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Travel

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A MILITARY TOUR
IN
EUROPEAN TURKEY,
THE CRIMEA,
AND ON
THE EASTERN SHORES OF THE BLACK SEA:

INCLUDING

ROUTES ACROSS THE BALKAN INTO BULGARIA, AND EXCURSIONS
IN THE TURKISH, RUSSIAN, AND PERSIAN PROVINCES
OF THE CAUCASIAN RANGE;

With *Strategical Observations*
ON THE PROBABLE SCENE OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

BY

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WITH MAPS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—Vol. I.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following pages have been written solely with the view of furnishing information on those countries which are now, or are likely to be, the scene of hostilities arising out of the present war. They are drawn up from memoranda made on the spot, chiefly in reference to military operations, and in anticipation of a future struggle between hostile armies. Hence more regard has been had to a careful delineation of the features, capabilities, and local peculiarities of the various regions described, and to the manner in which these may be turned to account in military operations, than to the composition of an amusing book of travels.

As regards the names of places mentioned in the several tours, and which no two European nations spell alike, it may be well to explain that in the case of well-known places, the spelling ordinarily used in England has been preserved; and all other names have been so spelt as to convey to the ear, when pronounced by an Englishman, the proper native designation.

Great caution has been used in respect to the names of official persons with whom the author was brought in contact, or from whom he received information, as indiscretion on this point might seriously compromise individuals to whose kindness and hospitality he holds himself indebted.

June, 1854.

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MILITARY TOUR,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Shores of the Dardanelles—Land Defences—Gulf of Saros—Hostile advance from Adrianople—Landing-places—Straits of the Dardanelles—Batteries at Nagara—Town of the Dardanelles—Koomkaleh—Excursion into Bulgaria—Chifliks—The Chekmagees—Irruption of Attila—Victory of Belisarius—Inaccurate descriptions of Baron Valentini.

IN the year 1836, I passed some time on the shores of the Dardanelles, where I was struck by the unprotected condition of the vast batteries on the European side towards the land, showing clearly that at the period of their construction, the Ottoman Government had only anticipated a naval attack from the powers of Western Europe. Even the recent Russian war of 1828-9, which brought the enemy so near the Dardanelles as Rodosto and Enos, did not arouse the Turks to a

sense of their danger from that quarter, and, in fact, as soon as the treaty of Adrianople was signed, the late Sultan ceased to think of defending himself against the Russians, and he was confirmed in this infatuation by the aid he received from the Czar in 1833, at the period of Mehemet Ali's defection.

In observing this great omission in the land defences of the Straits, I devoted my attention to the consideration of the peninsula which forms their European boundary, and it immediately occurred to me that, in the event of a new war with Russia, it would be most important to bar all access to this peninsula by land, if the nature of the country were favourable to such an object. Proceeding to the isthmus, which joins the peninsula to the mainland, I found that at one point between the Straits and the Gulf of Saros, at a distance of about six miles from Gallipoli, the land, which is here rather less than three miles in breadth, slopes down both on the side of the peninsula and on that of the mainland, forming a valley or hollow which runs nearly across the isthmus,

only interrupted in one place where a low and narrow ridge connects the opposite heights. This seemed a very suitable locality for a line of works, by which the peninsula would be rendered impregnable by land, whilst its defenders would be placed in secure possession of the neighbouring straits. Ascending at the same time a height in the line of the projected works, which resembles an artificial tumulus, I saw that the shore of the peninsula, along the Gulf of Saros, might also be easily protected by batteries. These remarkable topographical facts, placing the Dardanelles strategically in a new point of view, had been entirely overlooked by those military travellers, who had made this locality the subject of observation. I did not fail to comment upon them at the time; but as little attention was then bestowed upon anything connected with what has since become an object of such deep and absorbing interest, I usually found myself listened to with coldness and indifference, if not with absolute inattention. In the early summer of 1853, however, the case became

4 HOSTILE ADVANCE FROM ADRIANOPLE.

widely different, and being at Constantinople some time before the Russians entered the Principalities, I communicated fully, in an official quarter, where every representation which seems important to the service of this country is received with encouragement and acted upon with promptitude, all questions of a professional character connected with the defence of Turkey, which were suggested to me by the crisis. [See Appendix, No. I.] These, among other points, referred to the protection of the Dardanelles on the land side, should the straits be menaced from thence by an advancing Russian column from Adrianople, when our fleet might be elsewhere; and, indeed, a fleet alone, even if always present, could hardly exclude a land force from the peninsula, or avert the fatal consequences attendant on its occupation.

· An attentive and patient reception was given to my representations, and very soon afterwards I was assured, that no time had been lost in putting my suggestions in a way to be useful: nor did they fail to receive the

same attention at home [see Appendix, Nos. II. and III.], now that the situation of affairs had become so critical. Early in the present year, indeed, a commission under a distinguished officer of high rank and of profound scientific knowledge was despatched to Constantinople, where, after communicating with a similar assemblage of French officers, already arrived there, I had the gratification of learning that operations had been commenced by their repairing direct to Gallipoli, and selecting a line of defence in the very locality which I had so recently indicated; thus having the correctness of my views confirmed by the very highest authority.

There are several points on the neighbouring shores of the archipelago to the north-west, where troops could be landed without passing up the Dardanelles, and whence they could move direct upon Adrianople or its neighbourhood, which is the best position for a great reserve dépôt. Of these, Enos appears at first sight the most convenient, being nearer Adrianople than any other, with the advantage of being also

close to the river Maritza and its shores, which could be made available for the purposes of transport. The small gulf, or bay, in which Enos stands, is, however, extremely shallow; and that of Lagos, bounded by the Red Cape and Cape Fanari, is on this ground much to be preferred, having a depth of about nine fathoms near its entrance, and three fathoms even close to the shore; but the routes between Lagos and Adrianople should be well examined before they are used.

A few words may be said on the straits of the Dardanelles generally, which are nearly fifty-five miles in length, with a breadth varying from four and a-half miles in the broadest part, to less than a mile in the narrowest, at the point occupied by the town of the Dardanelles. The shores, from their windings and sinuosities, are peculiarly adapted for the erection of defences towards the water, which would be nearly impenetrable; but those now existing are insufficient to arrest the progress of a naval force, favoured by a steady breeze, even when not

aided by the power of steam. The wind, it may be observed, is generally with the current, which is very strong.

The strongest batteries, on both shores, have from the first been situated in the narrowest part of the strait, nearly at the town of the Dardanelles, and face each other. They are very ancient, and form the centre of the defences at that point, while numerous batteries, of a more ordinary description erected below them, are, though considerable in extent, placed so unskilfully, that it is believed an enemy could quickly render them untenable. Favourable situations are, however, by no means wanting, though they have not been turned to account; and batteries erected farther back from the shore would, from the direction of the heights, be able to enfilade in succession the length of the strait, keeping vessels under fire for a considerable time before they could return it. The batteries at Nagara, the ancient Abydos, should be greatly augmented; and the castles of the Dardanelles require to be extensively

repaired, and should, perhaps, be entirely reconstructed on more scientific principles. The monster pieces of cannon planted here on low platforms, without carriages, though of such large calibre, are of very little use; and their enormous stone balls, being thrown in a direction perpendicular to the strait, so as only to admit of a single shot being fired at a vessel in passing, are, on the whole, a useless kind of projectile. This armament ought to be exchanged for one thoroughly manageable and efficient, as the defence it affords is more imaginary than real, although, from other causes, a hostile disembarkation at this point would be extremely difficult.

The castle and batteries at the town of the Dardanelles, might be covered towards the land by an extensive regular fortification, which could sustain a siege in form, the space being sufficient for the erection of a bastioned fortress, while there are no heights so near as to command it to any decisive extent. Fort Nagara could be covered with equal facility by batteries disposed in several small fronts of fortification, which

might be erected where the ground affords a natural line of defence ; and a small isolated fort, and an enclosed battery, at the extremity of the plateau, would combine their fire with that of Nagara, constituting a land defence altogether baffling to any but a systematic attack by a powerful force.

Koomkaleh, at the mouth of the Dardanelles, on the Asiatic shore, admits of similar defences towards the land.* These strong points on that coast could, indeed, if thus strengthened, be held by the force which might have possession of the peninsula of Gallipoli, if an attempt should be made to turn the position on that side. Such are the opinions of all experienced officers who have visited this locality.

There are several harbours above the Dardanelles, on the European shore of the Sea of Marmora.† Of these, the best for the

* Since these observations were first penned, a square redoubt has been erected on a height behind fort Nagara, having its front towards the country ; two bastion-shaped works, which it commands, and another work, are in progress behind the castle of the town of the Dardanelles.

† Often spelt Marmara.

disembarkation of troops, is Rodosto, and a little nearer Constantinople, Silivria, which is frequented by sloops of good size, and might receive supplies. The various islands in that inland sea also afford sufficient anchorage, as described in various books of sailing directions.

About the time that I visited the Dardanelles I made an excursion from Constantinople into Bulgaria, noting, as I rode along, all that appeared of professional interest in the country through which I passed. It was the beginning of November when I set out; but I found the passes of the Balkan quite practicable as regarded snow, though this is not always the case at that season. Excepting an occasional rainy day, I travelled agreeably enough over the plains on both sides of the mountains. On leaving the old Gothic-looking walls of Constantinople [see Appendix No. IV.], which, as they now stand, would afford very brief means of defence, the Adrianople road carried me over a bleak tract of undulating country, resembling our downs, but deeply furrowed in many

places with steep ravines, and showing few vestiges of habitation beyond an occasional chiflik, or farm-yard, enclosed by a solid wall, and generally containing several dwellings and sheds for cattle. These enclosures might often serve for posts, but they could hardly resist artillery ; although there is a method employed in the East of digging outside the wall a deep ditch, and throwing the earth up to a certain height against it, which would, in some degree, deaden the fire, at the same time that the ditch formed by the excavation adds an obstacle, compensating for the facility which the earth thrown up within would otherwise give to an escalade.

The road passes at no great distance from the shore of the Sea of Marmora, and at about ten miles from the city walls, I reached the crest of one of the elevated downs, commanding a view of an extensive lake, about seven miles in length by two in breadth, bordered with marshy land, and stretching from the sea into the country, in the direction of the ridge called the Lesser Balkan, which lies to the north.

