

more than half are Turkish cavalry, and the remainder Turkish and Albanian foot. In the remote part of his territory, however, there are always petty chiefs, both among the Turks and the Koords, who, in case of need, do him military service with their followers, on condition of certain privileges and exemptions granted them in return. Even among the people here, in the heart of the Turkish empire, where despotism is so familiar to all, the government of Kullendar Pasha is thought to be severe; though, judging from external appearances, there are few towns in which there seem to be more of personal liberty, competence, and comfort among all classes of people.

On descending from the citadel, we went to the bath of the castle, which adjoins a mosque with a high square tower, and is close by the Mausoleum of a former Pasha, whose memory is held by all in great respect. We found here every thing that could contribute to the luxury of this enjoyment, and as a refreshment was prepared for us while we were in the inner bath, we partook of it on our carpets and cushions before dressing, and were renovated and refreshed, by this agreeable combination, after our fatiguing ramble through the town.

On leaving the bath, as it was near sun-set, we went to the Jāmah Kirkashoon, or Jāmah el Russās—a mosque so called, from its fine dome and roof being completely covered with sheet lead—to perform our evening devotions, my guide being himself a Mohammedan, and believing me to be of the same faith. The court of this mosque is spacious, and its front grand and beautiful. It is entered through a portico of eight pillars, which, from the singular appearance of their surface, appear like a composition, but are each a shaft of one solid stone. The dome and the lofty minaret, which rise from the edifice, are also very fine, and give to the whole an effect of great strength and stateliness. The interior, like that of most Mohammedan temples, is perfectly unadorned, having only the niche pointing to Mecca, a pulpit, and lamps, with carpets on the pavement for prayer.

On our return homeward, we stopped at a smelting-house, where they were running copper ore into large cakes, about the form, size, and weight of those sent from the stannaries in Cornwall, but less purely refined from the dross. We were told here, that the copper ore was brought from a place called Maadān, three days' journey to the north-east of this, and that, when smelted, it was sent by caravans to Orfah, Mousul, Bagdad, and Bussorah. Our inquiries regarding the price and the quantity annually exported were suspected to arise from interested views, and were not so readily answered.

Among the minarets of the mosques, I noticed some that were highly sculptured, and in several of the square towers were intermediate layers of red burnt-brick work, mixed with masonry of stone, after the manner of the Roman towers in the walls at Antioch, and quite as well executed as the buildings there. Amid the ruins of the castle, too, we had seen some fine arches of highly burnt bricks, which, from their form, as well as material, looked more like Roman than Saracenic work. In the bazārs and baths, there are portions of brick-work of a similar kind, which are, however, decidedly Moham-medan, as well as the mixture of basalt and lime-stone, in intermediate layers of black and white, in the khans and other large buildings. Among the broken columns of black basalt, which are seen scattered in different quarters of the town, there are, however, several Ionic capitals, which can leave no doubt of their being of Greek origin, and previous to the invasion of this country, either by the Turks or the Saracens.

It is from the circumstance of the wall and buildings of this city being constructed almost wholly of this black stone, that it is called, by the Turks, Kara Amid, or the Black Amid. Amida was its ancient name,* and its present one of Diarbekr, which prevails chiefly with the Arabs, is from the name of the province of which it is the capital, for the Turks still use the name of Amid, as

applied to the city, in all their public writings. According to D'Herbelot, the author of the Arabic History, called *Tarikh Montekheb*, pretends that this place was built by Shah Amurath, a king of Persia, of the first dynasty. The emperor Constantine fortified it against the Persians. It was afterwards pillaged and partly burnt by Tamerlane, in breach of a solemn engagement, in the year of the Hejira 796, and, after that, Usuncassan and the other kings of Persia had successively rendered themselves masters of it. Selim, the first Sultan of the Osmanli Turks, retook it from Shah Ismael, in the year of the Hejira 921, and established there a Beglerbeg, or governor of a province, with twelve sanjiacks, or standards, under him.*

In the History of the Invasion of Mesopotamia by Sapor, A. D. 359, the particulars of the siege of Amida are detailed; with much eloquence, by the author of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. After describing the military pomp of the army of this sovereign, from the plains of Assyria towards those of Mesopotamia, and the obstacles opposed to their march by the precautions that had been taken to retard their progress or defeat their design, he says, that though Sapor overlooked the strength of Nisibis, he resolved, as he passed under the walls of Amida, to try whether the majesty of his presence would not awe the garrison into immediate submission. An attack was made by a select body of troops, which was answered by a general discharge, in which the only son of the besieging prince was pierced through the heart by a javelin, shot from one of the balistæ. The funeral of the youth was celebrated according to the rites of his country, and the grief of the aged father was alleviated by the solemn promise of Sapor, that the guilty city of Amida should serve as a funeral pile to expiate the death, and to perpetuate the memory, of his son.

The Emperor Constantius had recently conferred on Amida the honour of his own name, and the additional fortifications of strong

walls and lofty towers. It was provided with an arsenal of military engines, and the ordinary garrison had been reinforced to the amount of seven legions, when the place was invested by the arms of Sapor. The assault was again made ; but, after an obstinate combat, the besiegers were repulsed ; and though they incessantly returned to the charge, they were again driven back with a dreadful slaughter. In one of the fiercest of these repeated assaults, Amida was betrayed by the treachery of a deserter, who indicated to the barbarians a secret and neglected staircase, scooped out of the rock that hangs over the stream of the Tigris. After Sapor had tried, without success, the efficacy of force and stratagem, he had recourse to the slower but more certain operations of a regular siege, in the conduct of which he was instructed by the skill of the Roman deserters. But every mode of resistance which art could suggest, or courage could execute, was employed in the defence of Amida, and the works of Sapor were more than once destroyed by the fire of the Romans. The resources of a besieged city may, however, be exhausted. The Persians repaired their losses, and pushed their approaches ; a large breach was made by the battering ram, and the strength of the garrison, wasted by the sword and by disease, yielded to the fury of the assault. The soldiers, the citizens, their wives, their children, all who had not time to escape through the opposite gate, were involved by the conquerors in a promiscuous massacre.*

When Jovian evacuated Nisibis and Singara, and restored the five provinces of the Tigris to the Persians, about four years after this siege of Amida, or A. D. 363, the unhappy fugitives of the former city, now compelled to abandon their homes, were seated in a new-built quarter of Amida ; and that rising city, with the reinforcement of a considerable colony, soon recovered its former splendour, and became the capital of Mesopotamia.†

* Gibbon's Roman Empire, vol. iii. pp. 205—209. 8vo.

† Ibid. vol. iv. c. 24. p. 220. 8vo.

During the Persian war of Kobad, A. D. 505, Amida again sustained a long and destructive siege. At the end of three months, says the historian, the loss of fifty thousand of the soldiers of Cabades or Kobad was not balanced by any prospect of success, and it was in vain that the Magi deduced a flattering prediction from the indecency of the women on the ramparts. At length, in a silent night, they ascended the most accessible tower, which was guarded only by a few monks, oppressed after the duties of a festival with sleep and wine. Scaling-ladders were applied at the dawn of day; the presence of Cabades, his stern command, and his drawn sword, compelled the Persians to vanquish; and, before it was sheathed, four thousand of the inhabitants had expiated the blood of their companions.*

The pillage of Tamerlane was nearly nine hundred years after this event, or A. D. 1393*, and the successive sieges and captures of this place by Usuncassan and the other Kings of Persia followed, until it was conquered by Selim, the first Sultan of the Osmanli Turks, in A. D. 1515. It fell again, however, under the Persian power, in less than a century afterwards, or about the year 1605. In the history of the Suffavean dynasty of Persian kings, after describing a bloody battle between the Persians and the Turks, in which the latter were entirely defeated; another historian says, from the period of this great victory till the death of Shah Abbas, he not only kept the Turks in complete check, but recovered all the territories which that nation had before taken from Persia. They were successively driven from their possessions along the shores of the Caspian, from Aderbijan, Georgia, Kurdistan, Bagdad, Mousul, and Diarbetr, all of which were re-annexed, by the sword of this monarch, to the Persian empire.†

In 1644, when Tavernier travelled through these countries, Diarbetr seems still to have been considered as a part of Persia, and as such he always speaks of it. He mentions an opinion there,

* Gibbon's Roman Empire, vol. vii. c. 40. p. 138. 8vo.

† Sir John Malcolm's History of Persia, vol. i. p. 541.

that the sixty-two towers in the outer wall were built in honour of the sixty-two disciples of Jesus Christ ; and says, that, in his day, there was an inscription over one of the gates, in Greek and Latin, that made mention of one Constantine. This was, no doubt, an inscription commemorating that emperor's repairs and embellishments here. I made many inquiries, both regarding this, and the secret staircase scooped in the rock of the citadel which overhangs the Tigris, as spoken of by Gibbon, but I could obtain no account of either ; and, indeed, the wonder of those whom I consulted on these subjects was strongly excited by the questions, as they could not conceive the motives which led to these inquiries, nor did they know any thing, even traditionally, of the facts to which they alluded. In the time of Tavernier, the estimate of the population was much greater than at present, as he numbers the Christians alone at twenty thousand, and states that the Basha or Vizier could bring above twenty thousand horse into the field.*

Niebuhr, in 1766, thought the number of inhabited houses to be about sixteen thousand, and the fourth part of these to be Christian dwellings. The government was then a Turkish one, as it still continues, nor does any material alteration seem to have taken place, since that period, except probably the ordinary change of governors. The inscriptions in Kufic and Arabic, which he then copied from the walls, are, as he described them in his time, but barely legible, from their being on a soft white lime-stone, which is inlaid between layers of the black basalt, and from the operation of the atmosphere alone is much more liable to injury than the hard stone of the walls themselves.

The Turks of Diarbekr are conceived to be more fanatic in their hatred of Christians than in other parts of the empire : I had no opportunity of witnessing this, though it was confirmed by the report of those resident here. It was at this place that I first noticed the Armenian calpac, a sort of high and heavy cap of cloth,

* The Six Voyages of John Baptiste Tavernier, b. iii. c. 3. p. 104. London, 1678. small folio.

which is worn by the Armenians of Constantinople, Smyrna, and the north of Asia Minor, but extends no farther south than this; for in Aleppo, Orfah, Mardin, and all Syria and Egypt, as well as Mousul and Bagdad, as we were told, these are always replaced by turbans of the Arabic form. The Koords and Arabs who sojourn here preserve their own peculiar and respective costumes. The women wear their outer coverings sometimes of white muslin, as at Smyrna and Damascus; sometimes of checkered blue cotton, as in most parts of Syria and Egypt; and sometimes of black silk, as is usual among the wealthier classes of ladies at Cairo. Both sexes are subject to the eruption in the face, as at Aleppo and Orfah, but in a much less extensive degree than at either of these places, the proportion here not exceeding one person in forty. As at the former towns, it is attributed by some to the water, and by others to the air, of the place; the mode of treatment too is the same at each, and the effects nearly similar, leaving a scar on the part affected after it has healed.

When we returned from our excursion around the town, as the gates were not yet shut, we intended going out to the village of Poorang to sleep, and hoped by setting off from thence early in the morning to reach Mardin within the same day, in time to join the caravan on its march. We accordingly took leave of Yuseff, the merchant, and repaired to the Khan to rejoin our horses and mount there. My Koord guide was not at first to be found; but, after sending emissaries in all directions to search for him, we at length discovered that he was held in personal arrest by a Turk of Diarbekr, to whom he was deeply indebted, and who, having met him now for the first time during the last five years, had laid violent hands upon his person, and swore by his beard, and by that of the Prophet, that he would not set him again at liberty, until a portion, at least, of the debt was paid, and some security offered for the remainder.

The redemption of this man from his present bondage seemed to me so hopeless, that I did not even make an offer towards it, but

directed search to be made after any other man who might be qualified to go with me as a guide to Mardin, and who should be sufficiently well known to the chiefs and their bands on the road, to protect me by his presence from their rapacity. Such a person was at length discovered, though not without much difficulty, and profiting by the supposed urgency of the case, demanded five hundred piastres for the undertaking! It was in vain to think of coming to terms after such an extravagant demand as this, so that the point was given up, and the man dismissed, amidst a volley of abuse and imprecations on us all, for having called him from his pipe and cushions on such a faithless errand.

I now returned to the Khan, with a determination to set out on my journey alone, and run all hazard of the evils which would necessarily await me on my track. Yuseff, the merchant, and all his friends, very kindly and strenuously opposed so rash a measure, but there was no alternative between doing this or waiting here, no one knew how long, for a better opportunity, and thereby losing the caravan at Mardin, without being certain of when or how I should be able to reach Mousul by any other. We accordingly roused up the keeper of the Khan, who had by this time closed his outer gates, and was taking a solitary pipe, and desired him to bring forth my horse; for though the city-gates were all closed, a present of eight or ten piastres would be sufficient to cause these to be thrown open for my going out. The man came out, angry at being disturbed from his pleasures, and half indignant at the imprudence of one whom he supposed to be at least the associate and partner of a common marauder. He told us to give ourselves no further airs, as he had received orders from the Governor himself not to let the Koord or his Syrian companion go, until the enraged creditor, who had detained him, had been satisfied. Our horses had therefore both been secured, and the keeper of them peremptorily refused to liberate either the one or the other, until he had received the Governor's orders so to do.

