

protected; and in this case will, I hope, be found a valuable fragment, because, whatever have been my conscientious fears of running servants, who work for pay, into danger of losing their lives by peril of the sea, yet I can safely say, that never did the face of man, or fear of danger to myself, deter me from verifying with my eyes, what my own hands have put upon paper.

IN the days of the Ptolemies, and, as I shall shew, long before, the west coast of the Red Sea, where the deepest water, and most dangerous rocks are, was the track which the Indian and African ships chose, when loaded with the richest merchandise that ever vessels since carried. The Ptolemies built a number of large cities on this coast; nor do we hear that ships were obliged to abandon that track, from the disasters that befel them in the navigation. On the contrary, they avoided the coast of Arabia; and one reason, among others, is plain why they should;—they were loaded with the most valuable commodities, gold, ivory, gums, and precious stones; room for stowage on board therefore was very valuable.

PART of this trade, when at its greatest perfection, was carried on in vessels with oars. We know from the prophet Ezekiel*, 700 years before Christ, or 300 after Solomon had finished his trade with Africa and India, that they did not always make use of sails in the track of the monsoons; and consequently a great number of men must have been necessary

* Ezek. chap. xxvii. 6th and 29th verses.

north-west monsoon which repels it, and keeps it in there, every rock on the Arabian shore becomes an *island*, and every two or three islands become a harbour.

UPON the ends of the principal of these harbours large heaps of stones have been piled up, to serve as signals, or marks, how to enter; and it is in these that the large vessels from Cairo to Jidda, equal in size to our 74 gun ships, (but from the cisterns of mason-work built within for holding water, I suppose double their weight) after navigating their portion of the channel in the day, come safely and quietly to, at four o'clock in the afternoon, and in these little harbours pass the night, to sail into the channel again, next morning at sun-rise.

THEREFORE, though in the track of my voyage to Tor, I am seen running from the west side of Jibbel Zeit a W. N. W. course (for I had no place for a compass) into the harbour of Tor, I do not mean to do so bad a service to humanity as to persuade large ships to follow my track. There are two ways of instructing men usefully, in things absolutely unknown to them. The first is, to teach them what they can do safely. The next is, to teach them what they cannot do at all, or, warranted by a pressing occasion, attempt with more or less danger, which should be explained and placed before their eyes, for without this last no man knows the extent of his own powers. With this view, I will venture, without fear of contradiction, to say, that my course from Cossair, or even from Jibbel Siberget, to Tor, is impossible to a great ship. My voyage, painful, full of care, and dangerous as it was, is not to be accounted a surety for the lives of thousands. It may be regarded as a foundation for surveys hereafter to be made by persons more capable, and better protected;

take in your water at Mocha; or, if any reason should hinder you from touching that shore, a few hours will carry you to Azab, or Saba, on the Abyssinian coast, whose latitude I found to be $13^{\circ} 5'$ north. It is not a port, but a very tolerable road, where you have very safe riding, under the shelter of a low desert island called Crab Island, with a few rocks at the end of it. But it must be remembered, the people are *Galla*, the most treacherous and villanous wretches upon the earth. They are *Shepherds*, who sometimes are on the coast in great numbers, or in the back of the hills that run close along the shore, or in miserable villages composed of huts, that run nearly in an east and west direction from Azab to Raheeta, the largest of all their villages. You will there, at Azab, get plenty of water, sheep, and goats, as also some myrrh and incense, if you are in the proper season, or will stay for it.

I AGAIN repeat it, that no confidence is to be had in the people. Those of Mocha, who even are absolutely necessary to them in their commercial transactions, cannot trust them without surety or hostages. And it was but a few years before I was there, the surgeon and mate of the Elgin East-India man, with several other sailors, were cut off, going on shore with a letter of safe conduct from their Shekh to purchase myrrh. Those that were in the boat escaped, but most of them were wounded. A ship, on its guard, does not fear banditti like these, and you will get plenty of water and provision, though I am only speaking of it as a station of necessity.

If you are not afraid of being known, there is a low black island on the Arabian coast called Camaran, it is in

lat. $15^{\circ} 39'$, and is distinguished by a white house, or fortress, on the west end of it, where you will procure excellent water, in greater plenty than at Azab; but no provisions, or only such as are very bad. If you should not wish to be seen, however, on the coast at all, among the chain of islands that reaches almost across the Gulf from Loheia to Mafuah, there is one called Fooft, where there is good anchorage; it is laid down in my map in lat. $15^{\circ} 59' 43''$ N. and long. $42^{\circ} 27'$ E. from actual observation taken upon the island. There is here a quantity of excellent water, with a faint or monk to take care of it, and keep the wells clean. This poor creature was so terrified at seeing us come ashore with fire-arms, that he lay down upon his face on the sand; nor would he rise, or lift up his head, till the Rais had explained to me the cause of his fear, and till, knowing I was not in any danger of surprise, I had sent my guns on board.

FROM this to Yambo there is no safe watering place. Indeed if the river Frat were to be found, there is no need of any other watering place in the Gulf; but it is absolutely necessary to have a pilot on board before you make Ras Mahomet; because, over the mountains of Auché, the Elanitic Gulf, and the Cape itself, there is often a great haze, which lasts for many days together, and many ships are constantly lost, by mistaking the Eastern Bay, or Elanitic Gulf, for the entrance of the Gulf of Suez; the former has a reef of rocks nearly across it.

AFTER you have made Sheduan, a large island three leagues farther, in a direction nearly north and by west, is a bare rock, which, according to their usual carelessness and indifference, they are not at the pains to call by any other name.

name but *Jibbel*, the rock, island, or mountain, in general. You should not come within three full leagues of that rock, but leave it at a distance to the westward. You will then see shoals, which form a pretty broad channel, where you have soundings from fifteen to thirty fathoms. And again, standing on directly upon Tor, you have two other oval sands with sunken rocks, in the channel, between which you are to steer. All your danger is here in sight, for you might go in the inside, or to the eastward, of the many small islands you see toward the shore; and there are the anchoring places of the Cairo vessels, which are marked with the black anchor in the draught. This is the course best known and practised by pilots for ships of all sizes. But by a draught of Mr Niebuhr, who went from Suez with Mahomet Rais Tobal, his track with that large ship was through the channels, till he arrived at the point, where Tor bore a little to the northward of east of him.

Tor may be known at a distance by two hills that stand near the water side, which, in clear weather, may be seen six leagues off. Just to the south-east of these is the town and harbour, where there are some palm-trees about the houses, the more remarkable, that they are the first you see on the coast. There is no danger in going into Tor harbour, the soundings in the way are clean and regular; and by giving the beacon a small birth on the larboard hand, you may haul in a little to the northward, and anchor in five or six fathom. The bottom of the bay is not a mile from the beacon, and about the same distance from the opposite shore. There is no sensible tide in the middle of the Gulf, but, by the sides, it runs full two knots an hour. At springs, it is high water at Tor nearly at twelve o'clock.

ON the 9th we arrived at Tor, a small straggling village, with a convent of Greek Monks, belonging to Mount Sinai. Don John de Castro * took this town when it was walled, and fortified, soon after the discovery of the Indies by the Portuguese; it has never since been of any consideration. It serves now, only as a watering-place for ships going to, and from Suez. From this we have a distinct view of the points of the mountains Horeb and Sinai, which appear behind and above the others, their tops being often covered with snow in winter.

THERE are three things, (now I am at the north end of the Arabian Gulf,) of which the reader will expect some account, and I am heartily sorry to say, that I fear I shall be obliged to disappoint him in all, by the unsatisfactory relation I am forced to give.

THE first is, Whether the Red Sea is not higher than the Mediterranean, by several feet or inches? To this I answer, That the fact has been supposed to be so by antiquity, and alledged as a reason why Ptolemy's canal was made from the bottom of the Heroopolitic Gulf, rather than brought due north across the Isthmus of Suez; in which last case, it was feared it would submerge a great part of Asia Minor. But who has ever attempted to verify this by experiment? or who is capable of settling the difference of levels, amounting, as supposed, to some feet and inches, between two points 120 miles distant from each other, over a desert that has no settled surface, but is changing its height every day?

* Vide his Journal published by Abbé Vertot.

day? Besides, since all seas are, in fact, but one, what is it that hinders the Indian Ocean to flow to its level? What is it that keeps the Indian Ocean up?

TILL this last branch of the question is resolved, I shall take it for granted that no such difference of level exists, whatever Ptolemy's engineers might have pretended to him; because, to suppose it fact, is to suppose the violation of one very material law of nature.

THE next thing I have to take notice of, for the satisfaction of my reader, is, the way by which the children of Israel passed the Red Sea at the time of their deliverance from the land of Egypt.

As scripture teaches us, that this passage, wherever it might be, was under the influence of a miraculous power, no particular circumstance of breadth, or depth, makes one place likelier than another. It is a matter of mere curiosity, and can only promote an illustration of the scripture, for which reason, I do not decline the consideration of it.

I SHALL suppose, that my reader has been sufficiently convinced, by other authors, that the land of Goshen, where the Israelites dwelt in Egypt, was that country lying east of the Nile, and not overflowed by it, bounded by the mountains of the Thebaid on the south, by the Nile and Mediterranean on the west and north, and the Red Sea and desert of Arabia on the east. It was the Heliopolitan nome, its capital was *On*; from predilection of the letter *O*, common to the Hebrews, they called it Goshen; but its proper name was *Geshen*, the country of Grass, or Pasturage; or of the

the *Shepherds*; in opposition to the rest of the land which was sown, after having been overflowed by the Nile.

THERE were three ways by which the children of Israel, flying from Pharaoh, could have entered Palestine. The first was by the sea-coast by Gaza, Askelon, and Joppa. This was the plainest and nearest way; and, therefore, fittest for people incumbered with kneading troughs, dough, cattle, and children. The sea-coast was full of rich commercial cities, the mid-land was cultivated and sown with grain. The eastern part, nearest the mountains, was full of cattle and shepherds, as rich a country, and more powerful than the cities themselves.