The lake is separated from the sea, at its south-western extremity, by a low ledge, not many yards in breadth, traversed by the ancient highway, now in a ruinous state, and supported in some places on low arches, through which the brackish water passes and repasses, according to the direction of the wind between the sea and the lake. The causeway could easily be closed artificially, when seven miles of country would be rendered unassailable by an enemy; for although boats might navigate these lakes to a certain extent, its marshy shores must always render navigation difficult, even if such vessels were at hand, which hitherto has not been the case. This spot, which the Turks call Kuchuk Chekmagee, is designated by the Franks Ponte Piccolo, to distinguish it from the greater bridge crossing the isthmus at Buyuk Chekmagee, or Ponte Grande, the second lake, about six and a half miles further on towards Adrianople.

The ledge at Ponte Piccolo is about three-quarters of a mile in length; but the lake

expands very considerably further up, and at the distance of four miles is broken into a fork, each branch being fed by a stream which flows from the highlands to the north. Proceeding over the ledge, a country of heights and valleys, becoming bolder to the northward, extends for about six or seven miles, when the second lake, of equal length, but somewhat narrower than the first, presents itself, divided like the other from the sea by a narrow ledge supporting a bad causeway, the centre of which rests on the large bridge before mentioned. From the brow or crest of the heights above, which are lower than those at Kuchuk Chekmagee, but which command the ledge at a very short distance, a zigzag path leads down to the village of Buyuk Chekmagee. Standing at this point, the spectator is immediately impressed with the conviction of the great strength of such a pass, and of its immense utility to Turkey if turned to proper account, being, as it were, the abutment on which the left flank of a fine position rests, covering the capital from

an enemy in this direction—a capital which, once attained by a hostile army, would involve most probably in its own ruin the fall of the Ottoman empire in Europe. Yet the Turks do not seem to have ever noticed these natural defences, nor to have made the slightest use of them. Even the European officers in Turkey, at the period of the military operations of 1829, whose conversance with military science should have led them to discern these positions, could not have pointed them out to the retreating Ottomans; an omission, or rather oversight, which led to the most disastrous consequences, as the Turkish government, through sheer fear of the capture of Constantinople when the Russians were still distant, entered into the unfavourable treaty of Adrianople.

On visiting the spot after that period, I did not fail myself to draw attention to these positions, which appears to be the first specific notice they received. A recent writer, indeed, has described the locality as “that formidable position about twenty miles from the capital, so celebrated in his-

tory, where, owing to the nature of the ground, Attila was stayed in his march to conquer the Eastern empire ; and where, at a later period, the Huns* were signally defeated by Belisarius." In reference to this statement, however, it must be observed that, as regards the advance of Attila, Gibbon especially mentions that he was only arrested by the city walls of Constantinople, without alluding to any position whatever. The following is the passage in Gibbon :—

“ The armies of the Eastern empire were vanquished in three successive engagements, and the progress of Attila may be traced by the fields of battle. The two first, on the banks of the Utus and under the walls of Marcianopolis, were fought in the extensive plains between the Danube and Mount Hæmus. As the Romans were pressed by a victorious enemy, they gradually and unskilfully retired towards the Chersonesus of Thrace [the peninsula of the Dardanelles], and that narrow peninsula, the last ex-

Bulgarians.

tremity of the land, was marked by their third and irreparable defeat. By the destruction of their army Attila acquired the indisputable possession of the field. From the Hellespont to Thermopylæ and the suburbs of Constantinople, he ravaged without resistance and without mercy the provinces of Thrace and Macedonia; Heraclia* and Constantinople might, perhaps, escape this dreadful irruption of the Huns, but words the most expressive of total extinction, are applied to the calamities which they inflicted on seventy cities of the Eastern empire. Theodosius, his court, and the unwarlike people were protected by the *walls of Constantinople* [not the Anastasian wall]; but these walls had been shaken by a recent earthquake, and the fall of fifty-eight towers had opened a large and tremendous breach. The danger, indeed, was speedily repaired, but this accident was aggravated by a superstitious fear that heaven itself had delivered the imperial city to the shepherds of Scythia."

* Situated at the modern Erakler, forty miles beyond Buyuk Chekmagee.

Nor is the position of the Chekmagees indicated in the historian's description of the encounter between Belisarius and the Bulgarian horse, although, since it has been clearly pointed out by modern science, a note in Gibbon may, to a certain extent, be regarded as obscurely hinting at the locality ; and, indeed, it is only lately that any one has thought of giving it even this character. Belisarius is said by the historian to have entrenched himself at Melanthius, about twenty miles from Constantinople, and there repulsed seven thousand Bulgarians, by whom he was attacked. As far as the description throws any light upon the subject, this might have occurred in front, just as well as in the rear of the lakes ; and, in fact, with more probability, as he mentions ambuscades in the woods, and the woods are all in the front. He alludes, too, in the note, to a causeway and bridge built by Justinian over a morass, or gullet, between a lake and the sea ; and a causeway and fragment of a bridge, which I mention hereafter, are still existing in a similar situation near Silivria,

much in front of the position. The position, moreover, is almost twenty miles in length, and, consequently, its weaker points could never have been held by a body with a front of only three hundred veterans, while the four passes by which it is pierced require to be strongly occupied as long as they continue, as at present, unfortified.

It is open to great doubt, then, if this is the ground adverted to by Gibbon, and it is clear that it was never employed by the Turks, either in their earlier wars, or in the disastrous campaign of 1829.

A position, however, in the days antecedent to the discovery of gunpowder, and the consequent development of the modern system of military engineering, was, in every respect, very different indeed from what that term now implies. If those whom it behoves were, in the present day, to look out for positions with only a classical volume in hand, they might pass over unnoticed ground as strong as Torres Vedras itself, and possibly ensconce our forces in situations, once reckoned impregnable, but where they

would now stand the chance of suffering as much as they ever did during our most unsuccessful Indian campaigns.

Baron Valentini, who passes for a great authority, but whose description of this position and of that at Gallipoli is inaccurate and confused, begins by terming the district on the European side of the Bosphorus, the “*Thracian* or *Byzantine Peninsula* ;” and Constantinople is described as its “*réduit*,”—a term in fortification applied to a smaller but stronger work ~~within~~ one of greater extent,—whereas the city is, compared with the position of the Chekmagees, weak and untenable.

The portion of the Lesser Balkan between the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea, to the west of the Chekmagees, he designates as an *impassable* chain of mountains, although it is traversed by five or six roads fit for wheel carriages, and which are still uninterrupted by fortifications. He describes the wall of Silivria, built by Anastasius, and repaired by Justinian, as now forming, behind the valley of Tousladere, the principal

line of defence. But this fabric was upwards of thirty miles from Constantinople, as its huge foundations, all that now remains of it, attest, while Buyuk Chek-magee is within twenty miles. This, I think, shows that Valentini had a very indistinct conception of what were the true defences of the city, if, indeed, he had any idea of where they are to be looked for; and I believe, moreover, that he was the originator of the erroneous supposition that Attila was stopped in his course before he reached the walls* of Constantinople. If Baron Valentini was right in supposing, as he does, that Zabergan was beaten at the *Anastasian* wall by Belisarius, that event most certainly could not have occurred at the long lines of Buyuk and Kuchuk Chek-magee; and therefore he has not, any more than Gibbon, indicated specifically those remarkable positions.

As regards Gallipoli, although it is only a small, open commercial town, containing a castle, now completely in ruins, Baron

* That is, the city walls; not the walls of Anastasius.

Valentini calls it “a fortress and military port,” a *réduit* to the Thracian Chersonesus, which he describes as a tongue of land, from one and a half to two miles wide, and ten miles in length. Here, again, whether he employs the German or English scale of measurement, he is altogether incorrect, for the peninsula of the Dardanelles is, at least, fifty English miles in length, measuring from the extremity, opposite Koomkaleh, at the entrance of the strait, to a point on the Sea of Marmora, in a line with the head of the Gulf of Saros; while its extreme breadth is twelve miles, and its least, at the proposed lines some miles higher up the strait than Gallipoli, about two miles and a half. Neither does Baron Valentini say one word of the expediency of fortifying the isthmus by a line of works drawn across it, nor point out either the narrowest part of it, or the spot where the natural formation of the ground is most favourable for the purpose. On the contrary, his faulty and erroneous description of the peninsula and of the town of Gallipoli, as well as his allusion to the

remaining portion of the ancient Anastasian wall, the *Macrontichas*, which he brings from the neighbourhood of Constantinople to that of Gallipoli, are only calculated to impress the reader who has had personal experience of these localities with the supposition that in writing his account he has trusted entirely to books or hearsay descriptions, and has never paid them a visit ; while those who have not been on the spot can hardly fail to be misled by the narrative.

Few other military writers, in their schemes for the defence of Turkey, have until lately touched upon those positions, and even these few have rested little upon their strength. They were, however, like that of Gallipoli, distinctly pointed out in my memoranda at the time, and again in the representations which I made in 1853 [see Appendix, Nos. I., II., and III.], meeting latterly with attention on both points. At the beginning of the present year they were noticed by Col. Chesney, and about the same time visited by the French and English Engineer Commission.

CHAPTER II.

Aqueducts and Reservoirs—Chatsalda—Passes—Landing-places—Proposed Batteries—The Bosphorus—Buyuk-dereh—Buyuk-Liman—Kilia—Belgrade—Levend Chiflik—Roomeli-Hissar—The Asiatic Coast—Line of Defence—Blockhouses.

HAVING thus traversed the shore road from Constantinople to the lakes, we shall now, in continuing the subject of the defences of the city on the land side, describe the inland road towards the Balkan, which passes through Chatsalda; but only as far as that place for the present, as it is my intention to revert to the seaward defences on the Euxine, before leaving the vicinity.

Quitting the city by the gate of Adrianople, and leaving on the right the river Sydaris, vulgarly called the Ali-bey, which flows through a ravine into the Golden Horn, not far from where it receives the Barbysis (now called the Khèat-Khaneh-soo), the road

passes between the two great barracks of Ramish Chiflik and Daoud Pasha, situated about two miles from the walls,* where the Turks, looking much too near the city for its strongest defences, formerly erected field works, which, though fallen into decay, might, if repaired, serve as the scene of a last struggle with the enemy.