In this dilemma, nothing remained to be done, but to make an

application to the Governor himself, through the best and speediest channel, and as it was now long past sun-set, there would be considerable difficulty in obtaining access to his person. It was proposed, therefore, that we should repair to the house of Yuseff, and endeavour to find out some one of the suite of the Pasha, who was usually attendant on his person, and who, for a competent remuneration, would no doubt undertake to negotiate the affair. We accordingly returned to the merchant's dwelling, and in less than an hour afterwards a Turkish Effendi, one of the Pasha's confidential secretaries, was found, who offered, for an acknowledgment in money, to obtain both the liberation of my own horse, and that of the Koord too, before the morning. For each of these he at first demanded two hundred piastres, but, after many bickerings, he reduced his demand to one hundred. The liberation of the Koord himself he thought would not be so easy a task, as the order of the Pasha would be hardly sufficient to induce an enraged creditor to give up the hold which he had of his debtor's person, the only security he could ever have from such a wandering character for being paid his due.

The Turk had been absent little more than an hour before he returned, bringing with him the keeper of the khan, whom he had himself taken to the presence of the Pasha, to receive the order for the liberation of my horse, which he had undertaken to procure; and the horse, being now sent for, was brought from the caravanserai to the court of Yuseff's house, to assure us the more unequivocally of its freedom. I accordingly paid to Hassan, the Turk, the hundred piastres, for which we had originally bargained, and twenty-five more, which it was pronounced, by general acclamation, I ought to pay the old keeper, as a present on delivering up his charge; and this, under the joy of the moment, I was not prepared to dispute, being sufficiently happy in the belief, that I should now be at liberty to set out with the morning's dawn, and at all events be free to pursue my journey alone.

An ample feast had been all this while preparing, to which the

whole circle of Yuseff's Christian acquaintance had been invited, ni order to break the bread of friendship with an Englishman, all Mohammedans being excluded, that they might the more freely indulge the privileges of their common faith in midnight potions, and vent their indignation against their oppressors over the intoxicating draught. We sat down, to the number of about thirty, around a large metal salver, laden with dishes, which were put on, taken off, and replaced by others in quick succession, after the fashion of the Turks. The feast was preceded by songs in the Turkish language, most of them remarkable for their gross indelicacy. Large glasses of arrack were swallowed at short intervals, so that most of the party were intoxicated before they began to eat, and as glasses were again served in pretty quick succession during the meal, many were quite drunk before it was ended. Loose songs were now followed by still looser conversations, and lascivious dances were next performed by men and boys, without the gravest among them being at all shocked at these Bacchanalian orgies. The utmost freedom was given to their expressions of hatred against the Turks; and though it was impossible not to feel pity for them, as subjects of the most galling tyranny, or not to sympathise with them in their faintest struggles against so odious slavery, yet it was painful to see that they quietly submitted to the yoke, and suffered themselves to be trodden under foot while sober, and breathed forth slaughter and revenge only while they were drunk; leaving the impression that they would be as cruel, were they of the stronger party, as they are timid and unresisting now that they are of the weaker. Here, upon the spot, I was forcibly struck with the contrast which the conduct and professions of these Christian teachers exhibited, when compared with the charity of a former bishop of the same place, as related by Gibbon, and deservedly rescued by him from oblivion.*

This Acacius of Amida, boldly declaring, that vases of gold and silver are useless to a God who neither eats nor drinks, sold the plate of the church of Amida; employed the price in the redemption of seven thousand Persian captives, taken in the Theodosian war; supplied their wants with affectionate liberality, and dismissed them

Acts of benevolence and Christian charity, from whomsoever they spring, cannot be too frequently mentioned, and they shine with more lustre from amidst the aggravated wrongs under which they are displayed. But of the conduct to which I was here a painful witness, it is difficult to speak, except in terms of reprobation. These oriental Christians of the present day were not, however, without their consolations, which they reciprocally interchange in nearly the same language as that attributed, in the very next page of the same historian, to the Armenian archbishop Isaac, when he deplores, yet half excuses, the vices of Antasines, the nephew and successor of the Persian Chosroes.*

These midnight revels did not cease until the morning was nigh, and even then many more had sunk upon the floor to sleep, from fatigue and intoxication, than had retired for the purpose of going to their own homes. The speedy downfall of the Mohammedan power, and the eternal damnation of all heretics and infidels, were the favourite toasts; and these, it is said, were so clearly recommended by holy writ, that drinking to their accomplishment was only supporting the word of God, and hastening the drinker's own salvation. With this reiterated assurance, which was repeated on all sides at every draught that was swallowed, sounds of cursing still reverberating in my ears, I stretched myself along upon the carpet, to catch an hour's repose before the dawn should summon me to begin my journey, which the revolting scenes I had unwillingly witnessed here made me most impatient to begin.

to their native country, to inform the king of the true spirit of the religion which he persecuted."—Gibbon, vol. v. c. 32, p. 427.

* "Our king," says this mitred prelate, "is too much addicted to licentious pleasures; but he has been purified in the holy waters of baptism. He is a lover of women, but he does not adore the fire or the elements. He may deserve the reproach of lewdness, but he is an undoubted Catholic; and his faith is pure, though his manners are flagitious."



CHAPTER XII.

FROM DIARBEEKR TO MARDIN, DARA, AND NISIBIS.

JUNE 28th.—It was by the grey twilight of the morning that I saddled my horse, in haste ; when, rolling up my carpet behind me, and balancing my spear, I mounted in the court-yard of the merchant's house, and left the recently noisy party all now sound asleep, after the excesses of the preceding night.

It was not yet sun-rise when I reached the city-gate, so that this was still shut ; and as the warders had received orders on the preceding evening not to suffer either the Koord or myself to pass without express permission from the governor, I was again arrested here, until the truth of my own liberation from the claims of my companion's creditor could be ascertained. A well-timed present prevailed on one of the guards to hasten off to the palace, in order

to make the necessary inquiries; while another commanded a servant to hold my horse, with a hope of something being given him for his civility. The Aga of the guard, who had by this time just ended his morning prayers, then invited me to his carpet, and filling my pipe out of his own tobacco-bag, presented me also with a cup of his morning coffee, thus rendering my detention as agreeable as he could.

The messenger at length returned, with a confirmation of the truth of all that I had stated, with respect to my freedom: the expected presents were paid, the gates were thrown open, and with the prayers of the guards for the safe journey of one whom they supposed to be a believer, going heedlessly forth into danger, I left the walls of Diarbekr to return to Mardin alone.

Crossing the Tigris at the two fords, over which we had passed before, I was enabled to retrace my path with sufficient ease, and pushed on through Poorang, Akh Tuppé, Shukrah Tuppé, and Sushoaf, going at a full trot nearly the whole of the way, halting only at these villages to drink, and to ask a few questions regarding the roads, now and then also ascending an eminence, to command a more extensive view, and see if my way a-head was clear.

It was about El Assr when I reached Sushoaf, without having met with any obstacle in my way; but it was now necessary, as I intended to travel all night, to halt for an hour to refresh and repose. I accordingly alighted at the house of the Sheikh, who had entertained us on our way to Diarbekr, and beneath whose roof we had slept away an hour, securely sheltered from the heat of the mid-day sun. His first inquiry was naturally after my former companion, who had been long personally known to him; and though I ran the risk of incurring blame for deserting him in his distress, and probably, too, of being pillaged, since I was no longer under his protection, I thought it best to give a true and simple statement of the cause of our separation. It had the effect I anticipated, in exciting his displeasure: but this was softened by the observations of some young females, who were preparing the materials

for a wedding-feast in the same room, and who seemed privileged, by the occasion of the festivity, to speak their minds more freely than usual. They pleaded warmly, and not unsuccessfully, on my behalf; and the anger of the chief was soon appeased.

The preparations in which these females were engaged, were for a marriage-feast, the bridegroom being a Koord of the mountains, and the bride a sister of the young girls who so kindly advocated my cause; and as these were all daughters of the Sheikh himself, they even prevailed on him to insist on my tarrying to partake of the wedding-dinner to be given on this occasion. The invitation was accordingly offered to me, and I was too deeply impressed with gratitude for the kindness of my young female pleaders, to whom I was indebted for so happy an escape from threatened danger, not to accept it, although I dreaded every moment of detention as pregnant with still greater evil.

It was at the close of the afternoon prayers that the company, who consisted of all the males of the village, to the number of more than a hundred men and boys, began to seat themselves on the ground, on each side of a long cloth spread out as a table. While the dishes were placing on this rural board, I kept myself busily employed in rubbing down, watering, and feeding my horse, in order to avoid, as much as possible, observation and inquiry; but when the master of the feast came, I was seated as the "stranger-guest" immediately beside him; and on the ejaculation of "B'Is'm Illah" being uttered, I dipped my fingers into the same dish, and had the choicest bits placed before me by his own hands, as a mark of my being considered a friend or favourite; for this is the highest honour that can be shewn to any one at an Eastern feast.*

Two interesting passages of Scripture derive illustration from this trait of eastern manners. The first, is that in which the Saviour says, "When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room,* lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place: and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

* The word "room," in this passage, means place or station, and not apartment.

All eyes were upon me, as a stranger; I did not understand Koordish, and could speak barely enough of Turkish, to communicate my most common wants, while none of the party present understood more of Arabic than I did of the last-named tongue. This circumstance was, indeed, rather favourable than otherwise to my present purpose, as no one seemed to entertain a doubt of the purity of my faith. I was, however, a stranger, and alone; and, although I enjoyed the protection of the Sheikh as long as I continued under his roof, yet the instant that I quitted it, I should become a fair prey to any party, who might consider me worth plundering. I was persuaded, from the nature of many of the inquiries that were made of me, from many individuals of the assembly, as to the route I intended to take, the nature of the errand which could thus justify my travelling alone, and similar remarks, that, even during this feast, of which we were all common partakers, plans were thought of for intercepting me on my way. I was as reserved, however, in my communications, and as cautious in my answers, as I could well be, without giving offence, though I had made up my mind to go by a different route from that by which we had come, if this were at all practicable. I dared not ask this, even of my host, who, after I had quitted his roof, was as likely as

But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee." (Luke, c. xiv. v. 8—10.) In a country where the highest importance is attached to this distinction, the propriety of this advice is much more striking than if applied to the manners of our own; and the honour is still as much appreciated throughout Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia, at the present day, as it was in those of the Messiah. The other passage is that, in which, at the celebration of the passover, Jesus says, (Matt. c. xxvi. v. 23.) "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me." As there are but very few, and these always the dearest friends, or most honoured guests, who are seated sufficiently near to the master of the feast to dip their hands in the same dish with him, (probably not more than four out of the twelve disciples at the last supper enjoyed this privilege,) the baseness of the treachery is much increased, when one of these few becomes a betrayer; and in this light, the conduct of Judas was, no doubt, meant to be depicted by this pregnant expression.

any other person to betray me. To be found alone in conversation with either of his daughters, would be certain death to both of us : I contrived, however, by calling to one of them as she passed, to bring me a jar of water, to avail myself of her information ; and as we stood at a sufficient distance from the assembly to be heard by none, though seen by all, I was enabled to ask and receive from her all the information I needed on this point, by which I learnt the existence of a more westerly road than that pursued by my Koord guide, on our way to Diarbekr.

The feast being ended, after thanking the Sheikh for his kindness, I remounted my steed, with anxious thoughts, and pursued the beaten track by which we had come from Mardin, until I was entirely out of sight from the village, when I crossed over a by-path which had been described to me by the Sheikh's daughter, and got, at length, into the more westerly road, leading to Burnisht.

It was near sun-set when I reached this village, which was larger than either of those through which I had yet passed. It was seated in a hollow, between hills, and had a small castle, or fortified dwelling, which was occupied by the chief, Mustapha Aga, who commanded the district for a short distance around him, and was as much feared as the most powerful sovereign could be within his own dominions. My ignorance of the road beyond this station obliged me to halt here ; and, as I could not make the necessary inquiries without being questioned in my turn, I was obliged to use the same precautions as I had done at Sushoaf. The master of the house at which I stopped listened to my tale ; and, as his own family and friends were now assembled about him to supper, I was invited to alight and partake of their fare, while a lad was sent to take care of my horse during the meal. Very pressing solicitations were used to prevail on me to pass the night here, and set out for Mardin in the morning, as they insisted that I should certainly lose my way by night, and could not divine the cause of such heedless running into danger. I yielded to their

entreaties, only so far, however, as to take an hour's nap after supper, and then remounted, to pursue my way alone.

It was about nine o'clock when I quitted Burnisht, and, going through narrow ravines and winding valleys, I soon found myself so embarrassed with the difficulty of tracing the beaten road, for the purpose of which I had alighted, and walked on a considerable distance on foot, that I lay down on the ground, in despair of being able to find my way, until the day broke. As there was a portion of the soil covered with high corn, I unbridled my horse, and taking in my hand the long halter used on such occasions, suffered him to range within its length, and feed at pleasure, while, rolling myself up in my cloak, and stretching myself along on the grass, I enjoyed a welcome sleep.

