bid us welcome, and a

number of his friends and acquaintances, chiefly Christians, followed to see and congratulate the strangers. To Yuseff I knew I might safely entrust the secret of my being an Englishman, being aware that the communication of this would be as flattering to him as advantageous to myself. It was still concealed, however, from my guide, and from the few other Mohammedans who visited us; but when these had retired, and the entertainment that had been hastily prepared for the occasion was set before us, my guide, who had no more scruples than myself as to the use of forbidden draughts, followed my example in this particular, and we, therefore, still retained our Moslem characters in each other's eye, though our practices were entirely Christian. While we sat around the board of our hospitable host, messengers were sent to the Konauk Tatar Agasi, or rendezvous of the Tartars, to ascertain whether there were any despatch-bearers destined for Bagdad, or whether any were soon expected from Constantinople. The principal object of our journey to this place was, indeed, to find such messengers, if possible, in the direct road between these great cities, which stand at the extremes of the Turkish empire, and to accompany them on their way. This cannot be done casually at any of the intermediate posts on the road, but must be effected at some one of the head-quarters, in the great towns at which they halt. It is here only that travellers can make the necessary arrangement for the proper supply of such a number of horses as they may require: a firman is then given to them, by the governor of the city, authorizing them to demand the number specified, from those who have contracted to supply the post-horses on the road, and all then goes on smoothly. Without such authority from the government, the suppliers of the horses would not grant them to a stranger, even on payment of the common hire; as it is not the custom to lend out horses in this way to any one, except the Sultan's messengers, for whom they are carefully reserved.

Our disappointment was great when the messengers returned to tell us, that though there were several Tatars going to the north,

there were none destined for Bagdad; and from the recent passage of despatches that way, no couriers from Constantinople were immediately expected. This, however, they added, was always uncertain; and we were, therefore, advised to wait a day or two, under the hope of some arrival. In complying with this advice, we should lose the occasion of the caravan from Mardin, which still remained, without being certain of securing another; so that on reflection I determined rather to hasten our return. As we had yet nearly the whole of the day before us, I was desirous of employing it in an excursion about the town, and in seeing as much of its interior as the short period allotted for our stay would admit. For this purpose, a guide was furnished me by Yuseff, the merchant, who was recommended to me as combining the useful qualities of fidelity and great local knowledge, acquired during a long residence here; and besides this, he was perfectly acquainted with Arabic, which enabled us to communicate freely. With this man I traversed the interior of the city, in every direction, visiting the mosques, the bazārs, and the baths; and, after nearly four hours' rambling through crowded streets and narrow passages, halting to observe such buildings and places as were more particularly curious, we came at last to the citadel, which stands at the opposite extremity of the town to that by which we entered it. From hence we enjoyed a more commanding view of the whole city, spread out beneath us, as well as of the surrounding country, than we could have done from any other spot; and, adding the more minute features, which we had collected in our peregrinations through the town, to this panoramic picture of it, noted on the spot, the following was the general result

The city of Diarbekr is seated on a mass of basaltic rock, rising in an eminence on the west bank of the Tigris, the stream of that river flowing by the foot of this hill, from north-east to south-west, as it makes a sharp bend in that direction from the northward. The form of the town is very nearly circular: it is walled all around, and is about three miles in circuit.

There are four gates now open in the city, and these are called by the names of the respective quarters of the country to and from which they lead. The first, which is on the south-west, is called Bab el Mardin, or Mardin Kaupusee: the second, on the west, is called Bab el Roum, or Oroum Kaupusee: the third, on the north, is called Bab el Jebel, or Daugh Kaupusee; and the fourth, on the east, is called Bab el Jedeed, or Yenghi Kaupusee. The first leads to Mardin, the second to Asia Minor, or Rounclia, the third to the mountains of Armenia and Koordistan, and the fourth, which is a new one, to the river.