This neighbourhood is intersected by the subterranean conduits and lofty aqueducts which convey water from Kalfas, Kavaskioi, and other great reservoirs, to Constantinople ; and though, when I visited them, they were quite undefended, the Chekmagee lines, if erected, would effectually protect these works. The vast importance of preserving them will be understood when it is recollected that Constantinople is situated on the extremity of a wedge of land ill supplied with springs, or running streams, and in a climate where, at certain seasons, there is but little rain for months. During

* As to its ancient stone walls, they are so near the houses within them, that from any point whence they could be attacked with cannon, the city might be bombarded, and would very soon be reduced to ashes.

the wet season, the rains are collected in the reservoirs from a thousand small channels, descending from the higher tracts, and the supply is liberally dealt out to the water-loving denizens of the city, who, from their habits of frequent ablution, and almost hourly indulgence in large draughts of water, would be rendered miserable by even a partial diminution of their favourite element ; although, with their usual improvidence, they have suffered some of the other reservoirs situated within the city walls, and which formerly communicated with those without, receiving and storing their overflowings, to fall to ruin, when their preservation would probably have doubled the supply, and, in the event of attack, would have been of some utility even after an enemy had gained possession of the surrounding district.

Leaving the aqueducts behind, a country is now traversed resembling that on the parallel route already described, but in which the heights are bolder and the valleys more abrupt, while small towns and chifliks are of more frequent occurrence, and

the supply of water near the road is, by means of copious artificial fountains and occasional rivers by which it is crossed, considerably more abundant. This highly-defensible tract extends as far as the Chek-magee lines, which may be said to run from the two lakes on the Sea of Marmora, nearly to the fort of Kara-bornoo on the Black Sea, where it has in its front the salt lake of Derkos, and the narrow ledge dividing it from the sea which, no doubt, might be easily cut through, so as to admit the waters of the Euxine.

Our approach to the first of these lines, or that nearest Constantinople, is marked after passing a khan* and fountain, by the summit of a bold position on the Constantinople side of a river flowing through a deep ravine towards the lesser lake, and hence a view is obtained of Kuchuk Chek-magee and the neighbouring sea. Descending into the ravine, the road, which is generally good, crosses the river by a substantial stone bridge, close to which is a

* Caravansera.

fountain, and ascending the steep bank on the opposite side, passes a large walled chiflik where another position commences.

From this point we come on a succession of inferior slopes, dipping towards the lakes and marshes, each affording a position. One of these, about two miles from the Chatsalda marsh in its front, to which it extends, has in its course, a little to the west of the road, a small isolated height, well suited for a fort or telegraph, or rather for both. From this eminence there is an extensive view, embracing the second lake, with its town and isthmus, and several villages occur on both sides of the road. This locality is well calculated for the encampment of troops, being elevated above the marshes, and at the same time not distant from water.

Descending the heights, the road commences the passage of the marsh, by a narrow, ancient causeway, composed of square blocks of stone, often much displaced, and frequently intersected by the Karasoo and other streams, over which long stone slabs are placed, forming a species of bridge,

removable at pleasure ; thus adding to the other means available here for preventing the advance of an enemy.

A similar road leads also from Chatsalda towards Derkös, on the Black Sea, a distance of about ten miles, where the right of the lines described would rest near the Cape and fort of Kara-hornoo. Chatsalda is also about ten miles from the greater bridge, and fifteen or sixteen from the lesser, and unfortunately is in front of the lines, or it would have formed a good station for a depôt, or might have been the head-quarters of a force during the healthy season of the year.

By a perusal of these pages, and reference to the map and sketch, it will be perceived that the country extending from the sea of Marmora, to the right of the Chatsalda road, is very well secured. Thence to the Black Sea the heights become still bolder, and the valleys deeper, till the road crosses the Lesser Balkan. The course of the river Karasoo lies through one of the ravines peculiar to the country, which look like

abrupt cracks across the mountain ranges ; and of this peculiar formation the Bosphorus itself affords the most striking example.

A third pass to the right leads through the lines by the village of Kastana-kioi, and a fourth crosses the heights of the Lesser Balkan transversely, by a road which leads from it along the shore to Midia, joining one from the mouth of the Bosphorus. The three last-mentioned roads, as well as the Chekmagees, could, if strengthened by defensive works, be included in a position comparable with any existing.

We have now successively noticed the positions which constitute the immediate defences of Constantinople on the land side, and as long as they are not forced, there seems to be no danger of a hostile army reaching the city from the interior ; but it must not be forgotten that there are landing-places on the European side of the Bosphorus, within six miles of its mouth, in the bay near the village of Domusdereh, if not between that village and Kara-bornoo, where defences have yet to be erected for the effec-

tual protection of the capital. This is, indeed, for the moment secured by the presence of the allied fleets, but the chances of war may call them elsewhere, when the city would be exposed to the consequences of a possible landing of Russian troops, designed to act behind the forts and batteries on that side of the Bosphorus, which, like the Dardanelles, may be called a salt river, passing with a strong current from the Euxine towards the ocean. Nor in any event should it be allowed to remain in its present defenceless state, and the same remark may apply to the land defences of the Dardanelles.

It is true, the shore between Kara-bornoo and Domusdereh, is dangerous, except to those familiar with the intricate navigation, such as the Greek fishermen of the district, and vessels missing the mouth of the strait, a common occurrence, are very often wrecked there. The Bosphorus itself was chiefly fortified by European engineers, and its various straits and currents are commanded, though imperfectly, by batteries,

which can throw balls from shore to shore, rendering it almost impossible for vessels to pass through without sustaining serious damage; and I remember an experienced naval Officer, now an Admiral actively employed, having pointed out to me a spot upon the European shore, on a height a little above Istenia, whence heavy and well-constructed batteries could, in his opinion, send a fleet dismasted down the current to the opposite shore, towards which it directly sets, and where other batteries from the point of Chiboukly to that of Kandili, would riddle their unmanageable hulls as they floated down the stream. The existing batteries at the base of the abrupt heights which enclose the strait, were constructed before this branch of military engineering had attained its present state of perfection, when the art of taking advantage of the natural features of ground was not well understood, and when, indeed, the Ottoman Government had not much reason to expect very scientific attacks on this side of the capital by neighbouring powers. Some of

the works were merely constructed to repel the assaults of the Cossacks, at that time an independent people, and other similar opponents more or less barbarous. Even the batteries most recently constructed are upon the same plan, and but little better in point of efficiency ; while several places where the existence of currents and shoals invited the erection of powerful batteries are not turned to account, and the existing works, besides being ill-placed, are too small, and their fire does not cross.

The narrow tract of land through which the Bosphorus passes is intersected by a ridge, the termination of the range of the Lesser Balkan. The strait itself may be compared to a vast fissure in the country, cutting the ridge in two, and presenting on each side a rough section of its stratification. The whole length of the Bosphorus is about eighteen miles, and runs nearly from north-north-east to south-south-west, making several obtuse angles in its course, and forming shallow bays, where the influence of the different strong currents which pass through

it is not felt. The neighbouring country bordering upon it may best be considered in several distinct portions, taking the European and Asiatic shores as much as possible in succession. The former, as the side of the capital, demands our first attention. Commencing at Buyukdereh, therefore, we shall, before proceeding elsewhere, take the country which lies between it and the bay in front of Domusdereh on the Black Sea, near Kilia, closing the series of defensive works near the Bosphorus on that side:

Buyukdereh is situated at the foot of a rich valley in an extensive bay, one of the angles formed by the Bosphorus, about six miles from its entrance. Its fine harbour is free from currents, and from the outer anchorage commands a view of the upper reach of the channel as far as the Black Sea, and in the opposite direction as far as the battery just below Ingier-kioi, and above Chiboukly. This situation, with other circumstances, renders it a place of great importance, and its defence ought to be especially looked to.

Buyukdereh may at present be approached by land, from the Black Sea, by a march of five or six miles, there being no defensive works between it and the fort of Kilia, although, if a proper disposition of defences were made on the most commanding heights, the country is such as to admit of its being successfully disputed by a moderate force. There is also a road by Pyrgos, from the lakes, which is equally open. Even at Buyukdereh there are now only insignificant open batteries, situated upon the shore, and, like the rest, very accessible from the heights behind. About a mile above it, on the shore, is the fort called Delhi Tabia, consisting of a stone-fronted battery, mounting about thirty guns *à fleur d'eau*, from the flanks of which thin stone walls run a short way up the hill on each side, enclosing the space behind the battery on three sides, the battery itself forming the fourth. Within this area are barracks and other buildings, the whole exposed to the hill immediately behind, which rises at a very steep angle, so that shells, rockets, and even hand-grenades,

might be thrown from it, consuming the buildings, and driving the men from the guns. The hill is detached from the rest of the range, and might be fortified very advantageously. Delhi Tabia, like the other forts in the neighbourhood, has neither ditch nor glacis. Immediately behind, runs the road from Buyukdereh to Roomeli-Kavac, the site of the next fort; and opposite Delhi Tabia, on the other side of the strait, in a direction due south, comes the fort of Yousha, mounting fifty-one guns. This is partly an old stone battery, with a continuation to the right in fascine-work, such as is used in making dams, and the whole is surrounded by a wall to the rear, enclosing large barracks.*

All these contain long heavy brass guns, some of which, like those of the Dardanelles, are of very large calibre for carrying stone balls, and the rest, being generally mounted upon awkward low carriages, are incapable of

* The forts on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus are so like those elsewhere described, that further notice of them seems unnecessary.

much elevation or depression, and otherwise unmanageable.

Two deep valleys open behind Roomeli-Kavac, and a height beyond is crowned by the ruins of an old Greek or Genoese convent, a little in front of which the eye can sweep the battery below, discerning every gun within, and having almost equal command of the battery of Anatoli-Kavac on the opposite or Asiatic shore, though from the greater distance this would probably be only attainable with shells. The heights near the shore on the European side are higher and steeper than on the other, descending at Roomeli-Kavac in precipitous rocks, which extend, with little interruption, to the lighthouse at the mouth of the Bosphorus, and along this shore there is hardly any road or thoroughfare.

The next fort above Roomeli-Kavac is Buyuk-Liman, mounting about twenty-seven guns, and having in its front a good anchorage free from currents; but it stands rather too high above the water to do much execution in such a situation, and could be easily

reached from behind. An interval of about a mile brings us to the fort of Karibgeh, mounting forty guns in two tiers, and which is more perfect than any of the others, while it has a better enclosure on the land side ; although in that quarter it is, like the other defences, without guns. Another battery follows at the village of Fanaraki, adjacent to the European lighthouse, and which mounts nine guns, while a little beyond the lighthouse, on the other side of the creek, is an antiquated loopholed fort, wholly unprovided, at the time of my visit, with artillery. There is no other work between this spot and Kilia, although there are several places fit for landing at the termination of the small valleys on the shore, where the beach is gravelly, and which are frequented by large fishing-vessels.