THIS narrow valley, between the mountains and the sea, ran all along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, from Gaza northward, comprehending the low part of Palestine and Syria. Now, here a small number of men might have passed, under the laws of hospitality; nay, they did constantly pass, it being the high road between Egypt, and Tyre, and Sidon. But the case was different with a multitude, such as six hundred thousand men having their cattle along with them. These must have occupied the whole land of the Philistines, destroyed all private property, and undoubtedly have occasioned some revolution; and as they were not now intended to be put in possession of the land of promise, the measure of the iniquity of the nations being not yet full, God turned them aside from going that way, though the nearest, lest they "should see war*," that

* Gen. chap. xiii. ver. 17th.

is, least the people should rise against them, and destroy them.

THERE was another way which led south-west, upon Beer-sheba and Hebron, in the middle, between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean. This was the direction in which Abraham, Lot, and Jacob, are supposed to have reached Egypt. But there was neither food nor water there to sustain the Israelites. When Abraham and Lot returned out of Egypt, they were obliged to separate by consent, because Abraham said to his brother, "The land will not bear us both*."

THE third way was straight east into Arabia, pretty much the road by which the Pilgrims go at this day to Mecca, and the caravans from Suez to Cairo. In this track they would have gone round by the mountains of Moab, east of the Dead Sea, and passed Jordan in the plain opposite to Jericho, as they did forty years afterwards. But it is plain from scripture, that God's counsels were to make Pharaoh and his Egyptians an example of his vengeance; and, as none of these roads led to the sea, they did not answer the Divine intention.

ABOUT twelve leagues from the sea, there was a narrow road which turned to the right, between the mountains, through a valley called *Badeab*, where their course was nearly south-east; this valley ended in a pass, between two considerable mountains, called *Gerwube* on the south; and *Jibbel Attakah* on the north, and opened into the low stripe of country

* Gen. chap. xiii. ver. 6th. Exod. chap. xiii. ver. 17th.

country which runs all along the Red Sea; and the Israelites were ordered to encamp at Pihahiroth, opposite to Baal-zephon, between Migdol and that sea.

It will be necessary to explain these names. *Badeab*, Dr Shaw interprets, *the Valley of the Miracle*, but this is forcing an etymology, for there was yet no miracle wrought, nor was there ever any in the valley. But *Badeab*, means *barren, bare, and uninhabited*; such as we may imagine a valley between stony mountains, a desert valley. *Jibbel Attakab*, he translates also, *the Mountain of Deliverance*. But so far were the Israelites from being delivered on their arrival at this mountain, that they were then in the greatest distress and danger. *Attakab*, means, however, to *arrive or come up with*, either because there they arrived within sight of the Red Sea; or, as I am rather inclined to think, this place took its name from the arrival of Pharaoh, or his coming in sight of the Israelites, when encamped between Migdol and the Red Sea.

PIHAHIROTH is the mouth of the valley, opening to the flat country and the sea, as I have already said, such are called *Mouths*; in the Arabic, *Fum*; as I have observed in my journey to Cossair, where the opening of the valley is called *Fum el Beder, the mouth of Beder*; *Fum el Terfowey, the mouth of Terfowey*. *Hhoreth*, the flat country along the Red Sea, is so called from *Hbor*, a narrow valley where torrents run, occasioned by sudden irregular showers. Such we have already described on the east side of the mountains, bordering upon that narrow flat country along the Red Sea, where temporary showers fall in great abundance, while none of them touch the west side of the mountains or valley of Egypt.

Egypt. Pihahiroth then is the mouth of the valley Badeah; which opens to Hhoreth, the narrow stripe of land where showers fall.

BAAL-ZEPHON, the God of the watch-tower, was, probably, some idol's temple, which served for a signal-house upon the Cape which forms the north entrance of the bay opposite to Jibbel Attakah, where there is still a mosque, or saint's tomb. It was probably a light-house, for the direction of ships going to the bottom of the Gulf, to prevent mistaking it for another foul bay, under the high land, where there is also a tomb of a saint called Abou Derage.

THE last rebuke God gave to Pharaoh, by slaying all the first-born, seems to have made a strong impression upon the Egyptians. Scripture says, that the people were now urgent with the Israelites to be gone, for they said, "We be all dead men *." And we need not doubt, it was in order to keep up in their hearts a motive of resentment, strong enough to make them pursue the Israelites, that God caused the Israelites to borrow, and take away the jewels of the Egyptians; without some new cause of anger, the late terrible chastisement might have deterred them. While, therefore, they journeyed eastward towards the desert, the Egyptians had no motive to attack them, because they went with permission there to sacrifice, and were on their return to restore them their moveables. But when the Israelites were observed turning to the south, among the mountains, they

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were

* Exod. ch. xii. 33.

were then supposed to flee without a view of returning, because they had left the way of the desert; and therefore Pharaoh, that he might induce the Egyptians to follow them, tells them that the Israelites were now entangled among the mountains, and the wilderness behind them, which was really the case, when they encamped at Pihahiroth, before, or south of Baal-Zephon, between Migdol and the sea. Here, then, before Migdol, the sea was divided, and they passed over dry shod to the wilderness of Shur, which was immediately opposite to them; a space something less than four leagues, and so easily accomplished in one night, without any miraculous interposition.

THREE days they were without water, which would bring them to Korondel, where is a spring of brackish, or bitter water, to this day, which probably were the *waters of Marah*.*.

THE natives still call this part of the sea Bahar Kolzum, or the Sea of Destruction; and just opposite to Pihahiroth is a bay, where the North Cape is called Ras Mufa, or the Cape of Moses, even now. These are the reasons why I believe the passage of the Israelites to have been in this direction. There is about fourteen fathom of water in the channel, and about nine in the sides, and good anchorage every where; the farthest side is a low sandy coast, and a very easy landing-place. The draught of the bottom of the Gulf given by Doctor Pococke is very erroneous, in every part of it.

It was proposed to Mr Niebuhr, when in Egypt, to inquire, upon the spot, Whether there were not some ridges
of

* Such is the tradition among the Natives.

of rocks, where the water was shallow, so that an army at particular times might pass over? Secondly, Whether the Etesian winds, which blow strongly all Summer from the north west, could not blow so violently against the sea, as to keep it back on a heap, so that the Israelites might have passed without a miracle? And a copy of these queries was left for me, to join my inquiries likewise.

BUT I must confess, however learned the gentlemen were who proposed these doubts, I did not think they merited any attention to solve them. This passage is told us, by scripture, to be a miraculous one; and, if so, we have nothing to do with natural causes. If we do not believe Moses, we need not believe the transaction at all, seeing that it is from his authority alone we derive it. If we believe in God that he made the sea, we must believe he could divide it when he sees proper reason, and of that he must be the only judge. It is no greater miracle to divide the Red Sea, than to divide the river of Jordan.

If the Etesian wind blowing from the north-west in summer, could heap up the sea as a wall, on the right, or to the south, of fifty feet high, still the difficulty would remain, of building the wall on the left hand, or to the north. Besides, water standing in that position for a day, must have lost the nature of fluid. Whence came that cohesion of particles, that hindered that wall to escape at the sides? This is as great a miracle as that of Moses. If the Etesian winds had done this once, they must have repeated it many a time before and since, from the same causes. Yet, * Dio-

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* *Diod. Sic. Lib. 3. p. 122.*

dorus Siculus says, the Troglodytes, the indigenous inhabitants of that very spot, had a tradition from father to son, from their very earliest and remotest ages, that once this division of the sea did happen there, and that after leaving its bottom sometimes dry, the sea again came back, and covered it with great fury. The words of this author are of the most remarkable kind. We cannot think this heathen is writing in favour of revelation. He knew not Moses, nor says a word about Pharaoh, and his host; but records the miracle of the division of the sea, in words nearly as strong as those of Moses, from the mouths of unbiassed, undesigning Pagans.

WERE all these difficulties surmounted, what could we do with the pillar of fire? The answer is, We should not believe it. Why then believe the passage at all? We have no authority for the one, but what is for the other; it is altogether contrary to the ordinary nature of things, and if not a miracle, it must be a fable.

THE cause of the several names of the Red Sea, is a subject of more liberal inquiry. I am of opinion, that it certainly derived its name from Edom, long and early its powerful master, that word signifying Red in Hebrew. It formerly went by the name of Sea of Edom, or Idumea; since, by that of the Red Sea.

It has been observed, indeed, that not only the Arabian Gulf, but part of the Indian Ocean *, went by this name, though

* Dionysii Periegesis, v. 38. et Comment. Eustathii in eundem. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 765. Agathemeris Geographia, lib. ii. cap. 11.

though far distant from Idumea. This is true, but when we consider, as we shall do in the course of this history, that the masters of that sea were still the Edomites, who went from the one sea directly in the same voyage to the other, we shall not dispute the propriety of extending the name to part of the Indian Ocean also. As for what fanciful people* have said of any redness in the sea itself, or colour in the bottom, the reader may assure himself all this is fiction, the Red Sea being in colour nothing different from the Indian, or any other Ocean.

THERE is greater difficulty in assigning a reason for the Hebrew name, Yam Suph; properly so called, say learned authors, from the quantity of weeds in it. But I must confess, in contradiction to this, that I never in my life, (and I have seen the whole extent of it) saw a weed of any sort in it; and, indeed, upon the slightest consideration, it will occur to any one, that a narrow gulf, under the immediate influence of monsoons, blowing from contrary points six months each year, would have too much agitation to produce such vegetables, seldom found, but in stagnant waters, and seldom, if ever, found in salt ones. My opinion then is, that it is from the † large trees, or plants of white coral, spread every where over the bottom of the Red Sea, perfectly in imitation of plants on land, that the sea has obtained this name. If not, I fairly confess I have not any other conjecture to make.

No

* *Jerome Loba*, the greatest liar of the Jesuits, ch. iv. p. 46. English translation.

† I saw one of these, which, from a root nearly central, threw out ramifications in a nearly circular form, measuring twenty-six feet diameter every way.

No sea, or shores, I believe, in the world, abound more in subjects of Natural History than the Red Sea. I suppose I have drawings and subjects of this kind, equal in bulk to the journal of the whole voyage itself. But the vast expence in engraving, as well as other considerations, will probably hinder for ever the perfection of this work in this particular.



CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Sail from Tor—Pass the Elanitic Gulf—See Raddua—Arrive at Yambo—Incidents there—Arrive at Jidda.