From this I was soon disturbed, however, by the barking of dogs, which from their number seemed to betoken the neighbourhood of a village; and rousing myself to listen more attentively, I could trace the sounds distinctly, as coming from the summit of one of the neighbouring hills. I bridled my horse and remounted, and, notwithstanding the difficulty which still existed of finding any path, I went on, directing my footsteps constantly towards the point from which the sounds came, and, after about an hour's fatiguing scramble, at length reached the habitations of the village. As it was now midnight, most of the villagers were asleep; but one of them, who was apparently on the watch to guard the flocks of the rest, after expressing many suspicions of my intentions in travelling thus alone, and at such an hour of the night, at length offered me shelter, and advised my remaining until the morning before I renewed my way. The difficulty I had already experienced induced me readily to listen to this advice, and I accordingly halted here beneath his humble shed.

JUNE 29th.—The dawn had hardly yet opened before I was again on horseback, and quitting Kufferdell, as this small village

was called, I bent my way over hills and bare ground, until, soon after sun-rise, I came to the edge of some cliffs, overhanging a deep valley, beyond which I now saw Mardin but a short distance to the east-north-east.

Winding down the steep sides of these cliffs, and crossing the valley below, I entered the gates of the town about an hour after sun-rise, and hastened immediately to the bazār, to inquire after the caravan. This I learnt had departed on the morning of yesterday, and as it was intended to push on by forced marches towards Mousul, it was thought that no hope remained of my overtaking it on the way, unless it made a halt at Nisibeen.

I now repaired to the dwelling of the Syrian Patriarch, and from hence we despatched messengers to the villages on the plain, to ascertain precisely at what hour the caravan departed from thence, what route they intended to take, how their halts would be regulated, and all other particulars regarding them. In the meantime, we employed ourselves quite as actively in town, in endeavouring to find out whether any unfortunate passenger had, like myself, been left behind, and if so, whether he would be willing to join me in setting out after the caravan; as well as to learn whether I could, by any and what other means, resume my journey with a hope of success.

After strict search we discovered, that a horse-dealer of this place had about fifty horses, which he was desirous of getting marched to Mousul as speedily as possible; but that, like myself, he had lost the caravan by a few hours only, while he was willing to incur some risk in endeavouring to join it. Our condition was exactly similar to that of vessels left behind in port, and who, having lost their convoy, are obliged either to hazard something in sailing alone after the fleet, or incur all the loss and detention of waiting for another commodore. The prospects of any better, or even equally advantageous, opportunity seemed to us, in this case, so faint, that we soon made up our minds to make the best of the present occasion. After taking a hasty refreshment, therefore, and

allowing my poor horse, now almost knocked up from fatigue, to catch a short repose, I took leave of my Christian friends, and repaired to join the troop of horses at the khan.

After the prayers of El Assr, we mounted, and quitted the town of Mardin. Our party consisted of the horse-dealer, two drivers, and myself, with about fifty spirited and unsaddled horses. We went out by the south-east road, and drank at a fountain of excellent water in our way, when we descended to the foot of the hill, and, gaining the beaten path, continued our course over the plain. It was near sun-set when we reached the village of Harim, where there were about a hundred dwellings, all occupied by families of Koords. We repaired to the house of the Sheikh, who spread carpets for us, and gave us a welcome reception, cheering us with the prospect of our overtaking the caravan at Nisibeen, and doing all in his power to render our situation agreeable.

JUNE 30th.—After a night of imperfect repose, being hourly disturbed by the breaking loose of the horses, and their fighting with each other, we began to saddle our steeds, and prepare for starting at day-light, and just as the sun rose we mounted to proceed on our journey.

We continued our march in a south-easterly direction across the plain, and, in less than two hours after our setting out, were overtaken by two Tartars from Constantinople going to Bagdad, in charge of papers from the British Consul General at that capital, to the East-India Company's Resident at Bagdad. They had left Diarbekr on the evening of the same day that I had quitted it in the morning, and had there heard of my inquiries after Tartars. They were accompanied by a young Bagdad merchant, named Suliman, who was returning home with them; and they had each of them official orders on the Konaukchis, or post-horse suppliers on the road, for such horses as they might require, these supplies being furnished by an annual contract to all the Sultan's messengers that may be in need of them.

As soon as I ascertained this to be the case, I disclosed myself to the chief of these Tartars, who was called Yunus, or Jonas, and presented to him the general letter of Mr. Barker, addressed to any of the Government Tartars, bearing English despatches, that I might meet on the road. On the faith of this, he offered me his protection as far as we should go together; but added, that it would be impossible to procure me a change of horses for my journey until we reached Mousul, to procure a new order to that effect from the Pasha; so that nothing was left for me now but to put the strength of my present animal to its utmost stretch until we reached that city.

We accordingly proceeded together in company, and in about two hours after our leaving Harim, going at a pace of five or six miles an hour, we reached a small village called Gholee, containing little more than fifty dwellings, and peopled entirely by Koords. We did not alight here, merely halting to drink, as we sat on horseback, from the pitchers of some damsels at the well; after which we continued our way, and came, in about two hours more, to the village of Amooda. Here we alighted to wait on the Sheikh, who was a man of some consequence, and commanded many of the villages in the neighbourhood. The one in which he resided was larger than either of those we had passed through since leaving Mardin; and, like these, its whole population were Koords.

On our visit to the Sheikh, the Sultan's Firmān was put into his hands by Yunus; when the chief, as soon as he recognised the royal signet, rose from his seat, placed the sacred document on his head, and then kissing it, raised it again to his forehead. A meal was now placed before us, of which we all partook, after which inquiries were made as to our several occupations and pursuits, our means of travelling, and our capacity to pay the usual tribute of travellers passing this way. The Tartars easily escaped, from their having the high protection of the Sublime Porte; the young Suliman affected poverty, and came off with a trifle, and I followed his example with success; but the poor horse-dealer, whose property

was too visible to be concealed, was obliged to leave one of the best of his troop behind, this being selected by the Sheikh himself, as an equivalent for the money-tribute which the dealer was unable to pay.

We observed the Koord women at this village to be in general handsome, though they approached nearer to Arabs, in their complexions, and in their modes of adorning themselves, than the more northern Koords among whom we had sojourned; they were all well dressed, and wore a profusion of silver ornaments, in the shape of bracelets, anklets, and rings; but their lips were stained with a blue colour, after the fashion of the Arabs of the Desert.

We quitted this village of Amooda about ten o'clock, and still continued south-easterly over the plain. The harvest was now gathering in by reapers, who worked with the sickle in the right hand, and grasped the stalks of the corn with the left, as in Europe; the practice of plucking up the whole by the root, as described in a former page, not prevailing here. Horses were used, in the open air, to tread out the corn, in the manner in which oxen usually are in other Eastern countries. These were not muzzled during their labours, but were suffered to eat as they worked, and enjoy the reward of their hire, which they seemed to do without impeding the labour itself. We noticed here a singular kind of locust, which, while it stood on the ground, was of the same shape and colour as the common locust seen in large flocks; but when it expanded its wings for flight, it exhibited a body and wings as beautifully, as variously, and as brilliantly coloured, as those of the gayest butterfly. This locust was not much smaller in size than the large locusts of Egypt and Syria, but it was said to be always seen single, or in such small numbers as to lead to the belief that they never associated in hosts as the destructive locusts do.

Continuing our march over the plain, we had on our right, or to the south of us, at a great distance off, the mountain of Sinjār, a lofty range, high in the middle and tapering down at both ends

till it lost itself in the plain.* To the left, or on the north, was the longer and lower ridge of Mardin, distant only three or four miles, and running nearly in the direction of our march, or about south-east. It was amidst these hills, as we passed them, that we saw a large ruined town, with a castle, called Benaweel; near to which, in the same direction, is Dāra, or Kara Dara, an ancient post of some importance, now in ruins, but still possessing extensive remains, according to the report of two of our party who had often been there.

A description of the situation and construction of this fortress, as well as of its importance, is given by Gibbon, on the authority of Procopius, in his History of the Persian War.†

* “ Au midi de Mardin s’élève la montagne de *Singiar*, qui a été de tout temps la terreur des caravanes; elle peut avoir quatorze lieues de longueur, et s’étend du nord-est au sud-ouest dans une plaine immense, qui aux mois de Mars et d’Avril n’est qu’une prairie charmante, tapissée de verdure, parsemée de fleurs odoriférantes, et arrosée de plusieurs sources que la fonte des neiges convertit souvent en larges et impétueux torrens. Le sommet de cette montagne offre un terrain plat et fertile, où serpentent et murmurent mille ruisseaux agréables. L’orge et le millet y viennent en abondance; les raisins et les figues qu’il produit, sont renommés par leur beauté et leur goût exquis.”—*Description du Pachalik de Bagdad*, p. 96, 97.

† After enumerating the loss as sustained by the Greek emperor Anastasius, in his contests with the Persian Kobad, he says, “ To avert the repetition of the same evils, Anastasius resolved to found a new colony, so strong, that it should defy the power of the Persian, so far advanced towards Assyria, that its stationary troops might defend the province by the menace or operation of offensive war. For this purpose, the town of Dara, fourteen miles from Nisibis, and four days’ journey from the Tigris, was peopled and adorned: the hasty works of Anastasius were improved by the perseverance of Justinian; and, without insisting on places less important, the fortifications of Dara may represent the military architecture of the age. The city was surrounded with two walls, and the interval between them, of fifty paces, afforded a retreat to the battle of the besieged. The inner wall was a monument of strength and beauty: it measured sixty feet from the ground, and the height of the towers was one hundred feet; the loop-holes, from whence an enemy might be annoyed with missile weapons, were small, but numerous; the soldiers were planted along the rampart, under the shelter of double galleries, and a third platform, spacious and secure, was raised on the summit of the towers. The exterior wall appears to have been less lofty, but more solid; and each tower was protected by a quadrangular bulwark. A hard, rocky soil resisted the tools

It has been affirmed, says the historian of Persia, that this fortress answered the purpose for which it was built, for sixty years; but we must determine, before we adopt this conclusion, how its erection provoked those attacks which it so long resisted, and which at last brought ruin, not only on it, but upon all the Roman towns and territories in its vicinity.*

About thirty years afterwards, when Chosroes, the son of Kobad, received the ambassadors of Justinian, the successor of Constantine, it is said that he accepted of them eleven thousand pounds of gold, as the price of an *endless* or indefinite peace. Some mutual exchanges were then regulated; the Persian assumed the guard of the gates of Caucasus, and the demolition of Dara was suspended, on condition that it should never be made the residence of the general of the East.†

In little more than the same period of time, or about seventy years after its first foundation, when the contests between Rome and Persia were still continued, it fell before the arms of the latter.‡

In the beginning of the seventh century, or nearly a hundred

of the miners; and on the south-east, where the ground was more tractable, their approach was retarded by a new work, which advanced in the shape of a half-moon. The double and treble ditches were filled with a stream of water; and, in the management of the river, the most skilful labour was employed to supply the inhabitants, to distress the besiegers, and to prevent the mischiefs of a natural or artificial inundation. Dara continued, more than sixty years, to fulfil the wishes of its founders, and to provoke the jealousy of the Persians, who incessantly complained, that this impregnable fortress had been constructed in manifest violation of the treaty of peace between the two empires."—Gibbon, vol. vii. p. 139. 8vo.

* Sir John Malcolm's History of Persia, vol. i. p. 135. A. D. 531.

† Gibbon, vol. vii. c. 43, p. 308.

‡ Nushervan, or Chosroes, conducted in person the siege of Dara; and, although that important fortress had been left destitute of troops and magazines, the valour of the inhabitants resisted for months the elephants and the military engines of the great king. In the mean while, his general, Adarman, advanced from Babylon, traversed the Desert, passed the Euphrates, insulted the suburbs of Antioch, reduced to ashes the city of Apamea, and laid the spoils of Syria at the feet of his master, whose perseverance, in the midst of winter, at length subverted the bulwark of the East.—Gibbon, vol. viii. c. 46, p. 174.

years after Dara had been first founded, the generals of Khoosroo Purveez, who had been first restored to the Persian throne after his defeat and flight into Tartary, invaded the Roman territories, to avenge the death of the Emperor Maurice, whom Khoosroo had publicly adopted as his father. In the state to which the empire was then degraded, says the historian, by the rule of the centurion Phocas, who had been advanced to the purple by a despicable faction, and whose authority was hardly acknowledged beyond the walls of his capital, little opposition was made to the sudden and formidable invasion of the Persians. Dara, Edessa, and other strong places on the frontier, were soon subdued; Syria was completely pillaged, Palestine overrun, Jerusalem taken, and the true cross, which had been enclosed in a golden case and buried deep in the earth, was discovered, and borne in triumph to Persia; and the historians of that country, who give us these details, add, that the sacred relic was attended by a crowd of captive priests and bishops.*

Of this "Dara in the Mountains," as it is called, in the road from Mardin to Nisibeen, mention is made, in the Persian history of the Sassanian kings, by Mirkhond. It is there said, that Nou-shirvan the Just, or Kesra, entered the province of Jezeereh, the tract comprised between the Tigris and Euphrates, and forming the ancient Mesopotamia, where he subdued the cities of Dara and Edessa, and afterwards conquered Kennasserin and Aleppo.†

Procopius fixes the distance of Dara from Mardin at ninety-eight stadia, which, at seven stadia to the mile, (the proportion used in the Lower Empire, and the standard used by Procopius generally,) gives exactly fourteen miles. This, though it seems to have been rejected by D'Anville, who has doubled it in order to reconcile it with other distances of a place called Daras,‡ sixty miles south of Amadia, and fifteen from Nisibeen, according to the authorities of Marcellinus, Cedrenus, and Edrisi, is, nevertheless, as near the

* History of Persia, vol. i. p. 157.