Kilia is a small square fort with bastions, but being without either ditch or glacis, the revetment is exposed from top to bottom. It is besides commanded from a height a little to the south where there is a windmill, and also by one in the direction

of three high square towers, which form an aqueduct for conducting water to the fort. Immediately to the west is a bay running towards Domusdereh, upwards of two miles in length, and affording good anchorage, the bottom being sandy, and sloping regularly from the beach, which vessels can approach within six hundred yards with perfect safety. The bay is sheltered from the south-south-east and west winds, and the north wind is not dangerous, while the quality of the bottom is said to be such that should a vessel ground, she would suffer but little. The fire from the fort of Kilia is not to be dreaded, as its battery, which might soon be silenced, is too distant to reach the western part of the bay.

To the north-west of Buyukdereh runs a range of heights, covered in part by the forest of Belgrade. It is a continuation in this direction of the mountains of the Lesser Balkan, from which the heights in the neighbourhood generally branch out, forming numerous valleys. Those terminating on the Bosphorus are, in general, steep and rugged,

but towards the Black Sea the descent is more gradual. The range is reached from the Bosphorus, through one of the valleys immediately behind the village of Sari-Yari, east of Buyukdereh, by a steep and winding ascent. This elevated point is marked by a single high tree, where a fort would close the ravine, and, at the same time, be a key to the vicinity of Buyukdereh, which, as before intimated, is approached by several roads passing through the valley, some of which are practicable for wheel-carriages.* In a north-easterly direction from this spot the heights extend to Fanaraki, forming the European enclosure of the Bosphorus, over the batteries already described. In a westerly direction they become very important, running at an angle with the other ridge, between the landing-place near Domusdereh and the reservoirs at Belgrade. A commanding point on the last-mentioned ridge is marked by an old square

* Those who desire further information in reference to this ground, will find some memoranda on the subject in the Appendix.

castle in its vicinity, called the Tower of Ovid, which the great poet is reputed to have occupied, during a part of his exile from Rome. The village of Belgrade and the reservoirs are about six miles from the shore, and twelve from Constantinople.

The reservoirs consist of large solid dams, formed of very massive blocks of stone, to arrest the water which, at certain periods, pours in very large quantities through the valleys, and this source supplies about half the water consumed in the capital. The limpid element is conveyed to Constantinople by a very elaborate and perfect system of conduits and aqueducts, which, in the event of a hostile occupation, might be seized by an enemy, and the supply cut off; or a threat to blow up the aqueducts might be used to induce a surrender, even if a defending force were between the enemy and the capital. The occupation and defence of the surrounding heights would be, therefore, of the utmost importance under such circumstances; and there can be no doubt that great facility would be given to the accom-

plishment of that object by a judicious system of works, erected at the most suitable points, such as the commanding position above alluded to, more particularly if the defence of Constantinople were to fall into the hands of a weak and not thoroughly-disciplined force.

If the position in front of Belgrade were to be abandoned, the general slope of the country, in the direction of Constantinople, would be found favourable to an advancing enemy, but there are still several positions of secondary consequence in the way. The most important of these is situated at Levend Chiflik, where there were formerly large barracks: it has its right near the Bosphorus, and its left towards the branches of the river Barbysis, which, as well as the Sydaris, passes, as we have seen, through deep valleys; and if an attempt were to be made by an enemy to reach the city itself from this neighbourhood, without crossing the Golden Horn, the banks of these rivers would present to a defending force on that side very favourable ground for their ope-

rations, though not so to one on their right bank.

The last point where any defence could be made on the Pera side of the Golden Horn, in its present state, is the ground lying between the Sultan's fishing-kiosk below Kheatl-khanch, on the river Barbysis, a mile or two before it enters the harbour, and the village of Ortokioi on the Bosphorus. The distance across may be three or four miles as the crow flies, but as a line drawn between these two places would pass over the heights and deep ravines which descend upon the Golden Horn, the actual distance may be estimated at five or even six miles. The table-land here offers great facilities to the advance of an attacking force, from the moment that the position last described might be forced. Quite open and unwooded, the ground slopes gradually towards the city, until it dips into the Golden Horn, at an average distance of not more than 1400 yards from its summit to the city on the opposite side, presenting toartil-

lery a great command over the very combustible wooden buildings.* Shells, hot shot, and Congreve rockets, could be thrown from hence, and the vast city would in a very short time be reduced to ashes. The heights, indeed, rise immediately over the only large Naval Arsenal which Turkey possesses, and if set on fire, the very sparks would, with most winds, place the city in great jeopardy, while the Ordnance Arsenal at Topkhana would infallibly share the fate of the adjoining suburbs of Pera and Galata, with which it is in close connection. Near these localities no natural disposition of ground could possibly be more favourable for the attacking force. Proceeding down the sloping table-lands, their flanks covered by ravines, and each tongue of land furnished with a good road leading to the south-west, the columns could pass on, even in the darkest night, as the locality has not so much as a show of defence, and the old walls of Galata would fall before a few rounds. The

* The base of these heights, forming the shore opposite Constantinople, is not more than 700 or 800 yards from it.

kernel of the line between Kheat-khaneh and Orto-kioi Tash, however, lies nearly at an equal distance between those places, and a large well-laid-out fort, if erected at this spot, might arrest the advance of an enemy for a considerable time, and would also support the position of Levend Chiflik in its front, greatly tending to turn the scale in favour of the defending force, even though inferior in numbers.

The forts on the Bosphorus below Istenia would soon share the fate of the heights in their rear. The first is Roumeli-Hissar, an old castle built by Mahomet the Second when he captured Constantinople, being the first spot of land which he occupied in Europe.

The Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, in its present state, affords, towards the Black Sea, facilities for disembarkment equal to those on the European side. A bay, called Anchor Bay, about six hundred yards from the castle at the Asiatic lighthouse, and Riva Bay, at a distance of about three miles, offer several points available for the purpose ; and while vessels near the shore covered

the operation, without being exposed to the fire of any battery, the troops disembarked might ascend the watercourses which run down into the bays, and by occupying the heights on this side of the Bosphorus, turn its defences.

To obviate such a risk, the Asiatic coast, from the castle at the lighthouse to the bay of Riva, should be protected, like the European side, by a redoubt on each of the two capes enclosing the bay; and an intrenched camp at the head of the watercourses would, by operating on his front and flank, check the advance of an enemy. Should the difficulty of making a descent so near Constantinople, and in a country deficient in supplies, appear too great, an enemy might possibly effect a landing in one of the bays near the river Sangarias, when a system similar to that recommended on the European side ought to be adopted. At some points, small well-placed forts and intrenched batteries, and central supporting positions at others, carefully selected and strengthened, from whence a disembarking enemy

could be assailed and arrested in his march, are the means to be employed on both shores near the strait. The Asiatic side offers two excellent lines of defence on which to retire, the outermost extending from a lake in the rear of the Sangarias to the Gallas, which might easily be intrenched: the other, crossing the isthmus between Nice and Nicomedia, which is only about seventeen or eighteen miles in breadth,* and being intersected by ravines, is very available for defence.

In case of the immediate vicinity of Constantinople being threatened on the Asiatic side, either by the advance of an enemy from the direction of Erzerroom, or in consequence of such a landing having been effected as I have supposed, the country presents an interior line of defence, commencing at the Bay of Chalcedon, without the suburbs of Scutari, and extending to Anatoli-Hissar, the first Asiatic castle

* It has been suggested, that the defences of these towns should be restored to serve as centres for two intrenched camps.

above the capital The suburb of Scutari is enveloped by a chain of heights descending from Mount Bourgarloo, and connected in an oblique line with an eminence near the castle, but beyond the valley in which it stands. Although, however, this elevated spot commands one of the narrowest parts of the strait, it ought not to be occupied, as it is itself commanded by a higher ridge; but about four hundred yards further on is a plateau, embracing a view as far as Therapia, which would cross its fire with the batteries on the European side; and here a fort, aided by another on Mount Bourgarloo, would enable the defenders to hold the enemy at bay, in a line extending from Chalcedon to the Giant's Mountain. All the positions, in fact, are very strong, being supported on both flanks by precipitous ravines, so that they might be held by a corps very inferior in number to that of the enemy, who would be obliged to occupy a very extensive line, while the defending force could confine itself to one comparatively very limited.

The advance of an enemy, even to the water's edge, would not, on this side, be at once so decisive as on the other, from the obstacle presented by the Bosphorus. Still the loss of the Asiatic forts, and the destruction of the villages and dwellings extending for nearly ten miles up the strait, which must be the consequence of such an advance, would be a very heavy calamity, tending much to the ultimate success of an enemy.

Even should nothing more effective be done, works on the heights behind are imperatively required for the defence of both shores, for which the only provision yet made is some small wooden blockhouses, erected in 1853, behind the fort of Youska, with six or seven similar constructions at other points, of which one was in rear of Roomeli-Kavac, on the European side. That at Youska appeared to me to be commanded behind by the Giant's Mountain, and all these blockhouses seemed mean and combustible defences. They are, however, provided with a small ditch and glacis, and

their roofs are covered with earth to deaden the effect of shells and other projectiles.

Having thus described the scheme for improving the defences of the two great military positions of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, which there is now every prospect of our seeing energetically carried out, and which will enable a moderate force to hold those two keys of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean for any period, I must not omit to observe, that so far from the suggestion of such fortifications being intended to imply that a defensive and inactive plan of campaign is the best, I am quite of an opposite opinion. But by rendering the positions of Constantinople and Gallipoli impregnable, even in the hands of a force not highly disciplined, the mass of the armies would be available for acting at a distance; and having a secure basis to the rear, could (as well as the fleets) leave these most important localities behind them, without any feeling of apprehension. Moreover, even in a time of profound peace, it is of the utmost importance that these

defences should be completed, so that fresh aggression may not be provoked, by a knowledge of the feeble and vulnerable condition of the very seat of government of the Ottoman empire, situated as it is in a locality, which, quite independent of its being around the capital, has the greatest political and strategical interest to every nation in Europe.

CHAPTER III.

Silivria—Karristan—Bulgarian peasants—Kuseli and Apsa
 —Adrianople—Route to Shumla—Yamboli—Carnabat
 —Site for encampment—Ford of the Kamchik—Advance post—Shumla.