OUR Rais, having dispatched his business, was eager to depart; and, accordingly, on the 11th of April, at day-break, we stood out of the harbour of Tor. At first, we were becalmed in, at the point of the Bay south of Tor town, but the wind freshening about eight o'clock, we stood through the channels of the first four shoals, and then between a smaller one. We made the mouth of a small Bay, formed by Cape Mahomet, and a low sandy point to the eastward of it. Our vessel seemed to be a capital one for sailing, and I did every thing in my power to keep our Rais in good humour.

ABOUT half a mile from the sandy point, we struck upon a coral bank, which, though it was not of any great consistence or solidity, did not fail to make our mast nod. As I was looking out forward when the vessel touched, and the Rais by me, I cried out in Arabic, "Get out of the way you dog!" the Rais, thinking my discourse directed to him, seemed very much surprised, and asked, "what I meant?"

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"Why did you not tell me, said I, when I hired you, that all the rocks in the sea would get out of the way of your vessel? This ill-mannered fellow here did not *know his duty*; he was sleeping I suppose, and has given us a hearty jolt, and I was abusing him for it, till you should chastise him some other way." He shook his head, and said, "Well! you do not believe, but God knows the truth; well now where is the rock? Why he is gone." However, very prudently, he anchored soon afterwards, though we had received no damage.

At night, by an observation of two stars in the meridian, I concluded the latitude of Cape Mahomet to be $27^{\circ} 54'$ N. It must be understood of the mountain, or high land, which forms the Cape, not the low point. The ridge of rocks that run along behind Tor, bound that low sandy country, called the Desert of Sin, to the eastward, and end in this Cape, which is the high land observed at sea; but the lower part, or southernmost extreme of the Cape, runs about three leagues off from the high land, and is so low, that it cannot be seen from deck above three leagues. It was called, by the ancients, Pharan Promontorium; not because there was a light-house * upon the end of it, (though this may have perhaps been the case, and a very necessary and proper situation it is) but from the Egyptian and Arabic word Farek †, which signifies to divide, as being the point, or high land that divides the Gulf of Suez from the Eranitic Gulf.

I WENT

* Anciently called Pharos.

† The Koran is, therefore, called *El Farkan*, or the Divider, or Distinguisher between true faith and heresy.

I WENT ashore here to gather shells, and shot a small animal among the rocks, called Daman Israel, or Israel's Lamb; I do not know why, for it has no resemblance to the sheep kind. I take it to be the saphan of the Hebrew Scripture, which we translate by the coney. I have given a drawing, and description of it, in its proper place *. I shot, likewise, several dozens of gooto, the least beautiful of the kind I had seen, being very small, and coloured like the back of a partridge, but very indifferent food.

THE 12th, we sailed from Cape Mahomet, just as the sun appeared. We passed the island of Tyrone, in the mouth of the Elanitic Gulf, which divides it near equally into two; or, rather the north-west side is narrowest. The direction of the Gulf is nearly north and south. I judge it to be about six leagues over. Many of the Cairo ships are lost in mistaking the entry of the Elanitic for that of the Heroopolitic Gulf, or Gulf of Suez; for, from the island of Tyrone, which is not above two leagues from the Main, there runs a string of islands, which seem to make a semicircular bar across the entry from the point, where a ship, going with a south wind, would take its departure; and this range of islands ends in a shoal with sunken rocks, which reaches near five leagues from the Main. It is probable, that, upon these islands, the fleet of Rehoboam perished, when sailing for the expedition of Ophir †.

* See the article Ashkoko in the Appendix.

† 2 Chron. chap. xx. ver. 37th.

I TAKE Tyrone to be the island of Saspirene of Ptolemy, though this geographer has erred a little, both in its latitude and longitude.

WE passed the second of these islands, called Senaffer, about three leagues to the northward, steering with a fresh gale at south-east, upon a triangular island that has three pointed eminences upon its south-side. We passed another small island which has no name, about the same distance as the former; and ranged along three black rocks, the south-west of the island, called *Sufange el Babar*, or the *Sea-Sponge*. As our vessel made some water, and the wind had been very strong all the afternoon, the Rais wanted to bring up to the leeward of this island, or between this, and a cape of land called *Ras Selab*; but, not being able to find soundings here, he set sail again, doubled the point, and came to anchor under the south cape of a fine bay, which is a station of the Emir Hadje, called *Kalaat el Moilah*, the Castle, or Station of Water.

WE had sailed this day about twenty-one leagues; and, as we had very fair and fine weather, and were under no sort of concern whatever, I could not neglect attending to the disposition of these islands, in a very splendid map lately published. They are carried too far into the Gulf.

THE 13th, the Rais having, in the night, remedied what was faulty in his vessel, set sail about seven o'clock in the morning. We passed a conical hill on the land, called Abou Jubbé, where is the sepulchre of a saint of that name. The mountains here are at a considerable distance; and nothing can be more desolate and bare than the coast. In the

the afternoon, we came to an anchor at a place called Kella Clarea, after having passed an island called Jibbel Numan, about a league from the shore. By the side of this shoal we caught a quantity of good fish, and a great number also very beautiful, and perfectly unknown, but which, when roasted, shrank away to nothing except skin, and when boiled, dissolved into a kind of blueish glue.

ON the 14th, the wind was variable till near ten o'clock, after which it became a little fair. At twelve it was as favourable as we could wish; it blew however but faintly. We passed first by one island surrounded by breakers, and then by three more, and anchored close to the shore, at a place called Jibbel Shekh, or the Mountain of the Saint. Here I resolved to take a walk on shore to stretch my limbs, and see if I could procure any game, to afford us some variety of food. I had my gun loaded with ball, when a vast flock of goots got up before me, not five hundred yards from the shore. As they lighted very near me, I lay down among the bent grass, to draw the charge, and load with small shot. While I was doing this, I saw two antelopes, which, by their manner of walking and feeding, did not seem to be frightened. I returned my balls into the gun, and resolved to be close among the bent, till they should appear before me.

I HAD been quiet for some minutes, when I heard behind me something like a person breathing, on which I turned about, and, not without great surprise, and some little fear, saw a man, standing just over me. I started up, while the man, who had a little stick only in his hand, ran two or three steps backwards, and then stood. He was almost per-

fectly naked: he had half a yard of coarse rag only wrapped round his middle, and a crooked knife stuck in it. I asked him who he was? He said he was an Arab belonging to Shekh Abd el Macaber. I then desired to know where his master was? He replied, he was at the hill a little above, with camels that were going to Yambo. He then, in his turn, asked who I was? I told him I was an Abyssinian slave of the Sheriffe of Mecca, was going to Cairo by sea, but wished much to speak to his master, if he would go and bring him. The savage went away with great willingness, and he no sooner disappeared, than I set out as quickly as possible to the boat, and we got her hauled out beyond the shoals, where we passed the night. We saw afterwards distinctly about fifty men, and three or four camels; the men made several signs to us, but we were perfectly content with the distance that was between us, and sought no more to kill antelopes in the neighbourhood of Sidi Abd el Macaber.

I would not have it imagined, that my case was absolutely desperate, even if I had been known as a Christian, and fallen into the hands of these Arabs, of Arabia Deserta, or Arabia Petrea, supposed to be the most barbarous people in the world, as indeed they probably are. Hospitality, and attention to one's word, seem in these countries to be in proportion to the degree in which the people are savage. A very easy method is known, and followed with constant success, by all the Christians trading to the Red Sea from Suez to Jidda, to save themselves if thrown on the coast of Arabia. Any man of consideration from any tribe among the Arabs, comes to Cairo, gives his name and designation to the Christian sailor, and receives a very small present, which is repeated

peated annually if he performs so often the voyage. And for this the Arab promises the Christian his protection, should he ever be so unfortunate as to be shipwrecked on their coast.

THE Turks are very bad seamen, and lose many ships, the greatest part of the crew are therefore Christians; when a vessel strikes, or is ashore, the Turks are all massacred if they cannot make their way good by force; but the Christians present themselves to the Arab, crying *Fiarduc*, which means, 'we are under immediate protection.' If they are asked, who is their Gaffeer, or Arab, with whom they are in friendship? They answer, Mahomet Abdelcader is our Gaffeer, or any other. If he is not there, you are told he is absent so many days journey off, or any distance. This acquaintance or neighbour, then helps you, to save what you have from the wreck, and one of them with his lance draws a circle, large enough to hold you and yours. He then sticks his lance in the sand, bids you abide within that circle, and goes and brings your Gaffeer, with what camels you want, and this Gaffeer is obliged, by rules known only to themselves, to carry you for nothing, or very little, wherever you go, and to furnish you with provisions all the way. Within that circle you are as safe on the desert coast of Arabia, as in a citadel; there is no example or exception to the contrary that has ever yet been known. There are many Arabs, who, from situation, near dangerous shoals or places, where ships often perish (as between Ras Mahomet and Ras Selah, * Dar el Hamra, and some others) have perhaps fifty
or

* See the Map.

or a hundred Christians, who have been so protected: So that when this Arab marries a daughter, he gives perhaps his revenue from four or five protected Christians, as part of his daughter's portion. I had, at that very time, a Gaffer, called Ibn Talil, an Arab of Harb tribe, and I should have been detained perhaps three days till he came from near Medina, and carried me (had I been shipwrecked) to Yambo, where I was going.

ON the 15th we came to an anchor at El Har*, where we saw high, craggy, and broken mountains, called the Mountains of Ruddua. These abound with springs of water; all sort of Arabian and African fruits grow here in perfection, and every kind of vegetable that they will take the pains to cultivate. It is the paradise of the people of Yambo; those of any substance have country houses there; but, strange to tell, they stay there but for a short time, and prefer the bare, dry, and burning sands about Yambo, to one of the finest climates, and most verdant pleasant countries, that exists in the world. The people of the place have told me, that water freezes there in winter, and that there are some of the inhabitants who have red hair, and blue eyes, a thing scarcely ever seen but in the coldest mountains in the East.