† De Sacy's *Memoires*, p. 366. 4to.

‡ D'Anville sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre.

truth as possible, since the distance is reckoned to be a journey of five or six hours from Mardin, which, as it is in a mountainous and stony tract, cannot be more than fourteen or fifteen miles, which is about its distance also from Nisibeen.

The ruins at this place consist chiefly of military fortifications, walls, and fine cisterns for the preservation of water; and all around it are excavated sepulchres, in which sarcophagi, of the Roman fashion, are still to be found. In Cedrenus, it is called Anastasiopolis, and it is found under that appellation in many other writers; but its original name of Dara, which it bore before it was built on, has outlived that of its founder.*

The Daras of the geographers before cited, the distance of which, as given by them from known points, induced D'Anville to alter to that of Dara, which he supposes to be the same place, is likely, I think, to be some other station. This also may be said of the Dara, which Callistus places between two rivers, since, according to the report of the people here, there are no streams that run by the Dara in question, nor is it indeed likely, from the local features of the spot; while one might infer, from the number of cisterns found there to preserve rain-water, that it could not be near a river, as these would then have been useless. Probably one of these places may be the Daracardin, or Dadacardin, of Tavernier, at which he halted, after thirty-seven hours' travelling, from Orfah, and nineteen hours before he reached Mardin. He says of it, "This appears to have been a great town, but is all ruined; nor is there any thing remaining but a long stone bridge, very well built, under which runs a river that is very broad when it overflows. The people of the country have no other habitations than the hollows of rocks."† This circumstance, of the existence of caverns, being one feature of resemblance to the Dara of Anastasius, has

* L'Empereur Anastase, dans un règne agité des troubles intérieurs, depuis l'an 491 jusqu'en 517, fit construire dans l'emplacement d'un petit lieu, nommé Dara, un place très forte, à laquelle, il donna son nom.—*D'Anville sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre.*

† Travels of Tavernier, p. 68. London, 1678, folio.

occasioned them to be confounded; but the place of Tavernier is between Orfah and Mardin, or *west* of the latter; whereas, the Dara of the Romans was between Mardin and Nisibeen, or *east* of the former. Its having a river, and a bridge over it, makes it probable, however, that Daracardin was the place which Callistus places between two streams, more particularly as the distance of this place from Nisibeen does not at all accord with that of the Roman Dara. It may be worthy of remark, that as Dara was rather an appellative than a proper name, and signified, in the Persian language, royal, or sovereign,* it was likely to be applied to many places which were either royal, from being founded by emperors or kings, or deserving the title from their military importance.

It was near noon, after a journey of eight hours' brisk walking for the horses, or about forty miles from Mardin, that we reached the town of Nisibeen, where we found the caravan encamped. We halted here to join them, and learned that they had arrived thus far on the preceding evening, but were detained to-day in adjusting the claims, and softening down, if possible, the pretensions of the chief, who demanded an exorbitant tribute. When we alighted, this dispute was at its height, and we had just arrived in time to be made partakers of the evils it involved. The inferior persons of the caravan had been already pillaged of whatever they had worth taking. Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān was ordered to pay fifteen hundred piastres, exactly half the sum at first demanded; and I was compelled to pay two hundred and fifty for myself, while the Tartars, who are on all occasions more exempt from these arbitrary demands than other passengers, were obliged to pay each fifty piastres, before they could be suffered to proceed. The horse-dealer had a toll levied on his horses, to the amount of several piastres per head, but I could not learn the exact sum, though it was loudly complained of as unusually oppressive. There was no remedy, however, for any of us, but quietly to pay the sums demanded, and even then to thank those robbers for our lives, as this

Sheikh Farsee, as he was called, was the absolute sovereign of all the territory, from this to the neighbourhood of Mardin.

In directing an inquiry, as to the state of the road farther on, it appeared, from all we could collect, that there were still more dangers to encounter than those we had already left behind us; and other chiefs were spoken of, who, from being more powerful than Sheikh Farsee, would not content themselves, without a proportionately larger tribute than he had received from us. Whether this was true or false, the impression created by it was such, that even the Tartars would not prosecute their journey alone, notwithstanding the importance to them of expedition, but determined to abide with the caravan, for the sake of enjoying its protection, so that we all now clung together for mutual aid.

Towards the evening, I left the tent of the Hadjee, to make an excursion around the ruins of former days, which are found in abundance here. Though I saw much at a distance, the insolence and jealousy of the inhabitants were such as to prevent my entering into the town, and, consequently, to deprive me of the power of examining any thing closely, or seeing much in detail. Some particulars of the present state of this settlement were, however, collected, and these will serve at least to contrast with those which are related of its former importance.*

The first foundation of Nisibeen mounts up to an antiquity

* In the Description of the Pachalik of Bagdad, the situation and condition of Nisibin is thus briefly mentioned :—" Sans m'arrêter aux villages de la dépendance de Moussol, je passe à *Nissibin*, ville qui en est éloignée d'environ quarante-deux lieues. Cette cité célèbre, à laquelle les Grecs donnèrent le surnom de *seconde Antioche*, à cause de sa situation délicieuse, fut prise, comme on le sait par Lucullus sur Tigrane, du temps de la guerre de Mithridate, et devint le boulevard de l'Empire Romain, contre les Parthes et les Perses. Il n'en reste aujourd'hui que quelques mesures qui servent seulement à indiquer le lieu où elle a existé. Des Arabes y habitent, et une petite rivière, qui est apparemment le Migdonius, en fertilise les plaines. Le site de Nissibin, son climat, et la beauté de son terroir, la rendent encore digne de la célébrité dont elle a joui autrefois ; elle est sous la régie du *vaivode* de Mardin, dépendant lui-même du pacha de Bagdad, qui le nomme et le dépose à son gré."—p. 92, 93.

beyond even the reach of records; since it is thought, by some learned divines,* to be one of the places enumerated in the Scriptures, as built by Nimrod, "the mighty hunter before the Lord."†

Its name is more frequently written "Nesibis," on the medals which are preserved of it. It is found to be written "Nisibis" in Greek authors, while the present pronunciation of the name, "Nisibeen," or "Nesbin," is said, by D'Anville, to be in conformity to Abulfeda, the Arabian geographer.‡

Its situation is very clearly marked, as being in the northern part of Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and Euphrates; though it has been placed on the banks of the former by some geographers, who have confounded this river with the stream that runs by it.§ This stream, according to the most modern maps, is made to discharge itself into the Euphrates; but, by the more ancient map of Cellarius, which corresponds with the opinion and report of the people of the country, it discharges itself into the Tigris. This river of Nisibeen is the Saocaras of Ptolemy, and is formed of several small torrents, which unite together in the neighbourhood of Nisibeen. It was afterwards, under the Seleucides, called Mygdonius, as may be gathered from the Emperor Julian, who says,

* See Cellarius Anc. Geog. p. 448. 4to.

† The cities attributed to Nimrod are as numerous throughout Mesopotamia and Babylonia as those attributed to Pharaoh are in Egypt, or those to Solomon in Palestine and Syria. Among others, was the city of Samarah, one of the most famous in eastern annals. "This city," observes Mr. Beckford, "is supposed to have stood on the site where Nimrod erected his tower. Khondemir relates, in his Life of Motassem, that this prince, to terminate the disputes which were perpetually happening between the inhabitants of Bagdad and his Turkish slaves, withdrew from thence, and, having fixed on a situation in the plain of Catoul, there founded Samarah. He is said to have had, in the stables of this city, a hundred and thirty thousand *pied horses*, each of which carried, by his order, a sack of earth, to a place he had chosen. By this accumulation an elevation was formed that commanded a view of all Samarah, and served for the foundation of his magnificent palace."—*Notes to the Caliph Vathek*.

‡ Ammianus Marcellinus says, "Nisibis jam inde à Mithridaticis regni temporibus ne Oriens a Persis occuparetur, viribus restitit maximis."—lib. 25.

§ See Cellarius Anc. Geog. p. 448. 4to.

that the fields, in the neighbourhood of the walls of Nisibis, were watered by a river of that name. Under this dynasty, the city was called Antioch, with the addition of Mygdonia, which was then applied to the whole of this part of Mesopotamia.*

It is thought to have been taken, in the Mithridatic war, by the Roman general Lucullus, when he pursued his enemy across the Euphrates, and gave battle, on the plains of Mesopotamia, to the numerous forces which Tigranes had assembled to support the cause of his son-in-law; when, according to Plutarch, one hundred thousand foot and fifty-five thousand horse of the Asiatic forces were slain, by an army of only eighteen thousand Romans, little more than a century before the Christian era.

About two centuries afterwards, the Emperor Trajan, in the prosecution of the Parthian war, when he overran all Mesopotamia and Assyria, took Nisibis, among his other conquests, which, according to Dion Cassius, extended as far as Ecbatana; where, when he had obtained victories over unknown nations, and found himself on the borders of India, he lamented that he possessed not the vigour and youth of an Alexander, that he might add unexplored provinces and kingdoms to the Roman empire.†

* The change of names in places of antiquity presents continual obstacles to accurate deductions in ancient geography. The following place, mentioned by Pliny, is thought to be another name for Nisibis, and the tradition attached to the fountain described by him to apply to the springs there. "At Cabura, in Mesopotamia, (which is thought to be Nisibis under another name,) there is a fountain of water, which hath a sweet and redolent smell; setting it aside, I know not any one of that quality in the whole world again. But hereto there belongs a tale, namely, that this spring was privileged with this extraordinary gift, because Juno sometimes bathed and washed herself therein."—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* b. xxxi. c. 3.

† In the history of Artabanus, King of Parthia, and his restoration, as given by Josephus, the historian says, "And thus was Artabanus restored to his kingdom, by the means of Izates, when he had lost it by the means of the grandees of the kingdom. Nor was he unmindful of the benefits he had conferred upon him, but rewarded him with such honours as were of greatest esteem among them; for he gave him leave to wear his tiara upright, and to sleep upon a golden bed, which are privileges and marks of honour peculiar to the kings of Parthia. He also cut off the large and fruitful country

After Shapoor had conquered the greater part of the Jezeereh,* he marched against Nisibis, which long resisted his efforts to subdue it. According to Persian authors,† this celebrated fortress was at last taken, more through the effect of the prayers, than the arms, of his soldiers. For, wearied with the siege, Shapoor commanded his army to unite in supplications to the Divinity for its fall; and Persian authors state that the wall actually fell as they were imploring Heaven for success.‡

An unsuccessful attempt on this place by Sapor is described by Gibbon, from the Orations of Julian, as taking place about the year 338 of the Christian era. This, however, was Shapoor the Second, of the Persian historians, (between whom and his predecessor of the same name six sovereigns had intervened,) the son of Hormuz, who was crowned in his mother's womb before his birth,—a circumstance noted by all the historians of his life, both Greek and Persian.§ The description of these unavailing efforts against the fortress of Nisibis by Sapor, is given in so animated a manner by the historian, who has caught the leading features from the best authorities, and presented the whole as a glowing picture of his own, that the reader, who feels sufficient interest in the subject to desire further details, may receive great gratification on turning to the pages in which these are recorded.||

About twenty-five years after this, according to the chronology of the Persian historians, the Romans invaded Persia, and Shapoor the Second was called on to defend his country. The Arab tribes,

of Nisibis from the king of Armenia, and bestowed it upon him. Here the Macedonians had formerly built that city, which they called Antioch of Mygdonia."—*Antiquities of the Jews*, b. xx. c. 3. s. 3. A. D. 45.

* Jezeereh means an Island, and is here applied in that sense to the countries included between the Euphrates and Tigris, the Mesopotamia of the ancients.

† Zeenut ul Tuarikh.

‡ History of Persia, vol. i. p. 98, from De Sacy's *Memoirs*, p. 289. A. D. 260.