I SHALL now resume the route towards Shumla from Buyuk Chekmagee, by Adrianople and Carnabat, and afterwards describe those from Chatsalda to Varna, by Faki and the Pass of Emineh, and the central route through the mountains by Aïdos and Nadir Dervend to Pravadi.

At Coomboorgos, a Greek fishing-village, four miles from Buyuk Chekmagee, and near the shore, the eye discerns to the right some extensive ruins, with several large towers in the solid Greek style.* This place is nearly opposite to the western end of the lake of Derkos, and this may be the ruins of Melanthius, alluded to by Gibbon, as there are no ruins of a similar character

* Made of large blocks of stone without mortar.

between it and Constantinople, and a structure of such importance can hardly have wholly disappeared. The village is now very poor, but we saw some good boats in the harbour. From Coomboorgos to Bevadios, a distance of three miles, the country generally is a fine grassy down, undulating and smooth, with here and there traces of vine cultivation. Bevadios is the ancient Epibaton, where a Greek fortress formerly stood, built by a rival of Cantakuzene, on the sea-shore.

Advancing from Bevadios towards Silivria, for three or four miles, the country becomes flatter, and, indeed, forms a plain, with the heights trending off to the right towards Yenikioi Serai, &c.

After traversing a swampy flat, crossed by an old causeway, still in good order, we passed a brook running from a small lake above, by a wretched wooden bridge, and observed in the bed of the stream an arch, formed of large antique blocks, cemented together with mortar, which had probably been thrown down by an earthquake. This,

were it not for some confusion as to distance, might be regarded as the bridge which Gibbon mentions as having been constructed, together with a causeway, by Justinian, and to which allusion is made in a former chapter. Silivria, the next town, is approached from the neighbouring heights, and is hardly seen till they are descended. It lies at their base, under a cliff, and is commanded by an old Romaic castle,* with towers like the Genoese castles on the Bosphorus, but in a dilapidated condition. The town is on the Constantinople side of the bay, which affords anchorage for large sloops. A fine but thinly-peopled and badly-cultivated country, low but not flat, extends beyond; and, during a ride of five and a half hours, we only passed a single chiflik and hamlet, composed of a few poor houses, chiefly inhabited by Greeks, near an old and low viaduct, crossing a brooky flat. Three and a half hours more, over ground of a similar character, were occu-

* By Romaic architecture, I mean of the period of the Lower Empire.

pied in reaching Chorlvo, a town of about a thousand houses. This place was occupied in 1829 by the Russians, who advanced as far as the bridge, their right halting near Rodosto, while their left was probably at Viza or Midia, though they had advanced posts much nearer the capital, at Yenikioi, and even Chatsalda.

Hence we proceed to Karristan, a journey of six hours, and find a town of about three hundred houses, boasting very perfect remains of an ancient castle. The country varies but little the whole way, consisting chiefly of extensive plains here and there, more or less marshy, and rather more uneven, with deep narrow brooks intervening, which would be some obstacle to artillery. The streppet, or small bustard, is met with here, often in large flights. The ground then becomes eminently calculated for the movements of cavalry; though the Turks, during their last war, do not appear to have turned it to account. Luleh Burgas is the resting-place for this night.

During the day we must have passed

nearly a thousand Bulgarian peasants, returning from the neighbourhood of Constantinople. The country, where we saw them, is flat, and has numerous tumuli, precisely resembling those in the south of Russia; and the Bulgarians, in appearance, language, and even dress, are very similar to the Russians of the south. Those we encountered perform yearly two marches, of from two to three hundred miles, carrying their knapsacks and scythes on their shoulders, and are fed badly, and sleep in the open air. Many of them seemed mere lads, and some, although stout fellows for their age, appeared hardly able to go on from lameness, but still kept their places in the file. Being Christians, they are not available to the Porte as troops, although very fine material.

Passing the Burgas, a river of some size, the road ascends a height, the first of a series of undulations, which continue through a barren country, then covered with long dry grass,* to Baba-Eskessi, four hours distant.

* In the early summer the grass is fine and plentiful.

Baba-Eskessi is a town of five or six hundred houses, with two mosques and a church. A great proportion of the inhabitants are Greeks. There is a large tumulus near the town, which seemed never to have been opened. The next town, about an hour's distance, is Kuseli, a small place of one hundred and fifty or two hundred houses. In the neighbourhood are several heights divided by brooks, and one, a few miles in front, has a brook before it, and another in its rear. The left flank is marshy. This is a spot where troops might retard the advance of an enemy. At three o'clock we reached Apsa, a better town than Kuseli, though it has but few more houses; and here we passed the night.

From this point, it is about four hours to Adrianople, the road still leading over a sandy country covered with dry grass. About midway there is a khan, with a handsome fountain pouring forth two copious jets of very fine water, derived, by channels, from some source at a distance. Soon afterwards the aspect of the country alters, the

road descending to the valley of the Maritza, or Hebrus, when the land becomes woody, and is covered with vines.

In the background appears Adrianople with its domes and minarets. The great mosque of Selim possesses four very rich and elegant examples of those slender towers, which rise to a great height, and are ascended by nearly four hundred steps, leading to several balconies, or galleries, which occur in succession during the ascent.

Adrianople is a town of about a hundred thousand inhabitants, and is not a place of strength, being merely surrounded with ancient walls, flanked with towers, resembling those of Constantinople. Like that city it is divided into quarters, and has a population of Mussulmans and Christians nearly equal in numbers. It has been suggested that, by forming an entrenched camp, embracing the confluence of the rivers which occurs at this spot, a force of forty thousand men could here arrest the progress of one double that number, advancing from the Balkan. The style of

fortification adopted at Lintz, in the Austrian territory, is recommended as the most eligible, namely,—the construction of a series of large towers, about twenty in number, so planned as to allow free egress to their occupants. This, however, is a kind of fortification, which, from its solidity, requires time to execute, and is accompanied with heavy expense.

The Turks made no resistance at Adrianople in the last war ; but the Russians, during, the period they remained there, suffered a loss of probably as many men as their opponents could have occasioned them during the most brilliant defence. Their sickness has been attributed to malaria ; which was most probably the case, as they encamped on low ground near the river, instead of on the heights which command the town ; and their occupation was during the unhealthy months of August and September, when the inhabitants are very subject to fever and dysentery.

The road through Sofia to Belgrade crosses the Maritza ; but the chief route to Shumla,

our present destination, keeps at some distance from its left bank, and at the distance of twenty miles passes through the village of Buyuk Dervent and its defile, when we enter a more hilly country, covered with a low oak copsewood. The road is now good and dry, though somewhat stony, and passes a counterfort of the Little Balkans, at a village of about a hundred and fifty small houses, called Kuchuk Dervent. The country continues to present the same features as far as Papas-kioi, a better village of the same size but on a larger stream, and at a distance of about four hours from the last. From hence the land is more open and flatter, and is intersected by frequent streams. There are, indeed, some hills on both sides, but they are distant; and to the left is the river Toonja, which joins the Maritza at Adrianople, and at this time was much swollen, presenting a serious obstacle. In little more than an hour from this spot we came in sight of the Great Balkan bearing nearly north, and not appearing very high. The approach is through lower and more marshy land, which

becomes still more so after passing a good chiflik and several houses to the right. The descent from the higher ground was met by the flooded river, which makes several turns, and at one was a dam and mill, the former hardly perceptible from the inundation. The road to Yamboli, a distance of one or two miles, was execrable, and full of large loose stones with much mud and water. The ground was higher to the right.

Yamboli* is a good Turkish town, and contains fourteen mosques, and six hundred Turkish and four hundred Raya houses.

Turning north-east, we now proceed over a very good road, towards Carnabat, through an undulating grassy country, and with the Balkan to our left, while other hills rise on the right, and in our front, at a distance of four or five hours. At first our left was flanked by a river, then by a very extensive marsh, whence the stream flowed, and

* A more direct but more mountainous road, to Carnabat, leaves Yamboli some hours to the left, and crosses the Lesser Balkan transversely, instead of at a right angle, like that described here.

which was covered with immense quantities of wild-fowl. Swarms of bustards appeared on the plain close to us. In about three hours we reach a village; and here, leaving the marshy land to our left, we proceed over a smooth undulating country, well fitted for cavalry. The marsh quite disappears about two hours before reaching Carnabat; and the road, turning somewhat to the left, ascends some elevated plateaus. Here we commence the ascent of the lower mountains; but the rise in the road is trifling, and is succeeded by some tableland of considerable extent, bounded on the left by the high Balkan. After an hour's ride a village is passed to the left, and a cemetery to the right of the road; and another hour brings the traveller to Carnabat, a town completely Turkish, both as regards its detestably dirty and stony streets, and the idle, coffee-shop habits of its population.

The route from Carnabat is directly north, over a marshy plain, extending towards a pass which seems to enter a low

range, while other mountains near Kazan are about twenty-five miles to the left. The plain is stated to be dry in summer ; but a raised causeway of a mile or two in length, shows it is sometimes under water. It occupies about an hour to climb the ascent to the first summit of the heights, which is flat and woody ; and the dwarf oaks there were still in leaf. About half an hour beyond is the small town of Samenlar, containing about a hundred houses ; and on the height looking down from thence, in the direction of Shumla, is some pretty. defensible ground ; but its left is low, though resting on a marshy tract. About twenty-five miles to the left is the Kazan Pass.