The citadel, standing about midway between these two last-named gates, is thus in the north-east angle of the town; and, seated on the eminence of rock here, in a line with the walls, it overlooks the stream of the Tigris below, and by its elevation commands the whole of the town. The city-walls have round and square towers, at irregular intervals, and being high and strongly built of hewn stone, present an appearance of great strength; but the most securely fortified portion of it is that on the north, where the square towers are very thickly placed, and where there is a long battery of guns mounted, pointing through covered embrasures.

The remote boundaries of the view from hence, while standing on the citadel, are sufficiently marked to convey an idea of the nature of the country in which this city is placed. On the west is seen the range of Karaj Dag, or the black hills, which are of a moderate height, regular outline, and distant from ten to fifteen miles, going in a north-east and south-west direction. On the north are seen the lofty mountains of Moosh Dag, over which the road leads into Armenia and to Erzeroum, the mountains themselves being distant about twenty miles east, and stretching from west to east, as if a continuation of the chain of Taurus.

To the north-north-east, the Tigris is seen winding downward from its source in the hills, about four days' journey off, till it reaches the town itself, when it bends to the south-west, and runs past it in that direction, till it recovers its former course by a con-

trary bend, as before described. On the north-east, another portion of the Moosh Dagħ is seen, covered with snow, the range of its chain here bending south-westerly to go down through Koordistan in the line of the Tigris, running nearly parallel with its stream, but at some distance beyond its eastern bank. On the south-east, the wavy land and hills over which we had come from Mardin offered no particular objects to the view. And on the south-west is seen a portion of the Karaj Dagħ, and the plain, leading in that direction towards Orfah.

The citadel, which enjoyed so commanding a position here, is now abandoned, and completely in ruins. We had even difficulty in ascending to the platform near its centre, being obliged to mount over rubbish and fallen fragments; and, on reaching the top, we found the desolation so complete, that several of the dismounted cannon, which had been left there, were now more than half buried in the earth and long grass that had grown up around them. The form of the citadel is nearly circular; and it enclosed a space of at least a furlong in diameter. Within its ruined enceinte, is still the palace of the Pasha, which is a commodious rather than a splendid building. Attached to it are extensive stables, and a Maidān, or open space, where the horses are kept in the air, and where the horsemen sometimes exercise in the use of the jereed. One of the places used as a stable presents the ruins of a handsome and noble edifice, with finely-constructed domes of brick-work, and a beautiful door with columns and pilasters, most probably the remains of an old Christian building.

In the lower part of the citadel, near one of the gates of entrance, and now, indeed, the only one, as two of the former are closed up, we saw a number of brass cannon of different calibre, lying neglected on the ground. The largest of these had a bore equal to that of a twenty-four pounder, the smallest were of the size of our long nines, but were nearly double the length of our longest guns. Some of these pieces had on them Arabic inscriptions, of the date of the 1113th year of the Hejira, or A. D. 1735, so that they could

hardly have been used here before they had fallen into neglect. There were also some bombs and mortars of brass, and old armour of iron; but the guns were all dismantled, and every thing lay in one undistinguished heap.*

The town of Diarbetr, as seen from this height, does not appear to cover so great an extent of ground as Orfah, nor are the houses within it so thickly placed. The aspect is extremely different; the buildings of Orfah being generally constructed of white lime-stone, and those of Diarbetr being all built of black basalt in the lower stories, and of dark-coloured brick in the upper ones. There are, however, several mosques, towers, and little garden-plots with trees, seen in different parts of the town, which relieve the sombre colour of the buildings, and the sameness which a succession of flat terraces always produces.

The population is estimated at an extravagant rate, by the people of the country themselves; but it may be safely asserted, that at the present moment there are about fifty thousand inhabitants. The great mass of these are Osmanli Turks, as soldiers, government officers, merchants, and mechanics. Besides these, the Armenians, who, next to the Turks, are the most numerous, are thought to have a thousand families. The Arab, Turkish, and Armenian followers of the Catholic communion, have five hundred families. The Syrian sect are thought to include, at least, four hundred families. The Greeks, who are the least numerous among the Christians here, have about fifty. But the Jews have of late so rapidly declined, by emigration to Bagdad, Aleppo, and Constantinople, that there are now not more than a dozen houses of them left.