§ Gibbon, v. iii. p. 134; and History of Persia, v. i. p. 106.

|| See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. iii. c. 18, pp. 142—145.

it is said, who were eager for revenge, readily joined the Romans, and their united force amounted to one hundred and seventy thousand men, which were commanded by the celebrated Emperor Julian, himself, in person. Shapoor declined meeting this formidable army at the frontiers, being sensible, that if he suffered a defeat, which their overwhelming numbers rendered probable, he should be ruined. He retreated to one of the interior provinces; and, collecting all the force he could, he advanced to give battle. After a dreadful conflict, in which we are told he made the greatest personal efforts, his army was routed with immense slaughter, and Shapoor himself barely saved his life by flying with a few followers. He soon, however, assembled his army, and recommenced operations, to which he was more encouraged from the retreat of his victorious enemy, in pursuit of whom he advanced into the Roman territory, and sent ambassadors to their emperor with the following message—"I have re-assembled my numerous army, I am resolved to revenge those of my subjects who have been plundered, made captives, and slain. It is for this object, that I have bared my arm and girded my loins. If you consent to pay the price of that blood which has been shed, to deliver up the booty which has been plundered, and to restore the city of Nisibis, which is in Irāk, and properly belongs to our empire, though now in your possession, I will sheath the sword of war; but should you not assent to these terms, the hoofs of my steed, which are as hard as steel, shall efface the name of the Romans from the earth, and my glorious scymitar, that destroys like fire, shall exterminate the people of your empire." According to Persian history, this proud and insulting message had the desired effect. The alarmed Emperor of Constantinople agreed to the terms prescribed, and the famous city of Nisibis was delivered over to Shapoor, who immediately sent a colony of twelve thousand men, drawn from Fars and Irāk, to inhabit it, and to cultivate the lands in its vicinity.*

This emperor was succeeded by Jovian, by whom this fortress was yielded to Shapoor, as part of the cession with which he gladly purchased a peace.* The entry of Jovian into Nisibis, and the sufferings of the inhabitants, who were ordered to evacuate it in three days, are described by Ammianus, who was present at the scene.† This irresolute emperor, instead of breaking through the toils of the enemy, expected his fate with patient resignation, and accepted the humiliating conditions of peace which it was no longer in his power to refuse. The five provinces beyond the Tigris, which had been ceded by the grandfather of Shapoor, were restored to the Persian monarch. He acquired by a single article the impregnable city of Nisibis, which had sustained in three successive sieges the effort of his arms.‡

It was, however, wrested from the hands of the Persians about thirty years afterwards, according to the date of the reign of the emperor under which it happened. Khosrou Parviz had been fourteen years on the throne when the Greeks conspired against their emperor, and killed him, with his son Theodosius. There was another son of his at the court of Parviz, and under his command he sent a numerous army into the country of the Greeks, and into Syria. Being entered here, they first possessed themselves of Palestine and Jerusalem. They made prisoners of all the bishops who were at the Holy City, with many other persons, possessed themselves of the true cross, which was shut up in a case of gold and buried underneath the earth, and sent it to Parviz, in Persia. They then, in the same manner, rendered themselves masters of Alexandria and Nubia, and having entered the territory of Constantinople, committed great havoc. The Greeks, however, would not acknowledge the son, but named Heraclius their emperor, who, on the strength of a favourable dream, assembled an army at Constantinople, and marched as far as Nisibeen. Parviz sent twelve

D'Anville sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre, p. 52.

† Book xxv. s. 9. v. 2. pp. 406—408.

‡ Gibbon, vol. iv. c. 24. p. 210.

thousand men against them; but, in a battle there, they were defeated, with the loss of six hundred, besides their commander.*

Ferakhsad, however, one of the sons of Khosrou Parviz, who fled his country from fear of the reigning prince, made Nisibeen his place of refuge, and found protection there.†

It is acknowledged to have been the most important of all the places in Mesopotamia; and its name of "Nisibin," in the plural, is said to denote "posts, or military stations."‡ In Syriac, the name, in the plural, signifies "a place of columns;" but in Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Arabic, it implies, in the singular, a military post.§ Either of these etymologies would be sufficiently consistent with its former state and history to be adopted, since the greatest part of its importance arose from its value as a military post; and as the residence of emperors, nobles, and generals, it was decorated with many columned edifices in the architecture of the time.

When the Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela travelled through Mesopotamia, in 1173, he visited "Netsibin," as he himself writes it, and describes it as being then a large city, having rivers near it in abundance, and containing an assembly of a thousand Jews.|| The notice given of it by Otter, who travelled nearly six hundred years later, (in 1736,) is very slight;¶ and no other writers of modern times have given more ample details of its condition.

* De Sacy's *Memoires sur divers Antiquités de la Perse*, p. 402. 4to. A. D. 394.

† De Sacy's *Memoirs*, p. 415. 4to.

‡ D'Anville *Comp. Anc. Geog.* p. 434. 8vo.

§ D'Anville sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre, p. 52. 4to.

|| Voyage de Benjamin de Tudèle, in Bergeron's Collection, 4to.

¶ The following are the brief remarks of Otter on this place:—"Nous partimes le 3 Avril (de Kotche-Hisâr,) avec l'Ambassadeur du Grand Seigneur, et campâmes, après six heures de marche, dans Karadeiré, c'est à dire, la vallée noire, d'où nous allâmes le lendemain en quatre heures à Nisibin, petite ville du territoire des Arabes Rebia, au nord de Sindjar. Le Hermas descend d'une montagne au nord de cette ville, et passe à côté d'elle; l'on me dit qu'il y avoit sur les bords de cette rivière plus de quarante mille jardins, dans lesquels on trouvoit quantité de roses blanches; mais pas une rouge.

It has now, however, fallen into great decline. At the present moment it is occupied by about three hundred families of Arabs and Koords, mixed, under the government of Sheikh Farsee, who is himself a Koord horseman, and whose followers are mostly his own countrymen. These are chiefly Mohammedans, who have a mosque for their worship, though there are also a few Christians, who live among them peaceably ; but there are now no Jews. The houses of the modern town, which are found erected on the ruins, scarcely exceed a hundred habitable ones, and these are small square buildings of stone and mud, with flat roofs of straw, divided by narrow alleys—for they can scarcely be called streets—and wearing altogether an air of great poverty.

The situation of the town is in a level plain, with the hills of Mardin ranging along on the north, at the distance of from five to ten miles ; the high mountain of Sinjār on the south, distant about ten or twelve leagues ; and a flat desert country, generally, to the east and west. The town is seated on the western bank of the river Mygdonius, now called merely the river of Nisibeen ; and this is still observed to overflow its banks on the falling of the autumnal rains, and the melting of the vernal snows ; confirming the accuracy of Julian, who described it as inundating the country near the walls of the city, and watering the neighbouring fields. There are several smaller streams running into this river, near the city itself ; which corresponds with what Ptolemy has said of the Saocaras, as quoted before, and mentioned to be the same with the Mygdonius. It was this circumstance which formerly assisted the inhabitants in their agricultural labours, and still enables them to cultivate a great deal of rice, which requires more water than any other species of grain.

Among the most remarkable of the edifices whose remains are still existing here, is the citadel, a temple, a bridge, and a Roman

En partant de Nisibin, on ne trouve plus ni villes ni villages sur la route ; c'est un désert, habité par des Kiurds, des Arabes, et Yézidis, qui volent et maltraitent souvent les passans ; ils n'obeissent qu' à leurs Chiéks ou Chefs.—Otter, t. i. p. 121.

building, now called the Church of St. James. The citadel may be very ancient; since the fortifications of this city must have been almost coeval with its foundation; but the present edifice presents no marked features of Roman architecture, being, as far as I could perceive from an exterior view, a large building, of the square form usual in Mohammedan works of this nature. The temple, which is without the precincts of the present town, on the south, has five columns still erect, supporting an architrave, a portion, no doubt, of the original portico. It appeared to be of the Corinthian order, but small, and of ordinary execution.* I could not, however, approach sufficiently close to this to examine it minutely; for, in going towards it alone, though not more than a quarter of a mile distant from our encampment, I had a cloak, and inner garment, or abba and jubbe, stripped from me by four of the villagers, who were seemingly strolling in search of plunder, and whom I could not afterwards find, to recover the articles, or even to repurchase them.

The bridge is a long and level work of masonry thrown across the river, and supported on twelve arches of Roman work; the pathway, or platform, of the bridge being not more than ten feet above the level of the stream. It resembles the bridge seen near Khallet el Hhearin, on the road from Antioch to Aleppo, and, like it, was no doubt originally of Roman construction, though it has undergone repairs, in later times, from Mohammedan workmen; and this portion of it is now in a still more ruined condition than the more ancient one.

The church, which is dedicated to St. James, formerly a Bishop of Nisibeen, and a zealous opposer of the Arian heresy, is thought

* M. D'Olivier, in passing through this place, saw the columns described; and, after mentioning them, he says, "Un peu plus loin, nous vîmes un bloc de marbre blanc et gris, presque entièrement enfoui, sur lequel il y avait une inscription Latine, très effacée. Nous ne pûmes lire que les trois mots suivans—*Currus . . . victoriam stadii* . . . C'était, peut-être là, le stade, où se faisaient les courses des chevaux." —vol. iv. p. 243. 8vo.

by some to have been originally constructed for a place of Christian worship, about the fourth century, and dedicated, on its first building, to the bishop whose name it bears.* Others, however, suppose it to have been originally a temple of the Romans or Greeks, which was subsequently converted into a church, when the Christians became masters of the country.† I had no opportunity of entering it myself, or of seeing sufficient of it to offer an opinion on this question.

The river, near which the city of Nisibis stood, is still a considerable stream, augmented as it is by several tributary ones in its course. It rises in the hills to the northward, and goes away south and south-east from hence, till its junction with the Khaboor, below Sinjār, with which, according to some, it runs ultimately into the Euphrates; though others here insisted on its going alone into the Tigris. It is rapid, deep, and clear; and its waters, which are pure and sweet,‡ produce several kinds of fine fish, large crabs, and water-snakes, or serpents, like those found in the Arabian Sea, and on the coast of the Concan in India, particularly when approaching the harbour of Bombay.§

On returning to the camp, after my excursion, I found a large party of the inhabitants of the town assembled round the tent of Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān, and the eternal demand for presents was

* Niebuhr's Travels, vol. ii. p. 308. 4to.

† Travels of M. D'Olivier, vol. iv. p. 247. 8vo.

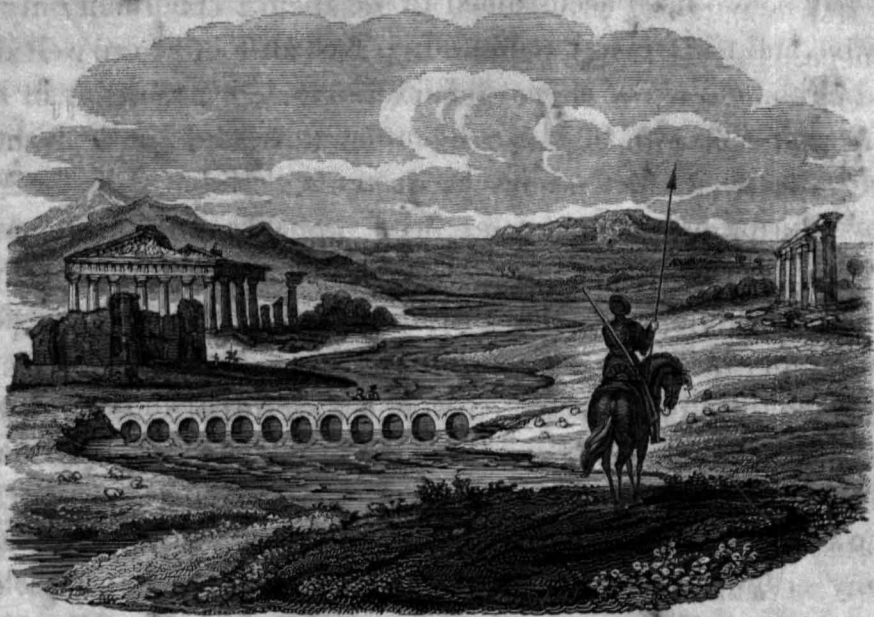
‡ See the Note from Pliny's Natural History, at p. 244.

§ In the Voyage of Admiral Van Neck, and Vice-Admiral Van Warwyck, to the East Indies, 1598, 1599, we find the Dutch killing and *eating* a large sea-serpent, near the island of Banda, "Le 8 de Mai, 1599, un serpent d'onze piés de long, ayant passé par un des écubiers du vaisseau Zelande, y fut tué et mangé."—*Voyages de la Comp. des Indes*, t. i. p. 567.

Dampier met with sea-snakes about four feet long, four fingers broad, flat tail, and spotted with yellow, on the coast of New Holland. There were also smaller ones, spotted with black and yellow; and others, very long and slender; and some as thick as a man's leg, with a red head. "This," says Pennant, "reminds me of the species described by Arrian, in his 'Periplus Maris Erythræi,' to which he gives black skins, and blood-red eyes."—*Outlines of the Globe*, vol. iv. p. 100.

vociferated from every mouth, but resisted with equal obstinacy. The people of the tribe living here seemed to be more mixed than we had before been accustomed to see them. The men only spoke Arabic, and the women and children Koordi. All were well dressed and clean, and about as many families resided in tents as in houses. The roving portion of the community possessed some of the most beautiful horses that could be seen; and these were chiefly employed in predatory excursions, while the rest of the men remained at home to till the ground, to feed the flocks, and to be employed in the more inglorious task of guarding the harems, or the females and children of their warring brothers.

At night all our difficulties were surmounted, and our departure was fixed for the morrow. A strong watch was set around our tents, formed chiefly of volunteers from among those of the caravan who had the most to lose; but, notwithstanding all our vigilance, many trifling articles were stolen, and muskets and pistols were repeatedly discharged during the night at thieves stealing silently into the camp.



CHAPTER XIII.

FROM NISIBEEN, ACROSS THE PLAIN OF SINJAR.

JULY 1st.—We began to prepare the burdens of our camels soon after midnight; and by the first opening of the dawn, we were all on our march.

Our course was directed to the east-south-east over the plain. On our left, or to the north of us, we had the range of hills which are continued from Dara eastward, and on which are several villages whose names we could not learn. On the right, or to the south of us, the lofty mountain of Sinjār rose from the desert plain, and seemed to be now distant from us about forty or fifty miles. The level tract between was like a spacious sea, with rocks and islets scattered over its surface. These small hills seem to be, in many instances, artificial, and are always chosen as the sites of villages,

for the purpose of greater security, and a more ready view of approaching danger.