Clearing another village, at a distance of half an hour, still surrounded by a fine country, with good soil, growing corn and dwarf oaks, the road, which is cut on the side of the hill, has a deep glen on its right ; and here it might, for an hour or two, be made impassable for artillery, by blowing up a portion of the rock. From this place the ground slopes to Dobral (five hours

from Carnabat), through a fine woody space, suitable for riflemen. Two miles beyond the country opens, and presents a good plain slightly elevated, and very fit for encampment,—wood, water, forage, and grain being abundant, while the climate is cool and salubrious. On the 22nd November but little snow had appeared, lying here and there, partially melted by recent rains. Dobral is a good Bulgarian village, with but few Mussulman houses. The ground now ascends, and we pass on by a very fair carriage road, which had been rendered practicable for wheels by the Russians, and which, turning a little to the left, crosses a ridge, the highest part of the pass. For about an hour it then descends a little, and goes through a narrow gorge, having in its front an excellent position, with a counter-fort immediately before it, and several lower steps connected with it by a narrow neck, and flanked somewhat in rear by two other detached eminences, which are higher than it, giving the command, as it were, of bastions over a ravelin. Beyond

this is the river Deli Kamchick, a branch of the greater Kamchick—a fine stream, with abrupt banks, which runs round the advanced height, and the others in its vicinity. The road winds on, descending round the front of the heights, from left to right, and crosses by a ford which reached our horses' girths; but it is, no doubt, like all mountain rivers, liable to great variations in depth. Leaving the ford we proceed up a mountainous valley, having at first a stream on our left, which joins the Kamchick near the ford; and which, as well as several others, we cross, meeting on both sides steep rocky heights covered with wood. About two miles further on is a fountain, near a crest which descends abruptly to a brook; and thence we climb a steep rocky height, which might easily be made impassable for wheels, by breaking up the road, and making some redoubts, or batteries, to bear on the spot. This would then be an excellent advance post, to give time to any troops at Dobral to come up to the first-described position. On a summit

beyond are the remains of a battery, intended to sweep a piece of flat ground to the left of the road. But in Turkey such works are generally ill placed; and in this instance the road is altogether *defiladed* from the battery by irregularities in the ground; while the battery is itself commanded by woody heights on both sides. A short distance beyond the country opens, and shows a good convex-shaped small position, formed like an oyster-shell, with a brook running at its base, which is crossed close to a fountain. The intervening ground affords wood, water, &c.

Ascending the opposite heights, the road enters Chiali Kavak, a straggling village of two or three hundred houses, chiefly poor wicker constructions, plastered roughly without. A good many Turks reside here, and probably form about half the population. Above the village are woody heights, where the road was now a good deal flooded, with ice and snow in patches. The wood, which abounded, was chiefly the small oak, but there were many large trees in sheltered

places; and it may be well to remark that there seemed to be abundance of wood-game.

The descent is in front of the battery, by a causeway, said to have been made by the Russians, and extending for more than a mile. Some flooded brooks then presented themselves, when the road took a peculiarly steep turn over the rocky spur of the height. Another ascent fairly reaches the last ridge of the Balkan in this pass, and commands a good view of the plain around Shumla, flanked by its singularly-shaped and low, but fine table mountain, and its intrenched camp, with the town lying at the right of its base, but mostly concealed by the projecting flank of the height. The descent is between conical hills, terminating in a fine country, very soon showing hedges, vines, &c. Several easy ridges, of fine form, to the right, mark a position of tolerable strength. The road enters Dragoi-kioi, a good Bulgarian village, abounding in cattle, sheep, &c.; and then keeping behind some ridges, which had till now formed the boundary of a shallow

valley, traverses a low table-land, several miles square, and covered with rich grass as smooth as a bowling-green,—a fine locality for the movements of cavalry. There is a similar tract a little nearer the river. To the left of the road, further on, is an old low intrenchment, of a quarter of a mile in diameter, which commands a lower fall in the country between it and the river, a second branch of the Kamchick joining it a little above the Kinpri-kioi passage. It meets the road near some elevations, having the appearance of old intrenchments, but which are said to be natural, and is crossed by a good ford only reaching the saddle-girths, although now a good deal swollen. Several arabas drawn by buffaloes passed over at the same time.

The Shumla heights are approached by a good road, fit for carriages, as far as a gipsy village of about a hundred houses, when a very great change for the worse takes place in the road, and the stronghold itself is only accessible through a slough of loose stones embedded in soft mud. The vicinity of a

Turkish town, indeed, is always marked by the increasing badness of the thoroughfares. Passing a new bastioned redoubt to our left, with revetments in masonry, not then finished, we entered the double enclosure of Shumla, formed of earth, and partially stockaded. It is not high, and a large barrack appears over it. A gateway admitted us first into a cemetery, and then to a very foul and wretchedly-paved street—even worse than any previous experience had led me to expect in such a place.

I shall defer further observations on Shumla and its neighbourhood for the present, and describe the other route from the lakes towards the Balkan by Visa Kirkliissa and Faki, through the passes of Cape Emineh and Nadir Dervend.

CHAPTER IV.

Anastasian wall — Encamping ground — Visa — Boomar-Hissar — Kirkliissa — Road to Faki — Faki — Marshy ground — Gulf of Burgas — Occupation of Sizeboli — Line of coast — Roads — Bay of Varna.

THE route towards the Balkan, carried in Chapter II. as far as Chatsalda, may now be followed out.

The causeway hitherto followed traverses a flat country for some distance, intersected with brooks, crossed by slight wooden bridges much out of repair, although ruinous abutments remain as relics of more massive structures, while they testify to their ancient importance. To the left rises a steep but not high range; and soon afterwards, to the right, some conical heights, with flattened tops, present themselves, near a village. The country then assumes the appearance of an elevated grassy plain for several hours' journey, when a khan is reached, situated about forty miles from Constantinople.

Near this place are the ruined foundations of the Anastasian wall, where very large blocks of calcareous stone, cemented with mortar, lie chiefly below the surface, having been excavated, in many places, for the purpose of being burnt into lime; and to effect this object kilns have been erected in the vicinity. The left is now flanked by a woody embarrassed country; and, on the opposite hand, a distant chain of low mountains rather approaches the road, showing a break as of a plain between them, indicating the course of the river, which empties itself into the lake left behind. Bushy oak woods and sandy heights continue for a couple of hours, when the traveller arrives at another small khan, of a quadrangular form. At a little distance further on, the country slopes down to the south-west, from a point affording a fine view, to the extent probably of twenty miles. In the direction of Yenikioi (west) is an extensive and finely-sloped position, crowned by a plateau, and running down to a brook, which, at its foot, passes

through a ravine of moderate breadth, taking a south-westerly course. A branch of the ravine, also traversed by a brook, curves round, and envelops the left of the position ; but here the slope is gradual until nearly in rear of the heights. The right terminates at an extensive copsewood, with which it is partially interspersed ; and this, too, is protected by the brook, which also takes a bend round in that direction. The spot appears to afford good encamping ground, and the country beyond is hilly and difficult.

On crossing the brook, grassy downs are passed, and we enter the poor Bulgarian village of Yenikioi. The road, ascending through low copse, soon reaches a crest overlooking a fine open plain, suitable for manœuvring a large force. A sloping ascent for about an hour brings us to the town of Sarai, where the Russians, during their advance in the last war, erected some field-works facing towards Constantinople, and greatly injured the town by their occupation.

About two hours beyond is Chakoli, a village of about two hundred houses ; and

leaving two other villages to the right, a further ride of the same duration, over fine grassy ways, brings us to the ancient town of Visa, situated on a height overlooking a vast plain, bounded to the west by low regular eminences, and to the north and east by more elevated ground, terminating the fine range of mountains towards Midia and Iniada, on the coast of the Black Sea. Roads practicable for wheels cross the Lesser Balkan, from both Sarai and Visa, to Midia, which is distant about eight hours' journey from each place.

Visa, the ancient Byzantine city of Byzia, still retains many vestiges of its former grandeur in the shape of marble blocks and columns, and these are frequently met with, particularly in the old citadel, which rises above the town on a separate eminence, and even now possesses ruined towers and walls. The town contains eight or nine hundred houses.

Leaving Visa, we enter a noble plain, bounded by sloping and wooded heights. A road passes, at some distance to the left,

to Kirkliſſa, without going through Viſa. After a ſlight aſcent, the track is croſſed in the direction of the Black Sea, by a way practicable for wheels, leading to Midia and other places. At the diſtance of about three hours from Viſa we paſs to the right a handſome chiflik, and a cemetery, diſtinguiſhed by a tower-shaped building with a dome roof, ſaid to be a remnant of an ancient Greek church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, but now the burying-place of a wealthy Turkiſh proprietor. From hence there is a gradual deſcent on the Viſa ſide, and the road croſſes ſeveral brooks, flowing from the low mountain range to the front and right, while the left opens fine cultivated plains. Another hour is required for the journey to Boomar-hiſſar, where an old caſtle, ſtanding on a height above the plain, ſtill ſhows ſome ruinous walls and towers. After reaching the village of Ienai, about three miles further on, paſſing through woods of fine ſcattered oaks, ſomewhat reſembling an Engliſh chace or foreſt, we reach the banks of a ſmall river, with a favourable poſition

for encampment on its right bank, looking towards Kirkliſſa. The laſt part of the road now croſſes a rich and well-cultivated plain, and is quite fit for carriages until it reaches Kirkliſſa, a finely-ſituated town, about forty miles eaſt from Viſa, and rather leſs from Adrianople.

We had paſſed to our right a track ſtriking off towards the Euxine ſide of the mountain range, and at Kirkliſſa we were at the junction of the road from Adrianople, and the direct road from Luleh Burgas to Aïdos and the Balkan.

A long deſenſive line between Kirkliſſa and Adrianople has been repeatedly pointed out as a favourable poſition for arreſting the advance of an army from the Balkan; but it is admitted, even by thoſe who recommend it, that much artificial preparation in the ſhape of ſuch works as exiſt at Lintz, in the Auſtrian territory, would be required to render it available; and when its great extent is fairly conſidered, it muſt be apparent that ſuch an undertaking would be a very ſerious one, and would require conſiderable time for its execution.

Kirkliſſa, or the Forty Churches, is very prettily ſituated on the ſouth-ſiſtern ſlope of a height, a ſpur of the Leſſer Balkan, riſing at the commencement of a fine tract of country which extends towards Adrianople in a weſterly and Luleh Burgas in a ſoutherly direction. It is the firſt really good country which the traveller reaches when purſuing this route from the Great Balkans. Vineyards, enclosed with hedges, are everywhere to be ſeen, as well as other indications of a fruitful ſoil and careful cultivation, and the roads are comparatively good. I look upon Kirkliſſa as one of the beſt permanent ſtations for a military force, both on account of its ſtrategical importance, and from its healthy ſituation, while it inſures an abundance of ſupplies. It is diſtant from Iniada and Midia, on the Black Sea, about fifty miles, but the routes in that direction are not good. Luleh Burgas is about twenty-five miles diſtant, over the more level country which prevails on that ſide.

In Kirkliſſa are nine mosques ; the largeſt,

called the Buyuk Djami, is a pretty building, having its walls mantled with ivy. Though nearly in the centre of the town, and in the vicinity of one of the two large baths, it stands in the midst of a cemetery, a very unusual thing in Turkey. The chertzehs, or covered bazaars, contain many good shops. Kirkliissa* has the reputation of entertaining Russian predilections, probably for substantial reasons; a fact, of which I thought I could trace some indications.