* Ammianus Marcellinus, in describing his flight to this city, says, "It is seated on an eminence, accessible only by a narrow path cut out of the rock." He adds also, "that Constantius surrounded Amida with walls and towers, and furnished it with a magazine of warlike machines." He adds, after an accurate description of its environs, "that there was in the centre of the city, and near the fortress, a large fountain, of which the water was drinkable, though, during the very hot weather, it had a disagreeable odour."—lib. xviii. c. 9. v. 1.

Of the mosques seen from the citadel, there are fifteen with minarets, nine of these having circular shafts and galleries in the Mohammedan style, and the remaining six having square towers after the manner of Christian churches, which it is generally thought these edifices once were. There are five other mosques, with domes or cupolas only, and several smaller ones without any distinguishing mark, making, altogether, about twenty-five Mohammedan places of worship. Of the Christian churches, the Armenians have two, one of which is large and richly decorated, and the other is smaller, but more tastefully adorned. The Catholics have a church, and a convent attached to it, in which two Italian Capuchin Friars live, with their usual dependents. The Syrians and the Greeks have also a place of worship each, and the few Jews have a small synagogue for their service, which completes the whole of the religious buildings within the walls.

There are upwards of twenty baths in the town ; of which the principal are, the Bath of Wahab Aga, the Pasha's Bath, the Bath of the Market, the Castle-Bath, and the Baths of the Camel and the Ass. The two first derive their names from their founders ; the two next, from their situations ; and the two last from their peculiar features, that of the camel being the largest and most spacious in all its interior divisions, and that of the ass having so little to recommend it but its cheapness, that none but ass-drivers and asses, according to the saying here, would even visit it, though it is frequented by all the poor people of the town.

There are about fifteen khans or caravanserais, of which the chief are, Khan Hassan Pasha, Khan Cheufta, Yengi Khan, Khan Paga Oghlee, Khan Abba Chia, Khan Kirkasha, Khan Segheutty, Khan Delibashi, Khan Khalah, Khan Thaboon, and Khan Arratha. The first of these is particularly fine, and superior to any of those at Orfah. In its lower court, the corn-market is usually held. Its magazines, within the piazza, which runs around this, are generally filled with goods. In the upper galleries are carried on several trades and manufactures. The rooms around form the lodgings of

the travellers who halt here ; and above all is an upper story, with apartments for the harems or families of those who may sojourn here, with kitchens, fire-places, and other domestic conveniences.

The bazārs are not so regularly laid out, or so well covered in, as in the large towns of Turkey generally. They are narrow, often crooked, and mostly roofed-over with wood. They are, however, well supplied with goods of all descriptions that are in request here, and, during the regular hours of business, are thronged with people. The manufactures of the town are chiefly silk and cotton stuffs, similar to those made at Damascus; printed muslin shawls and handkerchiefs, morocco leather in skins of all colours, smith's work in hardware, and pipes for smoking made of the jasmin branch, covered with muslin and embroidered with gold and silver thread. There are thought to be no less than fifteen hundred looms employed in weaving of stuffs ; about five hundred printers of cotton, who perform their labours in the Khan Hassan Pasha, after the same manner as before described at Orfah ; three hundred manufacturers of leather in the skin, besides those who work it into shoes, saddlery, and other branches of its consumption ; a hundred smiths ; and a hundred and fifty makers of ornamented pipe-stems only, besides those who make the clay balls, amber mouth-pieces, &c. The cloths consumed here are obtained from Europe, through Aleppo, as well as most of the glass ware, which is German ; and fine muslins, Cashmere-shawls, spices, and drugs, come to them from India, through Bagdad ; but most of the articles of domestic necessity can be procured in the place from its own resources, as every species of fruit and provisions are abundant and cheap, and the common manufactures of the town are sufficient to supply the wants of the great mass of the population.

The present Governor of the Pashalick and city of Diarbekr, whose name is Kullendar Pasha, has the dignity of three tails, and is therefore immediately dependent on the Sublime Porte only, without acknowledging any intermediate chief. His force within the city is said to consist of about a thousand soldiers, of whom