THE 16th, about ten o'clock, we passed a mosque, or Shekh's tomb on the main land, on our left hand, called Kubbet Yambo, and before eleven we anchored in the mouth
of

* El Har signifies extreme heat.

of the port in deep water. Yambo, corruptly called Imbo, is an ancient city, now dwindled to a paultry village. Ptolemy calls it Iambia Vicus, or the village Yambia; a proof it was of no great importance in his time. But after the conquest of Egypt under Sultan Selim, it became a valuable station, for supplying their conquests in Arabia, with warlike stores, from Suez, and for the importation of wheat from Egypt to their garrisons, and the holy places of Mecca and Medina. On this account, a large castle was built there by Sinan Basha; for the ancient Yambo of Ptolemy is not that which is called so at this day. It is six miles farther south; and is called Yambo el Nachel, or, Yambo among the palm-trees, a great quantity of ground being there covered with this sort of plantation.

YAMBO, in the language of the country, signifies a fountain or spring, a very copious one of excellent water being found there among the date trees, and it is one of the stations of the Emir Hadje in going to, and coming from Mecca. The advantage of the port, however, which the other has not, and the protection of the castle, have carried trading vessels to the modern Yambo, where there is no water, but what is brought from pools dug on purpose to receive the rain when it falls.

THERE are two hundred janissaries in the castle, the descendants of those brought thither by Sinan Basha; who have succeeded their fathers, in the way I have observed they did at Syené, and, indeed, in all the conquests in Arabia, and Egypt. The inhabitants of Yambo are deservedly reck-

oned * the most barbarous of any upon the Red Sea, and the janissaries keep pace with them, in every kind of malice and violence. We did not go ashore all that day, because we had heard a number of shots, and had received intelligence from shore, that the janissaries and town's people, for a week, had been fighting together; I was very unwilling to interfere, wishing that they might have all leisure to extirpate one another, if possible; and my Rais seemed most heartily to join me in my wishes.

IN the evening, the captain of the port came on board, and brought two janissaries with him, whom, with some difficulty, I suffered to enter the vessel. Their first demand was gun-powder, which I positively refused. I then asked them how many were killed in the eight days they had been engaged? They answered, with some indifference, not many, about a hundred every day, or a few less or more, chiefly Arabs. We heard afterwards, when we came on shore, one only had been wounded, and that a soldier, by a fall from his horse. They insisted upon bringing the vessel into the port; but I told them, on the contrary, that having no business at Yambo, and being by no means under the guns of their castle, I was at liberty to put to sea without coming ashore at all; therefore, if they did not leave us, as the wind was favourable, I would sail, and, by force, carry them to Jidda. The janissaries began to talk, as their custom is, in a very blustering and warlike tone; but I, who knew my interest at Jidda, and the force in my own hand; that my vessel

* Vide Irvine's letters.

vessel was afloat, and could be under weigh in an instant, never was less disposed to be bullied, than at that moment. They asked me a thousand questions, whether I was a Mameluke, whether I was a Turk, or whether I was an Arab, and why I did not give them spirits and tobacco? To all which I answered, only, that they should know to-morrow who I was; then I ordered the Emir Bahar, the captain of the port, to carry them ashore at his peril, or I would take their arms from them, and confine them on board all night.

THE Rais gave the captain of the port a private hint, to take care what they did, for they might lose their lives; and that private caution, understood in a different way perhaps than was meant, had effect upon the foldiers, to make them withdraw immediately. When they went away, I begged the Emir Bahar to make my compliments to his masters, Hassan and Hussein, Agas, to know what time I should wait upon them to-morrow; and desired him, in the mean time, to keep his foldiers ashore, as I was not disposed to be troubled with their insolence.

Soon after they went, we heard a great firing, and saw lights all over the town; and the Rais proposed to me to slip immediately, and set sail, from which measure I was not at all averse. But, as he said, we had a better anchoring place under the mosque of the Shekh, and, besides, that there we would be in a place of safety, by reason of the holiness of the saint, and that at our own choice might even put to sea in a moment, or stay till to-morrow, as we were in no sort of doubt of being able to repel, force by force, if attacked, we got under weigh for a few hundred yards,

and dropt our anchor under the shrine of one of the greatest saints in the world.

At night the firing had abated, the lights diminished, and the captain of the port again came on board. He was surpris'd at missing us at our former anchoring place, and still more so, when, on our hearing the noise of his oars, we hailed, and forbade him to advance any nearer, till he should tell us how many he had on board, or whether he had foldiers or not, otherwise we should fire upon them: to this he answered, that there were only himself, his boy, and three officers, servants to the Aga. I replied, that three strangers were too many at that time of the night, but, since they were come from the Aga, they might advance.

ALL our people were sitting together armed on the forepart of the vessel; I soon divin'd they intended us no harm, for they gave us the salute *Salam Alicum!* before they were within ten yards of us. I answered with great complacency; we handed them on board, and set them down upon deck. The three officers were genteel young men, of a sickly appearance, dress'd in the fashion of the country, in long burnooses loosely hanging about them, striped with red and white; they wore a turban of red, green, and white, with ten thousand tassels and fringes hanging down to the small of their backs. They had in their hand, each, a short javelin, the shaft not above four feet and a half long, with an iron head about nine inches, and two or three iron hooks below the shaft, which was bound round with brass-wire, in several places, and shod with iron at the farther end.

THEY

THEY asked me where I came from? I said, from Constantinople, last from Cairo; but begged they would put no more questions to me, as I was not at liberty to answer them. They said they had orders from their masters to bid me welcome, if I was the person that had been recommended to them by the Sherriffe, and was Ali Bey's physician at Cairo. I said, if Metical Aga had advised them of that, then I was the man. They replied he had, and were come to bid me welcome, and attend me on shore to their masters, whenever I pleased. I begged them to carry my humble respects to their masters; and told them, though I did not doubt of their protection in any shape, yet I could not think it consistent with ordinary prudence, to risk myself at ten o'clock at night, in a town so full of disorder as Yambo appeared to have been for some time, and where so little regard was paid to discipline or command, as to fight with one another. They said that was true, and I might do as I pleased; but the firing that I had heard did not proceed from fighting, but from their rejoicing upon making peace.

IN short, we found, that, upon some discussion, the garri-son and townsmen had been fighting for several days, in which disorders the greatest part of the ammunition in the town had been expended, but it had since been agreed on by the old men of both parties, that no body had been to blame on either side, but the whole wrong was the work of a *Camel*. A camel, therefore, was seized, and brought without the town, and there a number on both sides having met, they upbraided the camel with every thing that had been either said or done. The camel had killed men, *he* had threatened to set the town on fire; the camel had threatened to burn the Aga's house, and the castle; *he* had cursed the

Grand Signior, and the Sherriffe of Mecca, the fovereigns of the two parties; and, the only thing the poor animal was interested in, *he* had threatened to destroy the wheat that was going to Mecca. After having spent great part of the afternoon in upbraiding the *camel*, whose measure of iniquity, it seems, was near full, each man thrust him through with a lance, devoting him *Diis manibus & Diris*, by a kind of prayer, and with a thousand curses upon his head. After which, every man retired, fully satisfied as to the wrongs he had received from the *camel*.

THE reader will easily observe in this, some traces of the *azazel, or scape-goat of the Jews, which was turned out into the wilderness, loaded with the sins of the people.

NEXT morning I went to the palace, as we call it, in which were some very handsome apartments. There was a guard of janissaries at the door, who, being warriors, lately come from the bloody battle with the *camel*, did not fail to shew marks of insolence, which they wished to be mistaken for courage.

THE two Agas were sitting on a high bench upon Persian carpets; and about forty well-dressed and well-looking men, (many of them old) sitting on carpets upon the floor, in a semi-circle round them. They behaved with great politeness and attention, and asked no questions but general ones; as, How the sea agreed with me? If there was plenty at Cairo? till

* Levit. chap. xvi. ver. 5.

till I was going away, when the youngest of the Agas inquired, with a seeming degree of diffidence, Whether Mahomet Bey Abou Dahab, was ready to march? As I knew well what this question meant, I answered, I know not if he is ready, he has made great preparations. The other Aga said, I hope you will be a messenger of peace? I answered, I intreat you to ask me no questions; I hope, by the grace of God, all will go well. Every person present applauded the speech; agreed to respect my secret, as they supposed I had one, and they all were inclined to believe, that I was a man in the confidence of Ali Bey, and that his hostile designs against Mecca were laid aside: this was just what I wished them to suppose; for it secured me against ill-usage all the time I chose to stay there; and of this I had a proof in the instant, for a very good house was provided for me by the Aga, and a man of his sent to shew me to it.

I WONDERED the Rais had not come home with me; who, in about half an hour after I had got into my house, came and told me, that, when the captain of the boat came on board the first time with the two soldiers, he had put a note, which they call *tiskera*, into his hand, pressing him into the Sherriffe's service, to carry wheat to Jidda, and, with the wheat, a number of *poor pilgrims* that were going to Mecca at the Sherriffe's expence. Finding us, however, out of the harbour, and, suspecting from our manners and carriage towards the janissaries, that we were people who knew what we had to trust to, he had taken the two soldiers ashore with him, who were by no means fond of their reception, or inclined to stay in such company; and, indeed, our dresses and appearances in the boat were fully as likely to make strangers believe we should rob them, as theirs were to im-

prefs us with an apprehension that they would rob us. The Rais said also, that, after my audience, the Aga had called upon him, and taken away the *tiskera*, telling him he was free, and to obey nobody but me; and sent me one of his servants to sit at the door, with orders to admit nobody but whom I pleased, and that I might not be troubled with the people of Yambo.

HITHERTO all was well; but it had been with me an observation, which had constantly held good, that too prosperous beginnings in these countries always ended in ill at the last. I was therefore resolved to use my prosperity with great temperance and caution, make myself as strong, and use my strength as little, as it was possible for me to do.

THERE was a man of considerable weight in Aleppo, named *Sidi Ali Tarabolouffi, who was a great friend of Dr Ruffel, our physician, through whom I became acquainted with him. He was an intimate friend and acquaintance of the cadi of Medina, and had given me a letter to him, recommending me, in a very particular manner, to his protection and services. I inquired about this person, and was told he was in town, directing the distribution of the corn to be sent to his capital. Upon my inquiry, the news were carried to him as soon almost as his name was uttered; on which, being desirous of knowing what sort of man I was, about eight o'clock in the evening he sent me a message, and, immediately after, I received a visit from him.