After a march of two hours, we reached a small village, on an eminence, called Tal el Schiaire, or the Hill of Corn. The few houses seen were in shape like the long barns of English farmyards, thatched with sloping roofs of straw. The people, who were all Koords, lived chiefly, however, in tents; so that these buildings were mostly uninhabited, and kept probably for storehouses of grain.

In two hours from this, pursuing the same course, we passed through another place, called Theat Khalif Aga, or the Village of Khalif Aga, the name of the chief who resided here. It was seated on a smaller eminence than the former, and contained about fifty houses, but more than a hundred tents were pitched around it.

Just before noon we came to a similar village, called Doogher, where we made our halt for the day. We remarked that all these villages resembled each other in their chief local features; all were seated on rising grounds, each had a stream of water running near it from the northward, and in all of them were wells for the supply of this necessary article, when the brooks might be dried up and the streams fail. In our way from Nisibeen thus far, we saw several villages on our right and left, but I could not learn their names. The last and largest, however, of these was one now nearly abreast of us, called Azrowar, and standing on a higher elevation than either of the others,

In forming our halt, the place chosen for our encampment was by a small stream of water descending from the northern hills, and going to the southward to join the waters of Nisibeen. On the bank of this was killed, by one of our party, a large black serpent, of about nine feet in length, and nearly a foot in girth around the largest part of the body. It is said to prey chiefly on lizards, of which there are here many small ones of a very beautiful kind.*

Otter mentions a poisonous serpent found near Tchemen, not far from the lesser Zab, whose bite proved fatal in the course of an hour:—"A notre arrivée à cet endroit

Our tent was scarcely pitched, before there poured down from the northern hills a troop of about fifty horsemen, all mounted on beautiful animals, and armed with long lances. The caparisons of some of these were rich, and even splendid, and a few of the chief among the riders were also superbly dressed. They formed, indeed, by far the most respectable body of men in appearance that we had yet seen on our way. The whole of these were followers of Khalif Aga, the head of a very numerous body of horse in this quarter, and, according to report, the most powerful chieftain between Orfah and Mousul. There were among this party two little boys, who could not have been more than ten years old, but who rode with as much firmness and ease, and wielded their lances, and discharged their pistols, with as much dexterity as any of the rest; and had, if possible, still more boldness in their behaviour to strangers. They were all Koords, and we remarked in them a roundness of feature that was much more approaching to European than to Asiatic physiognomy, particularly when contrasted with the long and prominent features of the Arabs. Their complexions too were as fair as those of Englishmen, though, in all, the eyes and hair were dark. Their dress was in fashion a mixture of Turkish and Arabian, but inclining more to the latter; many of them, however, wore gold ear-rings, which is rather a custom of the Indians than of either of the people before named.

The reception given in our tent, to the chief of this party, was like that of a man to whom all owed unlimited submission. Every one seemed to acknowledge him, as far as obsequious humility can express that feeling, to be the absolute master of their lives and

un Persan alla couper de l'herbe sur le bord de l'eau, et fut mordu à la main par un serpent. Au cri qu'il fit, on accourut avec des sabres et des haches, croyant qu'il étoit tombé dans quelque embuscade des Kiurds; on le trouva étendu sur l'herbe, s'agitant, écumant comme s'il fut tombé du haut-mal; son bras enflé et noir fit bientôt connoître la cause du mal. On decouvrit à quelques pas de lui un serpent monstrueux qui fut mis en pièces. La thériaque et les contre-poisons qu'on donna à l'homme furent inutiles; il mourut une heure après."—tome i. p. 149.

property. One among his suite, whose appearance was more ruffian-like than that of any other of his comrades, was selected by this chief for the duty of inspecting the goods of the caravan. This duty he performed, while his superior threw himself along upon his carpet, beneath the tent, attended by his followers, who formed a complete circle around him.

On the report of this inspector, a contribution of two thousand Spanish dollars was fixed as the amount to be paid by the whole caravan; the proportion in which it was to be contributed by each was left to be settled among ourselves. There was at least an hour's strong remonstrance against this arbitrary demand of a sum which all confessed their inability to pay; and some even said, "Take every thing, all that we possess, and leave us naked. It will be less troublesome to us all, and effectually prevent the pillage of the next band of robbers, who, if you leave us any thing remaining, will be sure to lighten us of our burthens." It was not these remonstrances, however, but a conviction that the original sum could not be raised, which induced the chief at length to lower his demand to two thousand five hundred piastres, or about £125 sterling. Of this, the Hadjee Abd-el-Rakhmān was obliged to pay the half, and the remainder was left to be raised among the rest of the caravan. As we were now few in number, and the great mass even of these had not wherewithal to answer the exorbitant claims of these freebooters, I was compelled to pay, for my own share, no less than three hundred piastres, part of which I was obliged to borrow from the young nephew of my friend, Hadjee Abd-el-Ateef, my own ready cash being all expended, and having nothing now but my bills on Mousul and Bagdad left.

One would have expected, that after this sum was produced, which it was with some difficulty, and presented in hard and bright coin, they would have left us to repose in peace. But the possession of the glittering treasure served only to excite new desires for more; and it seemed to me that we were now in danger of complete pillage. The Hadjee had already laid out his presents before

the chief, on his first entering the tent, after the usage of the country ; and these were sufficiently rare and valuable to have been offered to a Sultan. Others were, however, now demanded ; and some of the bales of goods, that had hitherto remained untouched, were even opened, to search for something worthy the acceptance of this insatiable marauder. Nothing was found that suited his caprice ; and when he discovered that he himself was not likely to be individually benefited by further plunder, he began to affect a regard for justice, and desired that all " private property," as he called it, might be respected !

Notwithstanding this positive injunction, from a leader, whom, in all other respects, his followers seemed implicitly to obey, the inferior persons of the troop wandered through the caravan, and secretly pilfered what they did not venture to take in public. The saddle and bridle of my horse, which were purchased new at Aleppo, and still in good riding order, were literally stolen from off the animal's back ; a mare, with all her furniture, was taken from another of the caravan ; and many things of smaller value from others, who had not the power to defend themselves from this arbitrary pillage of the troop, and who had no hope of redress from an appeal to their commander.

These men thus hung about our camp until sun-set, when they left us, all labouring under the dread of their paying us another visit before we finally quitted their neighbourhood. We learnt, that Khalif Aga, the great leader, and most of the petty chiefs of these Koord horsemen, were Moslems ; but that the villagers dwelling in houses, including those of the plain and the hills, were Christians. It is asserted, that this chief can bring twenty thousand horse into the field under his banner ; and, though this may be an exaggeration, for the sake of approaching to round numbers, the force which he can command is no doubt very considerable.*

To shew that the character of the people, and the dangers of travellers in these parts, have been the same for more than two centuries past, the following passage from

JULY 2nd.—We quitted our station on the plain near Azrowar, with the dawn; and after six hours' continued march over a level tract, going about east-south-east throughout all the way, we made our halt for the night.

Dr. Leonhart Rauwolff's Travels, in 1573, on his way from Mousul to Nisibeen, is worth extracting :

“ After our journey had been deferred for four days, we broke up on the eleventh of January several hundred strong, and went on for the whole day without eating, with all speed, until the sun-set at night, when we encamped on an ascent near a small village, to keep our beasts and goods safe, and to refresh ourselves and them. We watched all night long, and went continually, three and three together, round about our camp by turns. The next day we proceeded on again in our journey with all speed, rather for a good fountain or spring's sake, as they do in these countries in the vast deserts, than to reach a good inn, where we arrived late at night, and encamped near it, to stay all night to rest. A little after, when we were at supper, some of the Curters (Koords) came to us into our camp, spoke to us kindly, and asked us whether we did want any thing that they could help us to; but we soon perceived them to be spies, that were sent by their companions, to see what strength we were of. But when they perceived that we were not pleased with them, they did not stay, but went away, and we composed ourselves to rest, but kept a good guard, as we had done the night before. About midnight, when we were in our first sleep, our watchmen perceived a great number of the Curters to approach, wherefore they awaked us with a great shouting, to alarm us the sooner, and to bring us into good order, and to frighten our enemies, and to drive them away. But they did not only not mind us, but made all haste they could up to us, and that so near that we could see them, although it was dark, before our camp, by their heads. But, when they found us in a good order and condition to oppose them, and did hear that our gunners and archers, which were ready to let fly at them, called with a loud voice to them *Tahal, tahal, Harāmi*, that is, Come hither, come hither, you thieves, &c. they halted for a little while, and were so afraid of us, that they turned their backs and ran away. Afterwards, when we feared nor expected their assault any more, they came quickly again a second time, in a far greater number than before. They led before them one camel and several horses, (which in the dark we could only discern by their heads looking against the sky,) in their hands, without doubt, that we might look upon them as travellers, or else that we might not be able to discern their number. But, notwithstanding all this, their first assault was fresh in memory, wherefore we did not tarry, but drew soon up in our former order again, wherein I was the left-hand man in the first rank again, with my scymitar drawn, and had before armed my breasts with several sheets of paper, that I had brought with me to dry my plants in, expecting their assault every moment. But, when they had made a halt again, fearing their skin as much as we did ours, and did neither shout nor move up towards us, one of

In the course of this march we saw many villages, both on our right and left, and went through five similar ones in the direct route, all of them small, and composed of pent-roofed dwellings of the long form before described. The people appeared generally to live in tents; and these long barns, as far as we could perceive, were more frequently used as places of shelter for cattle at night, than as the habitations of families. These villages were all seated on eminences of the plain, and all their doors looked towards the south, the point from which they have the most danger to apprehend. They were, however, all so small and so little known by the people of our caravan, that I could not obtain the names of any of them.

It was in about an hour after our setting out from near Azrowar that we quitted the cultivated ground, and came again on what was called "El Berreeah," or "the open land." This presented a surface of light dry turf, with a fine soil, and wanted only water to make it highly fertile and fit for immediate cultivation. Passing over this "Berreeah" for another hour, we came again on the basaltic rock, in large black masses, in some parts porous, and in others solid, with one portion particularly close and fine in the grain, but intersected by a vein of highly porous matter, apparently injected or shot through it in a straight line while liquid, and being about two inches wide throughout its whole length. The appearance of this vein was that of a fine sponge, or of dough, as it is seen if cut through while fermenting, or rising, previous to its being baked into bread, full of small holes; while the solid mass, in which this porous or spongy vein was seen, was one of the closest-grained stones that we had met with in our route, and would have borne a polish equal to the finest marble. Both of these substances were of a black colour; the vein, however, was not quite so dark as the solid portion through which it ran. We lost the traces of this basaltic rock in the soil,

ours provoked them, and did shoot at the camel, and did hit it, so that it gave a sign thereof, but the rest forbore to fire. So they staid a little while, and then went off a second time."—p. 168, 169.—Ray's edition, 8vo.

after a short time, and came again on cultivated ground, where the harvest was now gathering in.

The name of all this tract of land, over which we had passed to-day, was Belled Chittea; but, after all my inquiries, I could learn no particular name for any of the villages which we had seen. Each of them, indeed, was small, and being inhabited only during the corn-harvest, was formed of as many tents as fixed dwellings. Though the people thus live in tents, in huts, and in houses, and the Arabic language has particular names for each of these kinds of dwelling, these distinctions are unknown here. In distinguishing the particular class of habitations, of which a settlement is formed, the Arabs call them, Beeoot Hadjar, Beeoot Khashab, and Beeoot Shahr; that is, houses of stone, houses of wood and reeds, and houses of hair: the tents of the true Bedouin Arabs being invariably made of dark hair-cloth, woven from the produce of their flocks in their camps.

The range of hills on which Mardin and Dara are seated continued to run thus far, from west to east, until it terminated abreast of the station of our halt, about eight or ten miles to the northward of us, our course of east-south-east making an angle with it of nearly two degrees.

This course, while it occasioned us to leave the hills of Mardin at a greater and greater distance on our left, brought us progressively nearer to the mountain of Sinjār on our right. This mountain is considerably higher than the range of hills on the north; and its elevation above the plain appears, from hence, to be upwards of two thousand feet at least. It rises by sloping capes at either end, gradually growing higher near the centre; its direction being nearly east and west, and its length apparently about fifty miles. This mountain is here so marked a feature in the geography of Mesopotamia, that it found a place in all the geographical writings of the ancients who treated of this country;* and continues still to be a

land-mark for the Desert Arabs, and a place of constant reference by travellers, when speaking of the roads through these plains.

The town of Sinjār, or Singara, which either gave its name to, or derived it from, the mountain itself, was a celebrated military post during the contests for universal empire, of which this was, for a long while, the scene, between the armies of the East and the West. Its name frequently occurs in the histories of these wars, and coins have been found which bore the inscription of this city as a Roman colony.*

When the Emperor Trajan returned through Mesopotamia, after his conquest of Ctesiphon and Seleucia, and his visit to the ruins of Babylon, he made war against a tribe of Arabs here, who then formed an independent body in Sinjār. He besieged their capital, which defended itself bravely. The length of the siege, the excessive heat, and the want of water in the plain, engendered diseases in the camp. The emperor himself, indeed, here laid the foundation of the disorder which occasioned his death within the same year, A. D. 117, as he abandoned the enterprise against the Arabs, and returned with all speed through Syria towards Rome. He was unable to proceed any farther, however, than Cilicia, where he ended his days in the town of Selinas, which was afterwards called Trajanopolis, in honour of him.†

The animated description of the contest between the Roman legions under Constantius, and the Persian troops under Sapor, in the battle of Singāra, may be seen in the pages of Gibbon, from which a brief extract only will be given in a note below, to shew the nature of the country, and the evils, to which the oppressive climate, and difficulty of procuring supplies of the most ordinary refreshment, had reduced the soldiers of one of the bravest nations that ever yet existed.‡

See Cellarius, *Anc. Geog.* p. 441. 4to.

Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, vol. xxi. p. 61. 4to.

Paris.

“The stationary troops of Singara retired on the approach of Sapor, who passed

In the invasion of Mesopotamia by Sapor, when Constantius was sole Emperor of Rome, after the conquest of Amida, it is said, that the strength as well as spirit of the army with which Sapor took the field in the ensuing spring, was no longer equal to the unbounded views of his ambition. Instead of aspiring to the conquest of the East, he was obliged to content himself with the reduction of two fortified cities of Mesopotamia, Singara, and Bozabdi, the one situated in a sandy desert, the other in a small peninsula, surrounded on every side by the deep and rapid stream of the Tigris.* Five Roman legions, of the diminutive size to which they had been reduced in the age of Constantine, were made prisoners, and sent into remote captivity, on the extreme confines of Persia. After dismantling the walls of Singara, the conqueror abandoned that solitary and sequestered place.†

In the reign of the Emperor Jovian, Singara, and the Castle of the Moors, one of the strongest places in Mesopotamia, were dismembered from the empire; and it was considered as an indulgence, says the same historian, that the inhabitants of those fortresses were permitted to retire with their effects; but the Persian conqueror rigorously insisted that the Romans should for ever abandon the king and kingdom of Armenia.

the Tigris, over three bridges, and occupied, near the village of Hillel, an advantageous camp, which, by the labour of his numerous pioneers, he surrounded in one day with a deep ditch, and a lofty rampart. His formidable host, when it was drawn out in order of battle, covered the banks of the river, the adjacent heights, and the whole extent of a plain of above twelve miles, which separated the two armies. Both were alike impatient to engage; but the barbarians, after a slight resistance, fled in disorder, unable to resist, or desirous to weary, the strength of the heavy legions, who, fainting with heat and thirst, pursued them across the plain, and cut in pieces a line of cavalry, clothed in complete armour, which had been posted before the gates of the camp, to protect their retreat. The sincerity of history declares, however, that the Romans were vanquished with a dreadful slaughter; and that the flying remnant of the legions was exposed to the most intolerable hardships."—*Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of Rome*, vol. iii. pp. 139—142.

* The account of these sieges is given by Ammianus Marcellinus, 20—6, 7.

† Gibbon, vol. iii. c. 19, p. 209.

This territory, here known by the name of Sinjār, has been supposed by most writers to be the same with the land of Shinar, mentioned in the Scriptures. Some indeed apply this name to the whole of Mesopotamia.* St. Jerome, more particularly, when he speaks of Arach, or Erech, being Edessa, and Achad, or Accad, being Nisibis,† necessarily supposes this name to extend over the whole of the country between the Tigris and Euphrates, as it is expressly said, “that the beginning of Nimrod’s kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”‡ Benjamin of Tudela calls the whole of Mesopotamia by the name of “Senaar,” and supposes it to be the Shinar of the Scriptures.§ And Niebuhr also thought it probable, from the affinity of names, that the district of Sinjār at least might be the Shinar of the Pentateuch.|| This may explain that passage of the Bible, which, after naming these cities as being in the land of Shinar, says, “Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah. And Resen, between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city.” Nineveh and Calah are both out of that land, or beyond the river Tigris to the eastward; and Resen, which was between them, was necessarily so too; though Cellarius has, in his map, placed this nearly in the heart of Mesopotamia.

D’Anville, who thinks there is some difficulty in acceding to this opinion, of the present name of Sinjār, being a corruption of Shinar, or Sinear, and applied to the same tract of country as before,¶ remarks, in another place, with great accuracy, on the error of Ptolemy in placing it close to the Tigris, from which it is separated by a wide desert tract.**

* Gibbon, vol. iv. p. 211.

† See Cellarius, *Anc. Geog.* p. 441 and 448. 4to.

‡ Genesis, c. x. v. 10.

§ Voyage de Benjamin. Bergeron’s Collection.

|| “Selon tout apparence, le Singara des auteurs Grecs. Le nom a aussi beaucoup de rapport avec le Sinear de la Bible.”—*Voyage en Arabie*, vol. ii. p. 315, en 4to.

¶ Comp. of *Anc. Geog.* p. 433. 8vo.

** “Singara est une ville de grand consideration. Cellarius, apportant une attention

It was here, on this plain, to the north of the mountain of Sinjār, that the great scientific undertaking, of measuring two degrees of the meridian, was carried into execution, under the Khalif Al-Mamoun, the result of which problem ascertained a terrestrial degree to be equal to fifty-seven Arabic miles.*

Throughout the whole range of the mountain of Sinjār, there is now no great town, but there are still many villages. Of these, however, very little is known, as neither Turks, Koords, nor Arabs, dare to venture among the Yezeedis, by whom the mountain is chiefly inhabited.† The largest town they have, is seated on an island, in the middle of a lake, called Cottoneah, which, by some, is said to be at the foot of the mountain in the plain, and by others, is reported to be in the hills. My curiosity had been strongly excited by a passage of Niebuhr, which speaks of a pyramid on this island, built in a very durable manner, and worthy the examination of travellers.‡

scrupuleuse sur la nomenclature, remarque que le nom est au pluriel chez les écrivains Grecs, et l'emplacement près du Tigre ; c'est bien ce qui est évident dans Ptolémée, mais non pas également dans la Table Théodosienne, où le nom et la position figurée comme les principales, ne tiennent point au Tigre, et en sont séparés par le desert, que le nom de Troglodoti dans la table paroît designer. Cette ville fut prise par Trajan, au rapport de Dion Cassius, et on la voit ensuite colonie Romaine, avec les surnoms d'*Aurelia* et de *Septimia*, qui se lisent sur les médailles."—*D'Anville sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre*, p. 50.

* *D'Anville sur l'Euphrate et le Tigre*, p. 121.

† "La montagne de Singiar, fertile en diverses sortes de fruits, est d'un accès très-difficile, et la peuplade qui l'occupe met sur pied plus de six mille fusiliers, sans compter la cavalerie armée de lances. Il ne se passe guère d'année, que quelque grosse caravane ne soit dépouillée par cette tribu. Les Yézidis de cette montagne ont soutenu plusieurs guerres contre les pachas de Moussol et de Bagdad ; dans ces occasions, après qu'il y a eu beaucoup de sang répandu de part et d'autre, le tout finit par s'arranger moyennant de l'argent. Ces Yézidis sont redoutés en tout lieu, à cause de leur cruauté : lorsqu'ils exercent leurs brigandages armés, ils ne se bornent pas à dépouiller les personnes qui tombent entre leurs mains, ils les tuent toutes sans exception ; si dans le nombre il se trouve des *schérifs*, descendans de Mahomet, ou des docteurs musulmans, ils les font périr d'une manière plus barbare, et avec plus de plaisir, croyant acquérir par-là un plus grand mérite."—*Notice sur les Yézidis*, pp. 206, 207.

‡ "A l'ouest de Sinjar, et dans un lac, il y a un petit île, habitée par les Arabes, que

All my inquiries on that head, however, brought me no satisfactory information of such a monument, though of the Lake Cottoneah, and of its central island, every body seemed to know, and all were agreed on the impossibility of any but a Yezeedi, or one under his protection, visiting it. The other towns are scattered over the eminences and valleys of the mountain, and some few are seated at the foot of it, along the edge of the plain.

The whole of this district of Sinjār, including both the mountain and the plain, is under the power of the Yezeedis, who call this their own peculiar home, and scarcely suffer strangers to live among them. There are, however, a few Jews, who reside in the town of Cottoneah, on the island in the lake, and act generally as brokers, for the sale and purchase of the plunder, which the Yezeedis bring in from their predatory excursions. Christians, too, can go among them, when under the escort of one of their body, as they themselves so far venerate the Christian religion, as to kiss the hands of the priests, when they visit them at Mardin and other towns. They take the sacrament of the Lord's supper also from them; and believing the wine to be the real blood of Jesus, are careful, while drinking it, not to suffer a drop of it to fall on the ground, or even on their beards.

There is no great head or chief of the Yezeedis, as a nation; but the people of the towns on the plain, and in the hills, have their own governors, distinct from the wanderers of the mountain. These stand in nearly the same relation to each other as the Town Arabs and the Desert ones, or cultivators and Bedouins. The people of the towns live by agriculture, and such trades and manufactures as are suited to their wants. The mountaineers are in tribes, with sheikhs at their heads, and live chiefly by the plunder

l'on nomme Chatonie, et qui tient au continent par une digue fort étroite. On y trouve une pyramide, bâtie d'une manière fort durable et qui merite peut-être que de voyageurs aillent la voir. He adds, "Otter avait pareillement entendu parler d'une pyramide dans cette contrée, mais il ne l'a pas vue lui-même."—*Voyage en Arabie*, vol. ii. p. 316. 4to.

of caravans ; to obtain which, they descend from their hills, and intercept the passage of the high road. There are also some tribes scattered about the plain, even near to the borders of Mardin, and these lead the same kind of life. The mountaineers are said, however, to be the most savage and barbarous of the whole : they never trim their mustachios or their beards, nor do they ever cut their hair ; so that, as they go without any other covering than this on their heads, their appearance is quite conformable to their character. The difference which I had noticed in the physiognomy and complexions of the party of these Yezeedis, whom we met with at the khan in Orfah, must have been occasioned by this difference, of residing either in the mountain or on the plain. On the one, there is snow for a great portion of the year ; on the other, the heat is equal to that of any part of the world ; so that fair complexions, light hair, and blue eyes might be produced under the same degree of latitude with the olive Indian colour, dark hair, and black eyes, each of which I had seen among them : these varieties arising only from the difference of elevation, on which the persons were born and brought up to manhood.

The holy city of these Yezeedis is said to be in the mountains of Koordistan, on the east of the Tigris ; and another of their celebrated religious places is one, called Sheikh Khan, between Mousul and Amadia, to which they make an annual pilgrimage for the performance of some religious rites. The people of the country say it happened, on one occasion, that a Turkish military commander surprised them at this place, when engaged in worship, by coming suddenly on them at night ; and that, his force being too powerful for them to resist, they fled with great precipitation, leaving one of their sacred books behind them. Of this the Turkish officer took possession, and had even the patience to read some parts of it, so that it was probably written in Arabic ; but finding it, as he said, to be full of infidelity and profanation, he destroyed it, on the same principle as that which instigated the Khalif Omar to order the burning of the Alexandrian Library, and Père Sicard to destroy the

old Papyrus Manuscripts of Egypt. The general opinion is, that these Yezeedis have no sacred book; but this, when said by Mohammedans, simply means that they have neither the Bible, the New Testament, nor the Koran, for they acknowledge no other books as sacred. If, however, the anecdote of the Turkish officer be well-founded, it is clear that they once had some religious code, and it is probable that they even still possess some written records, dogmas, or legends connected with their rites and faith.

Between the Lakes of Van and Shahec, in the north of Koordistan, beyond the mountains, and south of Armenia, there are said to be many Yezeedis settled, while others again are scattered along the banks of the Tigris, and in the road between Mousul and Bagdad.

It is not known whether the origin of this respect for the Devil, whom they call Chelibi, or "Il Signore," be from the ancient Persians, with a subsequent mixture of Christianity, or whether it is a remnant of the doctrine of the Manicheans, whose heresy flourished at Edessa. Their name, from Yezd, the evil principle, as opposed to Ormuzd, the good one, with many of their peculiarities of language and customs, would seem to give them a Persian origin; while, on the other hand, some of their superstitions are referable to the Manichean sect; and both of these again have undergone many changes, brought about partly, perhaps, by the residence of Jews in these towns, as they are still suffered to live among them at the present day, and partly by their mixture with Christians, as their country was once even the see of a Chaldean bishop.

At the close of our journey to-day, we opened the lofty mountains of Koordistan, the highest point of the range of which is called Jebel Judee; and this is thought to be the spot on which the "Sefet-el-Noah," or the Ark of Noah, rested, after the "Wugt el Typhoon," or the time of the Deluge, as it is here expressed. This mountain is indeed exceedingly lofty, and, like many other points of the same range, was covered with one unbroken sheet of snow, for at least a third of the way down from the summit, although it

was now the hottest season of the year, and the intense heat of the plains was scarcely bearable to an European. These mountains form the range seen from Diarbekr, going towards the south-east. They appear from hence to lie in a direction of nearly north and south, on the east of the Tigris. Their outlines are broken, and they present numerous beds or ridges, while the mountain of Sinjār is apparently only one great isolated mass, of even outline, and said to be composed of lime-stone.*

Our evening halt was made beside a small stream, and near a village called Chehel Aga, consisting of two portions of reed huts, and three or four divisions of tented dwellings.