At Kirkliissa we change our course (which has been from Constantinople nearly north-west), and, taking an almost northerly direction, enter a more rugged country, presenting on both sides mountain ranges of moderate elevation. The country, for the first four hours (twelve to fourteen miles) is not very difficult, as far as regards the road; but rocks rise around in detached blocks, like huge walls, which give the locality another character. At this distance we reach Erakler, a village of about one hundred houses, and possessing a mosque. It suffered considerably by fire when occupied by the Russian troops in 1829.

The road from hence towards Faki keeps along a ridge of quartzzy granite ; but though often ascending and descending, it is nowhere difficult, and is practicable, even in its present state, for carriages, though it would be greatly improved by a little timely repair, which, with so much weather-worn and friable stone ready at hand, might be very easily done. Few habitations are visible from the road, but the country is not destitute of cultivation ; and in similar localities, even in Italy, it is usual for the peasants to come from distant villages to sow and reap their crops, quitting the place when their task is completed. Continuing along the crest, we pass through a high and woody country, quite a forest scene, the trees generally fine, but interspersed with the dwarf or Valonia oak, producing the gall-nut, and so come to Faki.*

This town is chiefly important from its situation at the junction of several roads, one of which proceeds by the pass of Buyuk Derwend to Adrianople, while another leads

* Often called Omoor-Faki.

to Agteboli, on the Black Sea; another by Tirnowo to Iniada; a fourth through the mountains to Carnabat; and a fifth forms the continuation of the road we have been pursuing, branching into two at Karapoonar, twelve miles to the north-east, where one leads by Aïdos across the Balkan, and the other, very soon descending from the lesser range, proceeds to Burgas, on the Black Sea. From Faki we ascend by this route the high ridgy country last described, traversing a fine forest of large oaks; and then, on leaving Karapoonar, descend towards the Euxine, for the purpose of following the shore road to Varna by Cape Emineh, when a great change occurs in the character of the ground. Soon, indeed, the country becomes low and marshy, and the road, which is deep and rough, is conducted through the most swampy tract, as if its constructors had purposely avoided the drier slopes in the vicinity; and, in fact, it often so nearly resembles a narrow canal, that it suggests the facility of defending the neighbourhood which it traverses on the principle of Co-

horn—at least when viewed, as it was by myself, in the month of November.

The same sort of country, with a wretched soil, continues on this side nearly to Burgas, a distance of twenty miles from Karapoonar, when the road skirts to the right a large salt lake, divided from the bay by a gravelly ledge, along which runs one of those rude, oriental aqueducts, marked by their brick columns, which conveys fresh water to the town.

Proceeding along the bay, a slight ascent leads to Burgas, which is nearly surrounded by its waters, and by two large salt lakes (Mangris and Alakos) extending into the country in the direction of Aïdos; and which combine, with other local advantages, to render this important harbour one of the strongest natural positions on this coast.

The bay, or rather gulf of Burgas, is about twenty miles in extent, looking to the north-east, with a fine country in its immediate neighbourhood, and has a general depth of about twelve fathoms.

Good anchorage exists near the town, as well as to the south-east, at St. Nicholas; and there is an excellent harbour at Sizeboli, a little more to the south, enclosed by a headland and an island, which completely shelter it. Sizeboli is situated on the small cape just mentioned; and, though without defences itself, both the town and its harbour are commanded by a height, on which a redoubt was erected by the Russians last war, when they seized this port, and used it as a place of disembarkation for the troops, which marched into the interior, and reinforced the army of Diebitsch, after it had crossed the Balkan.

The occupation of the bay of Burgas, and the presence of the allied fleets in the Black Sea, now preclude the possibility of such a use being made of Sizeboli by the enemy, while this large bay, abounding with harbours, affords to ourselves the means of throwing in reinforcements and supplies in rear of the Balkan, as Varna does in its front. The Russians, indeed, occupied Sizeboli without interruption from the Turks, first in

small numbers, and then in force, before their columns crossed the Balkan; for they were well aware of the great importance of first having the sea open to them on their flank. Of so much consequence, in fact, is this, that it seems very doubtful whether they could advance to any distance from the Danube, now that this advantage is wrested from them. Varna and Burgas, viewed in connexion with their harbours, are the abutments, as it were, on which rest the two defending lines, one in front, and the other formed by the fortified passes within the range of the Balkan.

The great bay of Burgas is very capable of defence. Its northern shore throws out two small peninsulas, on which stand the towns of Ankhialoo and Messembria, both possessing good harbours, and capable of being rendered extremely strong. It is an eligible position for the great naval arsenal of the Turkish empire, and has been pronounced by nautical officers, who have visited both, as being far superior, except in strength, to the opposite harbour of Sebastopol.

From Sizeboli a road runs along the shore to Constantinople, passing through Iniada and Midia, into the defensive position of the Chekmagees, near Kara-borneo, and the salt lake of Derkos. The coast, as far as Iniada, and even beyond it, is mountainous, woody, and difficult, affording many favourable positions; but, notwithstanding the obstacles it presents, a Russian column proceeded along it unopposed in 1829.

Near Midia, twenty miles further south, the mountains recede, and the coast from hence southwards assumes a low and bleak appearance, bounded by red sandy cliffs, and skirted by sandbanks, within which mariners well acquainted with the locality can anchor, but there are no buoys or bearings of any kind for the direction of vessels. Iniada affords a good harbour, with deep anchorage. The coast, however, is so ill-defined by landmarks that, on one occasion, when going in a Russian packet-steamer from Odessa to Constantinople, which was commanded by an English captain, we ran along this shore for a distance of more than

thirty miles, supposing we were to the east, instead of the west, of the Bosphorus ; and the error was not discovered till we were in sight of Iniada, which is marked by a clump of trees, having been only six or seven miles from the Bosphorus when we committed our mistake, so that, including our return, we went sixty miles out of our course. The number of wrecks we past seemed to attest that mistakes of this description are very frequent.

Proceeding from Burgas towards the Pass of Cape Emineh, we keep in a northerly direction for some miles, to the right of the third salt lake, called Alakos, which has the road to Aïdos on its left.

Immediately over the town of Burgas is a sloping height traversed by these roads, and which, from its command over the harbour, and its natural glacis, affords an excellent position for a fortress. The vicinity is a grassy down, of moderate extent, reaching to the salt lakes, which seem to the eye higher than the sea, and are some miles in length. On leaving the ledge which divides these

lakes from the sea, the road turns east in the direction of Ankhialoo, over a flat but dry country, abounding in vineyards and grass lands; but on reaching the fourth lake in this neighbourhood, which is smaller than the others, the direct road to Cape Emineh keeps to its left, while the way to Ankhialoo strikes off over another sandy isthmus to the right. Ankhialoo, which possesses a good harbour and considerable commerce, would, like Burgas, be a strong position, if fortified.

For a mile or two the Varna road runs along the shore of the last-mentioned salt lake, and at that distance from the town reaches a large chiflik, enclosed by a wall, with four ruinous towers at its angles. It is called Cheemos, and belongs to a certain Sereeb Bey. For the next four or five miles we pass only a few timber-yards, when the road arrives at the sea-shore, at a bay usually strewn with wrecks, while the lower counterforts of the Balkan rise at some distance to the left. The country from Ankhialoo is low and sandy, but well clothed with vines.

Messembria, also on a small peninsula, as has already been observed, and in situation very similar in every respect to Ank-hialoo, is more ruinous, and has a poorer population. Its isthmus is low and narrow, and had some field-works erected upon it at the period of the last Russian war. The route from hence continues close to the water, along the hard sands of a deep but moderate-sized bay, and then ascends into a higher country, interspersed with sandy hillocks, producing very good wine, for which the chief market is Odessa. Leaving the bay, we commence the ascent of Cape Emineh, terminating after some miles in a summit, whence an extensive bird's-eye view is obtained of the gulf of Burgas and its nearest towns, and in the opposite direction the eye can penetrate as far as Varna.

This mountainous coast is highly picturesque; but, as some drawback to its attractions, is said to be frequented in the summer season by plunderers from the higher ridges. It abounds with roe-deer and other game.

Descending from the headland a village appears to the right, where, as the ground possesses a good command over the road in its front, field-works might stop the advance of an enemy. The heights are partially wooded, and at their base, towards the north, runs the Koozak-soo, a good river, which reached to our horses' girths. Two broken wooden bridges appeared to the right and left. A marsh extends from the river towards the beach, which is traversed by several running streams, but near the shore is sandy and firm enough for wheel-carriages. Then an ascent of about an hour, through woody glades of oak, carries the route to Esekli (a name which, I believe, is given to the district generally), and continues through much the same country, till the wood disappears, when it enters upon an elevated tract of fine but uncultivated downs, reaching, in about a mile, the summits of Capes Mavoro and Aspro (the black and white capes) at their junction, when a fine view is obtained of Cape Emineh to the south, the last step of the Balkan, where it dips into

the sea. This seems good and healthy encamping-ground for the summer season. The distance from Burgas is about forty-five miles, and the neighbourhood is sprinkled with Bulgarian villages; while a good Greek village of about one hundred and fifty houses lies in an upland valley to the right, in view of the sea.

After a descent, where we pass some wind-mills, the country becomes undulating and woody for several miles, when a brook in a meadow is crossed a little below the small Turkish village of Fundookli. The road then traverses a projecting bend in the coast, striking through woods, which in that direction terminate at a *depôt* for timber, and a building dock, not far from the sea, called the Terzanah. The timber in the neighbourhood is very fine for ship-building.

Some heights rise at about a mile's distance with considerable command, succeeded by a ledge or isthmus, presenting four or five miles of sand on the right, reaching to the sea, while the left consists of a woody jungle. Approaching the river Kamchick,

near its mouth, the timbers of a destroyed bridge, and the remains of some field-works, are seen close to the sea. The channel of the river, bordered by heavy breakers, may also be distinctly traced, after it enters the sea. The distance from this spot to Varna is about sixteen or seventeen miles. The track, as far as the river, is sandy, though marks of wheels are seen, showing it is practicable for carriages. The waters of the Kamchick being at the moment very high and no bridge in existence, we proceed to a ferry about a hundred yards from its junction with the sea, and cross in a small miserable boat, with the horses swimming behind. Then we ride over a low marshy country to some heights on the Varna side, affording an extensive view of the sea; and pass a village or two (Petroskioi and Aita), along a good but sandy road fit for carriages, but requiring a few repairs, which might be easily executed. The country continues elevated and open for about six miles, passing a point towards the sea near a fountain, well suited for a look-out station, as it possesses an excellent

view of the country all round Varna. A descent from hence of about three miles, through a woody country, brings us to a ledge, under a mile in length, and about half that in breadth, which separates the lake of Dewna from the bay of Varna.