I WAS

* Native of Tripoli : it is Turkish.

I WAS putting my telescopes and time-keeper in order, and had forbid admittance to any one ; but this was so holy and so dignified a person, that all doors were open to him. He observed me working about the great telescope and quadrant in my shirt, for it was hot beyond conception upon the smallest exertion. Without making any apology for the intrusion at all, he broke out into exclamation, how lucky he was ! and, without regarding me, he went from telescope to clock, from clock to quadrant, and from that to the thermometer, crying, *Ab tibe, ab tibe !* This is fine, this is fine ! He scarcely looked upon me, or seemed to think I was worth his attention, but touched every thing so carefully, and handled so properly the brass cover of the alidade, which inclosed the horse-hair with the plummet, that he seemed to be a man more than ordinarily versed in the use of astronomical instruments. In short, not to repeat useless matter to the reader, I found he had studied at Constantinople, understood the principles of geometry very tolerably, was master of Euclid so far as it regarded plain trigonometry ; the demonstrations of which he rattled off so rapidly, that it was impossible to follow, or to understand him. He knew nothing of spherics, and all his astronomy resolved itself at last into maxims of judicial astrology, first and second houses of the planets and ascendants, very much in the style of common almanacks.

He desired that my door might be open to him at all times, especially when I made observations ; he also knew perfectly the division of our clocks, and begged he might count time for me. All this was easily granted, and I had from him, what was most useful, a history of the situation of the government of the place, by which I learned,

that the two young men (the governors) were slaves of the Sherriffe of Mecca; that it was impossible for any one, the most intimate with them, to tell which of the two was most base or profligate; that they would have robbed us all of the last farthing, if they had not been restrained by fear; and that there was a foreigner, or a frank, very lately going to India, who had disappeared, but, as he believed, had been privately put to death in prison, for he had never after been heard of.

THOUGH I cannot say I relished this account, yet I put on the very best face possible, "Here, in a garrison town, said I, with very worthless soldiers, they might do what they pleased with six or seven strangers, but I do not fear them; I now tell them, and the people of Yambo, all and each of them, they had better be in their bed sick of the plague, than touch a hair of my dog, if I had one." "And so, says he they know, therefore rest and rejoice, and stay as long with us as you can." "As short time as possible, said I, Sidi Mahomet; although I do not fear wicked people, I don't love them so much as to stay long with them."

HE then asked me a favour, that I would allow my Rais to carry a quantity of wheat for him to Jidda; which I willingly permitted, upon condition, that he would order but one man to go along with it; on which he declared solemnly, that none but one should go, and that I might *throw* him even into the *sea*, if he behaved improperly. However, afterwards he sent three; and one who deserved often to be *thrown* into the *sea*, as he had permitted. "Now friend, said I, I have done every thing that you have desired, though favours should have begun with you upon your
your



*Arab Sheik;
Tribe Beni Khorish.*

your own principle, as I am the stranger. Now, what I have to ask you is this,—Do you know the Shekh of Beder Hunein? Know him! says he, I am married to his sister, a daughter of Harb; he is of the tribe of Harb.” “Harb be it then (said I) your trouble will be the less; then you are to send a camel to your brother-in-law, who will procure me the largest, and most perfect plant possible of the Balsam of Mecca. He is not to break the stem, nor even the branches, but to pack it entire, with fruit and flower, if possible, and wrap it in a mat.” He looked cunning, shrugged up his shoulders, drew up his mouth, and putting his finger to his nose, said, “Enough, I know all about this, you shall find what sort of a man I am, I am no fool, as you shall see.”

I RECEIVED this the third day at dinner, but the flower (if there had been any) was rubbed off. The fruit was in several stages, and in great perfection. The drawing, and description from this *plant, will, I hope, for ever obviate all difficulty about its history. He sent me, likewise, a quart bottle of the pure balsam, as it had flowed that year from the tree, with which I have verified what the old botanists in their writings have said of it, in its several stages. He told me also the circumstances I have related in my description of the balsam, as to the gathering and preparing of the several kinds of it, and a curious anecdote as to its origin. He said the plant was no part of the creation of God in the six days, but that, in the last of three very bloody battles, which Mahomet fought with the noble Arabs of Harb, and his kin-

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* See the article Balsam in the Appendix.

men the Beni Koreish, then Pagans at Beder Hunein, that Mahomet prayed to God, and a grove of balsam-trees grew up from the blood of the slain upon the field of battle; and, that with the balsam that flowed from them he touched the wounds even of those that were dead, and all those predestined to be good *Muffulmen* afterwards, immediately came to life. "I hope, said I, friend, that the other things you told me of it, are fully as true as this, for they will otherwise laugh at me in England." "No, no, says he, not half so true, nor a quarter so true, there is nothing in the world so certain as this." But his looks, and his laughing very heartily, shewed me plainly he knew better, as indeed most of them do.

IN the evening, before we departed, about nine o'clock, I had an unexpected visit from the youngest of the two Agas; who, after many pretended complaints of sickness, and injunctions of secrecy, at last *modestly* requested me to give him some *slow poison*, that might kill *his brother*, without suspicion, and after some time should elapse. I told him, such proposals were not to be made to a man like me; that all the gold, and all the silver in the world, would not engage me to poison the poorest vagrant in the street, supposing it never was to be suspected, or known but to my own heart. All he said, was, "Then your manners are not the same as ours."—I answered, dryly, "*Mine*, I thank God, are not," and so we parted.

YAMBO, or at least the present town of that name, I found, by many observations of the sun and stars, to be in latitude $24^{\circ} 3' 35''$ north, and in long. $38^{\circ} 16' 30''$ east from the meridian of Greenwich. The barometer, at its highest, on the 23d of

of April, was $27^{\circ} 8'$, and, the lowest on the 27th, was $26^{\circ} 11'$. The thermometer, on the 24th of April, at two o'clock in the afternoon, stood at 91° , and the lowest was 66° in the morning of the 26th of same month. Yambo is reputed very unwholesome, but there were no epidemical diseases when I was there.

THE many delays of loading the wheat, the desire of *doubling* the quantity I had permitted, in which both the Rais and my friend the cadi conspired for their mutual interest, detained me at Yambo all the 27th of April, very much against my inclination. For I was not a little uneasy at thinking among what banditti I lived, whose daily wish was to rob and murder me, from which they were restrained by fear only; and this, a fit of drunkenness, or a piece of bad news, such as a report of Ali Bey's death, might remove in a moment. Indeed we were allowed to want nothing. A sheep, some bad beer, and some very good wheat-bread, were delivered to us every day from the Aga, which, with dates and honey, and a variety of presents from those that I attended as a physician, made us pass our time comfortably enough; we went frequently in the boats to fish at sea, and, as I had brought with me three fizeggs of different sizes, with the proper lines, I seldom returned without killing four or five dolphins. The sport with the line was likewise excellent. We caught a number of beautiful fish from the very house where we lodged, and some few good ones. We had vinegar in plenty at Yambo; onions, and several other greens, from Raddua; and, being all cooks, we lived well.

ON the 28th of April, in the morning, I failed with a cargo of wheat that did not belong to me, and three passengers, instead of one, for whom only I had undertaken. The wind was fair, and I saw one advantage of allowing the Rais to load, was, that he was determined to carry sail to make amends for the delay. There was a tumbling, disagreeable swell, and the wind seemed dying away. One of our passengers was very sick. At his request, we anchored at Djar, a round small port, whose entrance is at the north-east. It is about three fathoms deep throughout, unless just upon the south side, and perfectly sheltered from every wind. We saw here, for the first time, several plants of rack tree, growing considerably within the sea-mark, in some places with two feet of water upon the trunk. I found the latitude of Djar to be $23^{\circ} 36' 9''$ north. The mountains of Beder Hunein were S. S. W. of us.

THE 29th, at five o'clock in the morning, we failed from Djar. At eight, we passed a small cape called * Ras el Himma; and the wind turning still more fresh, we passed a kind of harbour called Maibeed, where there is an anchoring place named El Horma. The sun was in the meridian when we passed this; and I found, by observation, El Horma was in lat. $23^{\circ} 0' 30''$ north. At ten we passed a mountain on land called Soub; at two, the small port of Muftura, under a mountain whose name is Hajoub; at half past four we came to an anchor at a place called Harar. The wind had been contrary all the night, being south-east, and rather fresh;

* Cape Fever.

fresh; we thought, too, we perceived a current setting strongly to the westward.

On the 30th we sailed at eight in the morning, but the wind was unfavourable, and we made little way. We were surrounded with a great many sharks, some of which seemed to be large. Though I had no line but upon the small fuzgigs for dolphins, I could not refrain from attempting one of the largest, for they were so bold, that some of them, we thought, intended to leap on board. I struck one of the most forward of them, just at the joining of the neck; but as we were not practised enough in laying our line, so as to run out without hitching, he leaped above two feet out of the water, then plunged down with prodigious violence, and our line taking hold of something standing in the way, the cord snapped asunder, and away went the shark. All the others disappeared in an instant; but the Rais said, as soon as they smelled the blood, they would not leave the wounded one, till they had torn him to pieces. I was truly sorry for the loss of my tackle, as the two others were really liker harpoons, and not so manageable. But the Rais, whom I had studied to keep in very good humour, and had befriended in every thing, was an old harpooner in the Indian Ocean, and he pulled out from his hold a complete apparatus. He not only had a small harpoon like my first, but better constructed. He had, likewise, several hooks with long chains and lines, and a wheel with a long hair line to it, like a small windlass, to which he equally fixed the line of the harpoon, and those of the hooks. This was a compliment he saw I took very kindly, and did not doubt it would be rewarded in the proper time.

THE wind freshening and turning fairer, at noon we brought to, within sight of Rabac, and at one o'clock anchored there. Rabac is a small port in lat. $22^{\circ} 35' 30''$ north. The entry is E. N. E. and is about a quarter of a mile broad. The port extends itself to the east, and is about two miles long. The mountains are about three leagues to the north, and the town of Rabac about four miles north by east from the entrance to the harbour. We remained all day, the first of May, in the port, making a drawing of the harbour. The night of our anchoring there, the Emir Hadje of the pilgrims from Mecca encamped about three miles off. We heard his evening gun.