As the rest of our way from hence to Mousul was said to be impassable, except by force, from the plain being always infested by Yezedis, it became necessary to strengthen our means of defence; and accordingly a bargain was made with the Sheikh of the tribe, encamped at this place, to furnish us with eighty armed horsemen, to each of whom we were to pay three Spanish dollars for their protection as far as the banks of the Tigris, and to this sum every one in the caravan was to contribute in proportion to the value of the property which he had embarked in it; a proposition to which no one objected; as the zeal of religious hatred was added to a regard for personal safety in the minds of all.† The evening was therefore passed in collecting our force, and in preparing our weapons for a fray; and at night we lay down to catch an hour's sleep, to recruit our strength and spirits for the march.‡

* In the Travels of De Haiton, as inserted in Bergeron's Collection, this mountain of Siniar, as it is there called, is noted as the easternmost range in the territory of Mesopotamia; and the scarcity of water in the plains near it is also remarked.

† "D'ailleurs les Mahométans sont dans la ferme persuasion, que tout homme qui périt de la main d'un de ces sectaires, meurt martyr; aussi le prince d'Amadia a-t-il soin de tenir toujours auprès de lui un bourreau de cette nation, pour exécuter les sentences de mort contre les Turcs. Les Yézidis ont la même opinion relativement aux Turcs, et la chose est réciproque; si un Turc tue un Yézidi, il fait une action très-agréable à Dieu, et si un Yézidi tue un Turc, il fait une œuvre très-méritoire aux yeux du *Grand Scheikh*, c'est-à-dire du Diable."—*Notice sur les Yézidis*, p. 208.

‡ We were just now on the very spot where Dr. Rauwolff met the adventure

All my efforts to get even half an hour's rest were, however, unavailing. We were roused by the signals of the guards, and the shouts of the picquets stationed at the out-posts, almost every

described in a former note, (p. 258;) and, as the same fears existed with us, and kept us awake, in continual apprehension, the sequel of his adventure is worth giving, being as completely illustrative of the state of manners and character at the present day, as at the moment when it was first written, about two hundred and fifty years ago. The learned Doctor says: "So we kept awake all the rest of the night, and kept a good watch, and went on our journey again early the next morning about break of the day; and came again to wide and dry heaths, where we saw neither men nor beasts, and so we went on till noon, where we encamped in a large place, which was surrounded with walls and ditches pretty well, just like unto a fortress, whereof there are several in these dangerous places to be seen. When we staid there, two Curters [Koords] came again to us into our camp, and spoke to us, pretending that they came to demand the toll that was due there, it being their place: but our merchants soon perceived that they were not in a right cause, wherefore they would allow them nothing, which put these two into such a passion, that they drew their swords, and would have at us; but our friends did not stay idle neither, but took their swords away, and laid on with dry blows at them, and so flung them out of our camp. After this hubbub was over, we dined, and that the rather that we might not be too much weakened by our hard travelling, and so be the less able to resist these robbers, for want of strength, if they should fall upon us, which we were not wont to do before night, chiefly in great deserts, for there we used to get up presently after midnight, and travel all day long with all speed without eating, which I had often experimented before; wherefore I used to provide myself always with bread, and when I had a mind to eat it, I did either stay behind or go before; for nobody eats openly by the way in the sight of others, except he has a mind to run a hazard, because that most of them are very hungry and so eager at it, that they will assault one another for it, and take it away from their very mouths. After we had refreshed ourselves, and fed our beasts, which useth to be done also but once a day, we broke up with our caravan, and went on again. We quickly saw some mountains before us, where, when we approached them towards the evening, there appeared sometimes, on a high one, that before the rest lieth nearer to the plain, some of them, so that we might very well presume that there was more of them behind in ambuscado, which also proved very true: for, no sooner were we past it, but before we went up the hill, they came out from behind the mountain, in great troops on horseback, which immediately drew up into order in the fields, in two squadrons, three and three in a rank, to the number of about three hundred, almost as many as we were. They exercised their horses, which were very lank, very swiftly, turned sometimes on one, and then on the other hand, and come at length to us within a bow's shot. They had most of them darts, which they played withal in their full speed, sometimes holding it downwards, as if they would run through

ten minutes during the night. Sometimes, the alarm was well-founded, and nothing but a general muster and display of our force, in a state for immediate action, prevented the attacks of several bodies of Koords, formed in different quarters to assail us; at other times, the alarm was groundless, and arose from the idle discharges of pistols and muskets within our own camp: between both, however, sleep, or even bodily repose, was unattainable; so that I burned with impatience to commence our dangerous march.

a deer, which was a pleasant but very dangerous sight to us. When they shewed themselves, so as if they would fall upon us instantly, we drew our caravan close together, in order to resist them. Wherefore we stood still, and tied our beasts together, and bound the fore feet of each of them, that they could not stir; behind them stood our mockery, [Mookeri, or camel drivers,] with their bows, and all those that were not well provided with arms and horses either, to shoot at the enemy, or else, in case of necessity, if they should come too near us, to sally out, and cut off their horses with our scymitars. Near unto us our horses were drawn up into a troop, ready for their assault, to venture their success. After a whole hour's delay, we sent at length two of our company to them, and they sent also two of theirs to meet them to parley together; but which way they made up an agreement I know not, but they prevailed so much with them, that soon after they left us, and rode away, and we went on in our journey. After this, we kept our caravan, (that is so much as to say, a great many people, with loaden camels, asses, and horses,) in far better order than we had done before, and came that same day a good way to a small village, where we encamped and staid all night."—pp. 169—171.



CHAPTER XIV.

FROM THE PLAIN OF SINJAR, BY ROMOILA, TO MOUSUL.

JULY 3d.—We quitted our station on the plain, just as the moon was setting, and although we had now an additional escort of eighty well-armed and well-mounted men, our whole party did not exceed in number two hundred persons.

Soon after commencing our night-march, going in a direction of east-south-east, we passed over a deep ravine, filled with large basaltic masses, forming a vein in the earth, like the deep and winding bed of a torrent. The rest of our way was over desert ground, though the whole tract was capable of being rendered highly fertile, being covered with a good soil, and intersected by several small rivulets of water.

It was soon after the rising of the Pleiades, or just before the

first gleam of dawn appeared, that we formed our halt, at a spot called Romoila, for the sake of filling our vessels with water, as our next stage was to be a night one, through which we might not find any supply of this indispensable provision. This march was intended to be prolonged without a halt, until we should arrive on the banks of the Tigris, in order that we might thus pass over this dangerous plain of Sinjâr by night, and escape the prying sight of the Yezedis under the cover of darkness.*

The prayers of El Fudjer, or day-break, were performed by all the members of the caravan, with an unusual degree of solemnity, evidently betraying an extraordinary degree of apprehension, and proving that fear was a more powerful incentive than devotion to the exercise of this duty. Among the rest, was one individual who repeated aloud the call to prayer, in a fine voice, and after the peculiar manner of Medina, the native city of the Prophet, which differs from the common invocation, though both of them are peculiar to the Soonnee sect. This was, by some, highly admired, by others, thought an impertinent innovation, at such a place and at such a moment, and, by a third party, it was laughed at, as highly ludicrous. There was indeed just the same diversity of opinion on the merits of this fashion, as there would be in a country village in

* "Les Yézidis sont censés dépendre du pacha de Moussol, qui leur permet de venir acheter de temps en temps des provisions dans les villages de son département ; mais ils n'en sont pas moins grands voleurs, et toujours en guerre avec les Arabes de la Mésopotamie : ils ont pour armes, le fusil à mèche, la fronde et la pique. Les caravanes souffrent beaucoup de leurs brigandages ; cependant elles ne sont jamais dépouillées complètement par ces bandits, qui ont coutume de les attaquer à l'un des bouts, et n'emportent que ce qui peut servir à leur nourriture, ou à leur habillement. Je ferai remarquer ici que les pachas de Bagdad ont essayé à différentes époques de réduire les Yézidis, en les attaquant avec des forces considérables ; mais ils n'ont jamais pu en venir à bout. Ali-pacha, qui a tenté depuis peu la même entreprise, n'y a pas été plus heureux que ses prédécesseurs : on sait que son expédition contre cette race d'hommes agrestes et endurcis par les travaux, n'a abouti qu'à détruire trois ou quatre de leurs villages, et à massacrer ou emmener en esclavage quelques misérables familles, dont la conversion forcée à l'islamisme ne le dédommagera certainement pas de ses fatigues et de ses dépenses."—*Description du Pachalik de Bagdad*, p. 98, 99.

England, on the introduction of any new mode of singing the psalms, or chaunting the Litany of the Church Service.

As the Hadjee's tent was now crowded with the horsemen who formed our escort, and who, from their numbers and consequence, were here the lords paramount, every one of his usual guests was obliged to erect for himself some temporary shelter from the searching rays of the noon-day sun. There was not a breath of air stirring: the thermometer, under the shade of a double cloak spread overhead, stood at 118°, an hour before noon, and at two o'clock was 126°, while the parched state of the country, the dead calm, and the glare reflected from the desert plain, made our situation more oppressive to the feelings than any description can convey an accurate idea of. At the same moment, while thus fainting under so exhausting an atmosphere, we had in view before us, to the north-east, the lofty mountains of Koordistan, covered with snow: the very contrast of which served to increase our desire after a colder region, and to render us more impatient under our suffering in the present.

Our course through the preceding night had been from one to two points southward of east, and the extent of our journey not more than ten miles, in four hours of march, from the last stage of our encampment at Chehel Aga, to the place of our present halt, at Romoila. It was at about an equal distance from both of these, or near the centre of our route, that we passed a stream called Dama Kaupy. The town of Jezeereh was spoken of as being about the same distance from hence, in a direction of north-north-east, as Nisibeen is in a direction of west-north-west. In describing its size, when in the height of its splendour, the people of the country say, that it had three hundred and sixty-six mosques, or as many as there are days in the year, which is not, however, to be taken literally, meaning merely an indefinitely great number. The buildings in this town, like those of Diarbekr, are all constructed of black basalt, which gives it the same dark appearance, and has obtained for it among the Turks the same characteristic appellation of Kara, or black. It

is said to be, even in its present ruined state, as large as Orfah ; but all acknowledge that it is not so agreeable, or so well-built a city. The supplies of gall-nuts, which are brought to it from the mountains of Koordistan, and exported from thence to Aleppo, are the chief source of wealth and occupation to the inhabitants, who are principally Koords, with a small proportion of Arabs and Turks.

This town does not boast a very high antiquity. Its name is purely Arabic, signifying an island ; and though now applied particularly to the town, was anciently the general name of all Mesopotamia, or the whole space between the Tigris and Euphrates.* Benjamin of Tudela describes the Jezeereh of the present day, under the name of "Gezir ben Ghamar," which he places at "two days' journey from Netsibin." He says, it was "surrounded by the Tigris," from which feature it probably derived its name ; "and was seated at the foot of Mount Taurus," as he calls the mountains of Koordistan, "at the distance of four miles from the spot where the Ark of Noah reposed." This town was then the metropolis of all Mesopotamia, and contained, according to the Rabbi's report, about four thousand Jews. The population is greatly lessened since then, and the town declined in consequence ; but the local features, both of the site of the city, and the place of the mountain, on which the Ark of Noah is believed to have rested, still remain unchanged.

Having filled our water from the small stream at Romoila, and made such other arrangements as were deemed necessary for our next long march, we began, after the public prayers of noon, in which all joined, to load our camels, and quitted our encampment at one o'clock. We now went to the south-east, over the plain, observing nothing peculiar in the way, except three small eminences, which we passed at equal intervals between noon and sun-set, the hills being called respectively Tal Fraat, Tal Howa, and Tal Moos, each serving as landmarks for our course, and elevated points of observation, like many others of a similar kind, scattered over the face of these desert wastes.

* Bibliothèque Orientale, vol. ii. p. 111.

No halt was made at evening, but we continued our march through the night, having, in the former part of it, a bright moon to light our path. It was on the afternoon of this day that we had first noticed the Seraub, or Mirage of the Desert; and it was on this same night that we experienced the first fall of dew since our entering Mesopotamia.

It was near midnight when we reached a marshy ground, in which a clear stream was flowing along, through beds of tall and thick rushes, but so hidden by these, that the noise of its flow was heard long before the stream itself could be seen. From the length of the march, and the exhausting heat of the atmosphere, even at night, the horses were exceedingly thirsty. Their impatient restlessness, evinced by their tramping, neighing, and eager impatience to rush all to one particular point, gave us, indeed, the first indications of our approach to water, which was perceptible to their stronger scent long before it was even heard by us. On reaching the brink of this stream, for which purpose we had been forcibly turned aside, by the ungovernable fury of the animals, to the southward of our route, the banks were found to be so high above the surface of the water, that the horses could not reach it to drink. Some, more impatient than the rest, plunged themselves and their riders at once into the current, and, after being led swimming to a less elevated part of the bank, over which they could mount, were extricated with considerable difficulty; while two of the horses of the caravan, who were more heavily laden than the others, by carrying the baggage as well as the persons of their riders, were drowned. The stream was narrow, but deep, and had a soft muddy bottom, in which another of the horses became so fastly stuck, that he was suffocated in a few minutes. The camels marched patiently along the edge of the bank, as well as those persons of the caravan who were provided with skins and other vessels containing small supplies of water; but the horses could not, by all the power of their riders, be kept from the stream, any more than the crowd of thirsty pilgrims, who, many of them having no small vessels to dip