THE passengers that had been sick, now insisted upon going to see the Hadje; but as I knew the consequence would be, that a number of fanatic wild people would be down upon us, I told him plainly, if he went from the boat, he should not again be received; and that we would haul out of the port, and anchor in the offing; this kept him with us. But all next day he was in very bad humour, repeating frequently, to himself, that he deserved all this for embarking with infidels.

THE people came down to us from Rabac with water melons, and skins full of water. All ships may be supplied here plentifully from wells near the town; the water is not bad.

THE country is level, and seemingly uncultivated, but has not so desert a look as about Yambo. I should suspect by its appearance, and the freshness of its water, that it rained

rained at times in the mountains here, for we were now considerably within the tropic, which passes very near Ras el Himma, whereas Rabac is half a degree to the southward.

ON the 2d, at five o'clock in the morning, we sailed from Rabac, with a very little wind, scarcely making two knots an hour.

AT half past nine, Deneb bore east and by south from us. This place is known by a few palm-trees. The port is small, and very indifferent, at least for six months of the year, because it lies open to the south, and there is a prodigious swell here.

AT one o'clock we passed an island called Hammel, about a mile off; at the same time, another island, El Memisk, bore east of us, about three miles, where there is good anchorage.

AT three and three quarters, we passed an island called Gawad, a mile and a quarter south-east of us. The main bore likewise south-east, distant something more than a league. We here changed our course from south to W. S. W. and at four o'clock came to an anchor at the small island of Lajack.

THE 3d, we sailed at half past four in the morning, our course W. S. W. but it fell calm; after having made about a league, we found ourselves off Ras Hateba, or the Woody Cape, which bore due east of us. After doubling the cape,

the wind freshening, at four o'clock in the afternoon we anchored in the port of Jidda, close upon the key, where the officers of the custom-house immediately took possession of our baggage.



CHAP.

 CHAP. XI.

Occurrences at Jidda—Visit of the Vizir—Alarm of the Factory—Great Civility of the English trading from India—Polygamy—Opinion of Dr Arbuthnot ill-founded—Contrary to Reason and Experience—Leave Jidda.

THE port of Jidda is a very extensive one, consisting of numberless shoals, small islands, and funken rocks, with channels, however, between them, and deep water. You are very safe in Jidda harbour, whatever wind blows, as there are numberless shoals which prevent the water from ever being put into any general motion; and you may moor head and stern, with twenty anchors out if you please. But the danger of being lost, I conceive, lies in the going in and coming out of the harbour. Indeed the observation is here verified, the more *dangerous* the port, the *abler* the *pilots*, and no accidents ever happen.

THERE is a draught of the harbour of Jidda handed about among the English for many years, very inaccurately, and very ill laid down, from what authority I know not, often condemned, but never corrected; as also a pretended chart of the upper part of the Gulf, from Jidda to Mocha, full of soundings. As I was some months at Jidda, kindly enter-

tained, and had abundance of time, Captain Thornhill, and some other of the gentlemen trading thither, wished me to make a survey of the harbour, and promised me the assistance of their officers, boats, and crews. I very willingly undertook it to oblige them. Finding afterwards, however, that one of their number, Captain Newland, had undertaken it, and that he would be hurt by my interfering, as he was in some manner advanced in the work, I gave up all further thoughts of the plan. He was a man of real ingenuity and capacity, as well as very humane, well behaved, and one to whom I had been indebted for every sort of attention.

God forgive those who have taken upon them, very lately, to ingraft a number of new soundings upon that miserable bundle of errors, that Chart of the upper part of the Gulf from Jidda to Mocha, which has been tossed about the Red Sea these twenty years and upwards. One of these, since my return to Europe, has been sent to me new dressed like a bride, with all its original and mortal sins upon its head. I would beg leave to be understood, that there is not in the world a man more averse than I am to give offence even to a child. It is not in the spirit of criticism I speak this. In any other case, I would not have made any observations at all. But, where the lives and properties of so many are at stake yearly, it is a species of treason to conceal one's sentiments, if the publishing of them can any way contribute to safety, whatever offence it may give to unreasonable individuals.

Of all the vessels in Jidda, two only had their log lines properly divided, and yet all were so fond of their supposed accuracy,

accuracy, as to aver they had kept their course within five leagues, between India and Babelmandeb. Yet they had made no estimation of the currents without the * Babs, nor the different very strong ones soon after passing Socotra; their half-minute glasses upon a medium ran 57"; they had made no observation on the tides or currents in the Red Sea, either in the channel or in the inward passage; yet there is delineated in this map a course of Captain Newland's, which he kept in the middle of the channel, full of sharp angles and short stretches; you would think every yard was measured and founded.

To the spurious catalogue of soundings found in the old chart above mentioned, there is added a double proportion of new, from what authority is not known; so that from Mocha, to lat. 17° you have as it were soundings every mile, or even less. No one can cast his eyes on the upper part of the map, but must think the Red Sea one of the most frequented places in the world. Yet I will aver, without fear of being contradicted, that it is a characteristic of the Red Sea, scarce to have soundings in any part of the channel, and often on both sides, whilst ashore soundings are hardly found a boat-length from the main. To this I will add, that there is scarce one island upon which I ever was, where the boltspit was not over the land, while there were no soundings by a line heaved over the stern. I must then protest against making these old most erroneous maps a foundation for new ones, as they can be of no use, but must be of

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detriment.

* This is a common sailor's phrase for the Straits of Babelmandeb.

detriment. Many good seamen of knowledge and enterprise have been in that sea, within these few years. Let them say, candidly, what were their instruments, what their difficulties were, where they had doubts, where they succeeded, and where they were disappointed? Were these acknowledged by one, they would be speedily taken up by others, and rectified by the help of mathematicians and good observers on shore.

MR NIEBUHR has contributed much, but we should reform the map on both sides; though there is a great deal done, yet much remains still to do. I hope that my friend Mr Dalrymple, when he can afford time, will give us a foundation more proper to build upon, than that old rotten one, however changed in form, and supposed to have been improved, if he really has a number of observations by him that can be relied on, otherwise it is but continuing the delusion and the danger.

If ships of war afterwards, that keep the channel, shall come, manned with stout and able seamen, and expert young officers, provided with lines, glassess, good compasses, and a number of boats, then we shall know these soundings, at least in part. And then also we shall know the truth of what I now advance, viz. that ships like those employed hitherto in trading from India (manned and provided as the best of them are) were incapable, amidst unknown tides and currents, and going before a monsoon, whether southern or northern, of knowing within three leagues where any one of them had ever dropt his sounding line, unless he was close on board some island, shoal, remarkable point, or in a harbour.

TILL that time, I would advise every man sailing in the Red Sea, especially in the channel, where the pilots know no more than he, to trust to his own hands for safety in the minute of danger, to heave the lead at least every hour, keep a good look-out, and shorten sail in a fresh wind, or in the night-time, and to consider all maps of the channel of the Arabian Gulf, yet made, as matters of mere curiosity, and not fit to trust a man's life to. Any captain in the India service, who had run over from Jidda into the mouth of the river Frat, and the neighbouring port Kilfit, which might every year be done for L. 10 Sterling extra expences, would do more meritorious service to the navigation of that sea, than all the foundings that were ever yet made from Jibbel Zekir to the island of Sheduan.

FROM Yambo to Jidda I had slept little, making my memoranda as full upon the spot as possible. I had, besides, an aguish disorder, which very much troubled me, and in dress and cleanliness was so like a Galiongy (or Turkish seaman) that the * Emir Bahar was astonished at hearing my servants say I was an Englishman, at the time they carried away all my baggage and instruments to the custom-house. He sent his servant, however, with me to the Bengal-house, who promised me, in broken English, all the way, a very magnificent reception from my countrymen. Upon his naming all the captains for my choice, I desired to be carried to a *Scotchman*, a *relation of my own*, who was then accidentally leaning over the rail of the stair-case, leading up to

* Captain of the port.

to his apartment. I saluted him by his name ; he fell into a violent rage, calling me *villain, thief, cheat, and renegado rascal* ; and declared, if I offered to proceed a step further, he would throw me over stairs. I went away without reply, his curses and abuse followed me long afterwards. The servant, my conductor, screwed his mouth, and shrugged up his shoulders. "Never fear, says he, I will carry you to the *best of them all*." We went up an opposite stair-case, whilst I thought within myself, if those are their India manners, I shall keep my name and situation to myself while I am at Jidda. I stood in no need of them, as I had credit for 1000 sequins and more, if I should want it, upon Yousef Cabil, Vizir or Governor of Jidda.

I WAS conducted into a large room, where Captain Thornhill was sitting, in a white callico waistcoat, a very high-pointed white cotton night-cap, with a large tumbler of water before him, seemingly very deep in thought. The Emir Bahar's servant brought me forward by the hand, a little within the door ; but I was not desirous of advancing much farther, for fear of the salutation of being thrown down stairs again. He looked very steadily, but not sternly, at me ; and desired the servant to go away and shut the door. "Sir, says he, are you an Englishman?"—I bowed.—"You surely are sick, you should be in your bed, have you been long sick?"—I said, "long Sir," and bowed.—"Are you wanting a passage to India?"—I again bowed.—"Well, says he, you look to be a man in distress ; if you have a secret, I shall respect it till you please to tell it me, but if you want a passage to India, apply to no one but Thornhill of the Bengal merchant. Perhaps you are afraid of somebody, if so, ask for Mr Greig, my lieutenant, he will carry you on board my ship directly,

directly, where you will be safe."—"Sir, said I, I hope you will find me an honest man, I have no enemy that I know, either in Jidda or elsewhere, nor do I owe any man any thing."—"I am sure, says he, I am doing wrong, in keeping a poor man standing, who ought to be in his bed. Here! Philip! Philip!"—Philip appeared. "Boy," says he, in Portuguese, which, as I imagine, he supposed I did not understand, "here is a poor Englishman, that should be either in his bed or his grave; carry him to the cook, tell him to give him as much broth and mutton as he can eat; the *fellow* seems to have been starved, but I would rather have the feeding of ten to India, than the burying of one at Jidda."

PHILIP DE LA CRUZ was the son of a Portuguese lady, whom Captain Thornhill had married; a boy of great talents, and excellent disposition, who carried me with great willingness to the cook. I made as awkward a bow as I could to Capt. Thornhill, and said, "God will return this to your honour some day." Philip carried me into a court-yard, where they used to expose the samples of their India goods in large bales. It had a portico along the left-hand side of it, which seemed designed for a stable. To this place I was introduced, and thither the cook brought me my dinner. Several of the English from the vessels, lascars, and others, came in to look at me; and I heard it, in general, agreed among them, that I was a very thief-like fellow, and certainly a Turk, and d——n them if they should like to fall into my hands.

I FELL fast asleep upon the mat, while Philip was ordering me another apartment. In the mean time, some of my people had followed the baggage to the Custom-house, and some of them staid on board the boat, to prevent the pilfering.

pilfering of what was left. The keys had remained with me, and the Vizir had gone to sleep, as is usual, about mid-day. As soon as he awaked, being greedy of his prey, he fell immediately to my baggage, wondering that such a quantity of it, and that boxes in such a curious form, should belong to a mean man like me; he was therefore full of hopes, that a fine opportunity for pillage was now at hand. He asked for the keys of the trunks, my servant said, they were with me, but he would go instantly and bring them. That, however, was too long to stay; no delay could possibly be granted. Accustomed to pilfer, they did not force the locks, but, very artist like, took off the hinges at the back, and in that manner opened the lids, without opening the locks.

THE first thing that presented itself to the Vizir's sight, was the firman of the Grand Signior, magnificently written and titled, and the inscription powdered with gold dust, and wrapped in green taffeta. After this was a white fatten bag, addressed to the Khan of Tartary, with which Mr Peyssonel, French consul of Smyrna, had favoured me, and which I had not delivered, as the Khan was then prisoner at Rhodes. The next was a green and gold silk bag, with letters directed to the Sheriffe of Mecca; and then came a plain crimson-fatten bag, with letters addressed to Metical Aga, sword-bearer (or Selihtar, as it is called) of the Sheriffe, or his great minister and favourite. He then found a letter from Ali Bey to himself, written with all the superiority of a Prince to a slave.

IN this letter the Bey told him plainly, that he heard the governments of Jidda, Mecca, and other States of the Sheriffe, were disorderly, and that merchants, coming about
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their lawful business, were plundered, terrified, and detained. He therefore intimated to him, that if any such thing happened to me, he should not write or complain, but he would send and punish the affront at the very gates of Mecca. This was very unpleasant language to the Vizir, because it was now publicly known, that Mahomet Bey Abou Dahab was preparing next year to march against Mecca, for some offence the Bey had taken at the Sheriffe. There was also another letter to him from Ibrahim Sikakeen, chief of the merchants at Cairo, ordering him to furnish me with a thousand sequins for my present use, and, if more were needed, to take my bill.

THESE contents of the trunk were so unexpected, that Cabil the Vizir thought he had gone too far, and called my servant in a violent hurry, upbraiding him, for not telling who I was. The servant defended himself, by saying, that neither he, nor his people about him, would so much as regard a word that he spoke; and the cadi of Medina's principal servant, who had come with the wheat, told the Vizir plainly to his face, that he had given him warning enough, if his pride would have suffered him to hear it.

ALL was now wrong, my servant was ordered to nail up the hinges, but he declared it would be the last action of his life; that nobody opened baggage that way, but with intention of stealing, when the keys could be got; and, as there were many rich things in the trunk, intended as presents to the Sheriffe, and Metical Aga, which might have been taken out, by the hinges being forced off before he came, he washed his hands of the whole procedure, but

knew his master would complain, and loudly too, and would be heard both at Cairo and Jidda. The Vizir took his resolution in a moment like a man. He nailed up the baggage, ordered his horse to be brought, and attended by a number of naked blackguards (whom they call soldiers) he came down to the Bengal house, on which the whole factory took alarm.

ABOUT twenty-six years before, the English traders from India to Jidda, fourteen in number, were all murdered, sitting at dinner, by a mutiny of these wild people. The house has, ever since, lain in ruins, having been pulled down and forbidden to be rebuilt.

GREAT inquiry was made after the English nobleman, whom nobody had seen; but it was said that one of his servants was there in the Bengal house; I was sitting drinking coffee on the mat, when the Vizir's horse came, and the whole court was filled. One of the clerks of the custom-house asked me where my master was? I said, "In heaven." The Emir Bahar's servant now brought forward the Vizir to me, who had not dismounted himself. He repeated the same question, where my master was?—I told him, I did not know the purport of his question, that I was the person to whom the baggage belonged, which he had taken to the custom-house, and that it was in my favour the Grand Signior and Bey had written. He seemed very much surprised, and asked me how I could appear in such a dress?—"You cannot ask that seriously, said I; I believe no prudent man would dress better, considering the voyage I have made. But, besides, you did not leave it in my power,

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as every article, but what I have on me, has been these four hours at the custom-house, waiting your pleasure."

WE then went all up to our kind landlord, Captain Thornhill, to whom I made my excuse, on account of the ill usage I had first met with from my own relation. He laughed very heartily at the narrative, and from that time we lived in the greatest friendship and confidence. All was made up, even with Yousef Cabil; and all heads were employed to get the strongest letters possible to the Naybe of Masuah, the king of Abyssinia, Michael Suhul the minister, and the king of Sennaar.

METICAL AGA, great friend and protector of the English at Jidda, and in effect, we may say, *sold to them*, for the great presents and profits he received, was himself originally an Abyssinian slave, was the man of confidence, and directed the sale of the king's, and Michael's gold, ivory, civet, and such precious commodities, that are paid to them in kind; he furnished Michael, likewise, with returns in fire-arms; and this had enabled Michael to subdue Abyssinia, murder the king his master, and seat another on his throne.

ON the other hand, the Naybe of Masuah, whose island belonged to the Grand Signior, and was an appendage of the government of the Bascha of Jidda, had endeavoured to withdraw himself from his allegiance, and set up for independency. He paid no tribute, nor could the Bascha, who had no troops, force him, as he was on the Abyssinian side of the Red Sea. Metical Aga, however, and the Bascha, at last agreed; the latter ceded to the former the island and territory of Masuah, for a fixed sum annually;

and Metical Aga appointed Michael, governor of Tigré, receiver of his rents. The Naybe no sooner found that he was to account to Michael, than he was glad to pay his tribute, and give presents to the bargain; for Tigré was the province from which he drew his sustenance, and Michael could have over-run his whole territory in eight days, which once, as we shall see hereafter, belonged to Abyssinia. Metical's power being then universally acknowledged and known, the next thing was to get him to make use of it in my favour.

WE knew of how little avail the ordinary futile recommendations of letters were. We were veteran travellers, and knew the style of the East too well, to be duped by letters of mere civility. There is no people on the earth more perfectly polite in their correspondence with one another, than are those of the East; but their civility means little more than the same sort of expressions do in Europe, to shew you that the writer is a well-bred man. But this would by no means do in a journey so long, so dangerous, and so serious as mine.

WE, therefore, set about procuring effective letters, letters of business and engagement, between man and man; and we all endeavoured to make Metical Aga a very good man, but no great head-piece, comprehend this perfectly. My letters from Ali Bey opened the affair to him, and first commanded his attention. A very handsome present of pistols, which I brought him, inclined him in my favour, because, as I was bearer of letters from his superior, I might have declined bestowing any present upon him.

THE English gentlemen joined their influence, powerful enough, to have accomplished a much greater end, as every one of these have separate friends for their own affairs, and all of them were desirous to befriend me. Added to these was a friend of mine, whom I had known at Aleppo, Ali Zimzimiah, *i. e.* 'keeper of the holy well at Mecca,' a post of great dignity and honour. This man was a mathematician, and an astronomer, according to their degree of knowledge in that science.

ALL the letters were written in a style such as I could have desired, but this did not suffice in the mind of a very friendly and worthy man, who had taken an attachment to me since my first arrival. This was Captain Thomas Price, of the *Lion* of Bombay. He first proposed to Metical Aga, to send a man of his own with me, together with the letters, and I do firmly believe, under Providence, it was to this last measure I owed my life. With this Captain Thornhill heartily concurred, and an Abyssinian, called Mahomet Gibberti, was appointed to go with particular letters besides those I carried myself, and to be an eye-witness of my reception there.

THERE was some time necessary for this man to make ready, and a considerable part of the Arabian Gulf still remained for me to explore. I prepared, therefore, to set out from Jidda, after having made a considerable stay in it.

OF all the new things I yet had seen, what most astonished me was the manner in which trade was carried on at this place. Nine ships were there from India; some of them worth, I suppose, L. 200,000. One merchant, a Turk, living

at Mecca, thirty hours journey off, where no Christian dares go, whilst the whole Continent is open to the Turk for escape, offers to purchase the cargoes of four out of nine of these ships himself; another, of the same cast, comes and says, he will buy none, unless he has them all. The samples are shewn, and the cargoes of the whole nine ships are carried into the wildest part of Arabia, by men with whom one would not wish to trust himself alone in the field. This is not all, two India brokers come into the room to settle the price. One on the part of the India captain, the other on that of the buyer the Turk. They are neither Mahometans nor Christians, but have credit with both. They sit down on the carpet, and take an India shawl, which they carry on their shoulder, like a napkin, and spread it over their hands. They talk, in the mean time, indifferent conversation, of the arrival of ships from India, or of the news of the day, as if they were employed in no serious business whatever. After about twenty minutes spent in handling each others fingers below the shawl, the bargain is concluded, say for nine ships, without one word ever having been spoken on the subject, or pen or ink used in any shape whatever. There never was one instance of a dispute happening in *these sales*.

BUT this is not yet all, the money is to be paid. A private Moor, who has nothing to support him but his character, becomes responsible for the payment of these cargoes; his name was Ibrahim Saraf when I was there, *i. e.* Ibrahim the Broker. This man delivers a number of coarse hempen bags, full of what is supposed to be money. He marks the contents upon the bag, and puts his seal upon the string that ties the mouth of it. This is received for what is marked upon it, without any one ever having opened

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ed one of the bags, and, in India, it is current for the value marked upon it, as long as the bag lasts.

JIDDA is very unwholesome, as is, indeed, all the east coast of the Red Sea. Immediately without the gate of that town, to the eastward, is a desert plain filled with the huts of the Bedowèens, or country Arabs, built of long bundles of spartum, or bent grass, put together like fascines. These Bedowèens supply Jidda with milk and butter. There is no stirring out of town, even for a walk, unless for about half a mile, in the south side by the sea, where there is a number of stinking pools of stagnant water, which contributes to make the town very unwholesome.

JIDDA, besides being in the most unwholesome part of Arabia, is, at the same time, in the most barren and desert situation. This, and many other inconveniencies, under which it labours, would, probably, have occasioned its being abandoned altogether, were it not for its vicinity to Mecca, and the great and sudden influx of wealth from the India trade, which, once a-year, arrives in this part, but does not continue, passing on, as through a turnpike, to Mecca; whence it is dispersed all over the east. Very little advantage however accrues to Jidda. The customs are all immediately sent to a needy sovereign, and a hungry set of relations, dependents and ministers at Mecca. The gold is returned in bags and boxes, and passes on as rapidly to the ships as the goods do to the market, and leaves as little profit behind. In the mean time, provisions rise to a prodigious price, and this falls upon the townsmen, while all the profit of the traffic is in the hands of strangers; most of whom, after the market is over, (which does not last six weeks)

weeks) retire to Yemen, and other neighbouring countries, which abound in every sort of provision.

UPON this is founded the observation, that of all Mahometan countries none are so monogam as those of Jidda, and no where are there so many unmarried women, altho' this is the country of their prophet, and the permission of marrying four wives was allowed in this district in the first instance, and afterwards communicated to all the tribes.

BUT Mahomet, in his permission of plurality of wives, seems constantly to have been on his guard, against suffering that, which was intended for the welfare of his people, from operating in a different manner. He did not permit a man to marry two, three, or four wives, unless he could maintain them. He was interested for the rights and rank of these women; and the man so marrying was obliged to shew before the Cadi, or some equivalent officer, or judge, that it was in his power to support them, according to their birth. It was not so with concubines, with women who were purchased, or who were taken in war. Every man enjoyed these at his pleasure, and their peril, that is, whether he was able to maintain them or not.

FROM this great scarcity of provisions, which is the result of an extraordinary concourse to a place almost destitute of the necessaries of life, few inhabitants of Jidda can avail themselves of the privilege granted him by Mahomet. He therefore cannot marry more than one wife, because he cannot maintain more, and from this cause arises the want of people, and the large number of unmarried women.

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WHEN in Arabia Felix, where every sort of provision is exceedingly cheap, where the fruits of the ground, the general food for man, are produced spontaneously, the supporting of a number of wives costs no more than so many slaves or servants; their food is the same, and a blue cotton shirt, a habit common to them all, is not more chargeable for the one than the other. The consequence is, that celibacy in women is prevented, and the number of people is increased in a fourfold ratio by polygamy, to what it is in those that are monogamous.

I KNOW there are authors fond of system, enemies to free inquiry, and blinded by prejudice, who contend that polygamy, without distinction of circumstances, is detrimental to the population of a country. The learned Dr Arbuthnot, in a paper addressed to the Royal Society*, has maintained this strange doctrine, in a still stranger manner. He lays it down, as his first position, that *in femine masculino* of our first parent Adam, there was impressed an original necessity of procreating, ever after, an equal number of males and females. The manner he proves this, has received great incense from the vulgar, as containing an unanswerable argument. He shews, by the casting of three dice, that the chances are almost infinite, that an equal number of males and females should *not* be born in any year; and he pretends to prove, that every year in twenty, as taken from the bills of mortality, the same number of males and females have constantly been produced, or at least a greater proportion of men than of women, to make up for the ha-

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* Philosoph. Transact. Vol. 27. p. 186.

vock occasioned by war, murder, drunkenness, and all species of violence to which women are not subject.

I NEED not say, that this, at least, sufficiently shews the weakness of the argument. For, if the *equal* proportion had been in *femine masculine* of our first parent, the consequence must have been, that male and female would have been invariably born, from the creation to the end of all things. And it is a supposition very unworthy of the wisdom of God, that, at the creation of man, he could make an allowance for any deviation that was to happen, from crimes, against the commission of which his positive precepts ran. Weak as this is, it is not the weakest part of this artificial argument, which, like the web of a spider too finely woven, whatever part you touch it on, the whole falls to pieces.

AFTER taking it for granted, that he has proved the equality of the two sexes in number, from the bills of mortality in London, he next supposes, as a consequence, that all the world is in the same predicament; that is, that an equal number of males and females is produced every where. Why Dr Arbuthnot, an eminent physician (which surely implies an informed naturalist) should imagine that this inference would hold, is what I am not able to account for. He should know, let us say, in the countries of the east, that fruits, flowers, trees, birds, fish, every blade of grass, is commonly different, and that man, in his appearance, diet, exercise, pleasure, government, and religion, is as widely different; why he should found the issue of an Asiatic, however, upon the bills of mortality in London, is to the full as absurd as to assert, that they do not wear either beard or whiskers in Syria, because that is not the case in London.

I AM well aware, that it may be urged by those who permit themselves to say every thing, because they are not at pains to consider any thing, that the course of my argument will lead to a defence of polygamy in general, the supposed doctrine of the Thelyphthora *. Such reflections as these, unless introduced for merriment, are below my animadversion; all I shall say on that topic is, that they who find encouragement to polygamy in Mr Madan's book, the Thelyphthora, have read it with a much more acute perception than perhaps I have done; and I shall be very much mistaken, if polygamy increases in England upon the principles laid down in the Thelyphthora.

ENGLAND, says Dr Arbuthnot, enjoys an equality of both sexes, and, if it is not so, the inequality is so imperceptible, that no inconvenience has yet followed. What we have now to inquire is, Whether other nations, or the majority of them, are in the same situation? For, if we are to decide by this, and if we should happen to find, that, in other countries, there are invariably born three women to one man, the conclusion, in regard to that country, must be, that three women to one man was the proportion of one sex to the other, impressed at the creation *in semine* of our first parent.

I CONFESS I am not fond of meddling with the globe *before* the *deluge*. But as learned men seem inclined to think that Ararat and Euphrates are the mountain and river of antediluvian times, and that Mesopotamia, or Diarbekir, is the ancient situation of the terrestrial paradise, I cannot give

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* A late publication of Dr Madan's, little understood, as it would seem.

Dr Arbuthnot's argument fairer play *, than to transport myself thither; and, in the same spot where the necessity was imposed of male and female being produced in equal numbers, inquire how that case stands now. The pretence that climates and times may have changed, the proportion cannot be admitted, since it has been taken for granted, that it exists in the bills of mortality in London, and governs them to this day; and, since it was founded on necessity, which must be eternal.

Now, from a diligent inquiry into the south, and scripture-part of Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Syria, from Mouful (or Nineveh) to Aleppo and Antioch, I find the proportion to be fully two women born to one man. There is indeed a fraction over, but not a considerable one. From Latikea, Laodicea ad mare, down the coast of Syria to Sidon, the number is very nearly three, or two and three-fourths to one man. Through the Holy Land, the country called *Horan*, in the Isthmus of Suez, and the parts of the Delta, unfrequented by strangers, it is something less than three. But, from Suez to the straits of Babelmandeb, which contains the three Arabias, the portion is fully four women to one man, which, I have reason to believe, holds as far as the Line, and 30° beyond it.

THE Imam of Sana* was not an old man when I was in Arabia Felix in 1769; but he had 88 children then alive, of whom 14 only were sons.—The priest of the Nile had 70 and

* Sovereign of Arabia Felix, whose capital is Sana.

odd children; of whom, as I remember, above 50 were daughters.

It may be objected, that Dr Arbuthnot, in quoting the bills of mortality for twenty years, gave most unexceptionable grounds for his opinion, and that my single assertion of what happens in a foreign country, without further foundation, cannot be admitted as equivalent testimony; and I am ready to admit this objection, as bills of mortality there are none in any of these countries. I shall therefore say in what manner I attained the knowledge which I have just mentioned. Whenever I went into a town, village, or inhabited place, dwelt long in a mountain, or travelled journeys with any set of people, I always made it my business to inquire how many children they had, or their fathers, their next neighbours, or acquaintance. This not being a captious question, or what any one would scruple to answer, there was no interest to deceive; and if it had been possible, that two or three had been so wrong-headed among the whole, it would have been of little consequence.

I THEN asked my landlord at Sidon, (suppose him a weaver,) how many children he has had? He tells me how many sons, and how many daughters. The next I ask is a smith, a tailor, a silk-gatherer, the Cadi of the place, a cowherd, a hunter, a fisher, in short every man that is not a stranger, from whom I can get proper information. I say, therefore, that a medium of both sexes arising from three or four hundred families indiscriminately taken, shall be the proportion in which one differs from the other; and this, I, am confident, will give the result to be three women

to one man in 50° out of the 90° under every meridian of the globe.

WITHOUT giving Mahomet all the credit for abilities that some have done, we may surely suppose him to know what happened in his own family, where he must have seen this great disproportion of four women born to one man; and from the obvious consequences, we are not to wonder that one of his first cares, when a legislator, was to rectify it, as it struck at the very root of his empire, power, and religion. With this view, he enacted, or rather revived, the law which gave liberty to every individual to marry four wives, each of whom was to be equal in rank and honour, without any preference but what the predilection of the husband gave her. By this he secured civil rights to each woman, and procured a means of doing away that reproach, of *dying without issue*, to which the minds of the whole sex have always been sensible, whatever their religion was, or from whatever part of the world they came.

MANY, who are not conversant with Arabian history, have imagined, that this permission of a plurality of wives was given in favour of men, and have taxed one of the most *political, necessary* measures, of that legislator, arising from motives merely civil, with a tendency to encourage lewdness, from which it was very far distant. But, if they had considered that the Mahometan law allows divorce without any *cause assigned*, and that, every day at the pleasure of the man; besides, that it permits him as many concubines as he can maintain, buy with money, take in war, or gain by the ordinary means of address and solicitations,—they will think