CHAPTER V.

Passes of the Balkans—Ternova—Shumla—Fortifications
of Shumla—Citadel—Intrenched Camp.

THE pass of Nadir Dervend, which is situated between those of Chiali-kavak and Cape Emineh, was considered by early military writers the only route across the eastern part of the Balkans practicable for the passage of an army. An important portion, however, of Marshal Diebitsch's force, after crossing the Kamchick at Dervish Jowan, a short way above the ferry, followed the route by Cape Emineh to Messembria and Burgas; and the Chiali-kavak pass is now, as has already been noticed, practicable for wheel-carriages, and was much used during the last Russian war. In the second route, the direct road to Nadir Dervend branches to the westward at Karapoonar, and proceeds through a high country, much

resembling that on the Faki side, through Rusukasri and Benli to Aïdos, which stands at a point where several roads meet. One of these, turning to the left, leads towards Carnabat and Yamboli, and the Kazan and Chiali-kavak passes. Another, to the right, leads down the Aidosderch river, and between the salt lakes to Burgas. The last is that leading to Pravadi by the Nadir Dervend, considered by many to have been the greatest Roman pass.

The chief difficulties of this pass are on the Pravadi side of the Nadir Dervend, where it becomes very defensible; one branch of the road passing to the right, through a narrow gorge in the mountains, enclosed by lofty and rugged rocks, and descending through a defile of fifteen miles in length to Kiopri-kioi on the Kamchick; and another, which bears to the left, proceeding to Tchenga and Yenikioi, by a route equally defensible with the last mentioned, as far as Tchenga. Above that village are several large plateaus, well adapted for intrenched encampments. The Kamchick

is more easily forded near Tchenga than in the vicinity of Kiopri-kioi.

This country is considered to afford very strong positions. The routes from Yenikioi and Kiopri-kioi converge and meet at Pravadi, and from Tchenga a path enters the Chiali-kavak road a little on the Shumla side of that place.

Other passes through the mountains in this neighbourhood have been lately discovered, and minutely described; but there is great reason to doubt their being available, without much preparation, for military purposes. It is more probable that, as long as the other passes are held by a defending army, after being properly strengthened, no advantage would be gained on the part of their opponents by employing, in order to turn their position, paths more suited for the goatherd and his flock, than for the passage of a modern army, with all its cumbrous *matériel*.

It is recorded, indeed, that the Persians turned the position of the Spartan warriors at Thermopylæ by availing themselves of a

similar path; but could they have done so if either party had possessed even the lightest field artillery?

Next in importance to the west of the three passes already described is the Kazan pass, one branch of which commences at Carnabat, and, crossing the ridge, reaches Kazan, where it is joined by a more difficult road, ascending from Selimnia, and passing through Bash-kioi, a large Bulgarian village. From Kazan the route descending by Osman Bazar again separates into branches, leading to Shumla, Rasgrad, and Rustchuk. This pass, though bad, was used in the last Russian campaign, but chiefly by the Cossack corps.

Next towards the west comes the pass of the Demir Kapoo, or the Iron Gate, which crosses the Balkan range, at a great elevation (nearly 6,000 feet), and is little used. This route also is by Selimnia, and traversing the range, passes through the gorge—a very strong point—which gives the pass its name; and after reaching Stareka, it proceeds in several branches towards the Danube.

From its elevation and difficulty of access, this route cannot be generally counted on in military operations—but still it is practicable.

About forty miles further west lies the pass above Kusanlik, ascending from the banks of the Toonja to Shihska, and soon crossing the culminating point, where it descends by Gabrova; and one branch leads along the banks of the Yatra to Ternova, while another branch strikes off in a more westerly direction towards Rassova. The country on the Kusanlik side is described as rich and fruitful, and the route is much easier than those by Kazan. Once in the plains of Bulgaria, the roads may be said to branch off to every place of importance near the Danube.

It may be well to notice two other routes across the Balkan, although they cannot be said to afford great facilities for military purposes.

That next the Gabrova pass lies in a line between Philippopoli and Lofsha, a small town, in the direction of Nicopolis, and is

said to be exceedingly bad, and hardly passable. That which follows in the same direction lies in a line between Sofia and Rassova, passing on the Bulgarian side of the mountains, through the small town of Vratza, whence roads branch out to Nicopolis, Rassova, and Widdin. This way was used in 1829, by General Geismar ; who, having found a guide, marched by it from Rassova to Sofia, in order to get in rear of the Pasha of Scodra, near that place.

The last route to be described is the great road from Adrianople to Belgrade and Widdin, which is considered to turn the Balkan from the west, and is the easiest, though the longest route across these mountains.

This celebrated succession of comparatively easy passes may be said to commence about thirty miles to the west of Philippopoli, entering the gates of Trajan a few miles to the west of Tartar Bazardjik, a town on a branch of the Maritza, and descending, after crossing the range, to Ichtiman, which stands on a stream flowing towards the

Danube, they continue on to Sofia, which is considered to close the pass just adverted to.

Sofia, situated on a fine plateau, watered by the Isker, is a town of about thirty thousand inhabitants, chiefly Turkish, and is defended by a simple wall, flanked with towers, with a pasha's fortified residence in the centre; and notwithstanding its strategical importance, is by no means strong. In its neighbourhood are to be seen traces of the ancient Roman way, the track of which is still adhered to in the present route, keeping between the elevated ranges on both sides, and descending the Nissava and Morava to Nissa, situated at a distance of about eighty miles from Sofia, and a short way above the confluence of the two streams.

Nissa is another important strategical position, being situated at the junction of the great routes which lead to Widdin and Belgrade; but it is fortified no better than Sofia, and in much the same manner.

From Nissa, the route to Belgrade passes

over an easy country, near the banks of the Morova; and that to Widdin presents no great difficulties.

Having described the passes of the Balkan, I shall now endeavour to give a view of the first line of defence beyond; although this line, which may be said to have its left at Ternova, and its right at Varna, has been repeatedly the subject of description before.

Ternova stands in a deep hollow, of volcanic origin, on a plateau running into this concave declivity, and connected with the country above by a narrow precipitous ridge, covered with houses. The citadel is situated on a rock at its southern extremity, and communicates with the town by a bridge, the whole being surrounded by the river Yatra, a rapid stream, and considered to form a strong position. It covers the front of the Kusanlik pass, which is not one of great difficulty, though its defence is very important, more especially as routes from the side of Widdin enter the road to Gabrova in the rear, and consequently ex-

pose the defensive line to the risk of being turned in that direction.

Osman Bazar, though small in size, is the next place of any consequence on this line, being nearly equidistant from Ternova and Shumla, or about forty miles from each. The country is more mountainous on the Shumla side than on the other, and that fortress is approached through precipitous passes and deep forests, by a small Turkish village called Eski Juma.

I shall here resume my description of the remaining portion of the line to Varna, from personal observation, as well as from the best authorities who have treated of the subject.

Shumla is regarded as the strongest position in the Balkan range. It stands at the junction of several roads, which converge in that direction from the right bank of the Danube, and at the mouth of the two principal passes over the Balkans, as well as at the head of the valleys through which the Pravadi and Kamchik rivers flow towards the Black Sea.

Shumla, being in the direct line of march to Constantinople, has hitherto been the usual rendezvous of the Turkish forces, when on the eve of war with Russia. It is environed, to the north-west and south, by a vast crescent of bold heights, and towards the east by a marshy ravine, which empties its waters into the Kamchik. It contains about six thousand houses, the lower portion of the town being inhabited by the Christians, and the upper division by the Turks. It had long been surrounded by an enclosure of large extent, which ran up the heights to the rear, connecting it with an ancient fort or citadel, and which was flanked with small circular towers, capable of containing five or six defenders; but at the time of my visit, these defences, as well as later fortifications, had almost disappeared, in consequence of the operation of the treaty of Adrianople; and the works in general were in a very ruinous condition. The citadel, indeed, still existed, and might be regarded as the heart or kernel of the large intrenched camp thus formed. During the

last war, these defences were augmented by an extensive *enceinte*, chiefly of earth and palisading, erected on the heights, requiring many troops to defend it. The flat projections usual in Turkish defences, instead of bastions, to give a flanking fire, were numerous in this work, and a double line of redoubts was constructed on the most commanding points, in front of the continuous lines of defence, as well as other detached works on the western and southern sides, to protect the town towards the Balkan.

But, as has been observed, these fortifications were, to a great extent, removed, or at all events so levelled as to be rendered useless, some years after the conclusion of the last peace, and it was not till the recent renewal of hostilities that any steps were taken to put them once more in order. New redoubts have since been constructed on the undulating plain to the eastward, and great attention has been directed to the protection of that side, so as to connect its defences with those on the higher ground on the flanks and in the rear, where heavy batteries

have also been erected. Most of the works are furnished with guns mounted *en barbette*, commanding such points as an enemy could make available for the commencement of his approaches.

Still Shumla labours under the disadvantage of being in itself nearly an open town, surrounded with a chain of redoubts and other defences, and rather constituting a fortified position, requiring a large body of men to defend it, than a fortress which could, with a moderate garrison, resist a greatly superior force. And it has been often remarked, that this reputed stronghold may be turned to the west, by the route from Eski Juma and Osman Bazar, as well as to the east by the route from Pravadi to Carnabat, and at the same time that the defending force was blockaded by a corps from the Silistria side, an enemy's division arriving from Rasgrad by Eski Juma, and another from the Lower Danube by Bazardjik, might unite in very favourable positions in the valley of the Kamchik, near the villages of Eski Stamboul and Marash,

between Shumla and the Chiali Kavak pass, and intercept all communications with Adrianople and other places in the rear. It is very certain that, in 1829, the Russians not only cut off the communication of Shumla with Adrianople, but crossed the mountains, and marched there themselves. If the passes, however, had then been properly fortified and moderately defended, this might have been prevented. Previously, the Russians had always been arrested in their advance by the fortress of Shumla, as they attempted to possess themselves of it before entering the passes in its rear. The eastern side is the most accessible by nature, but the Russians on a former occasion scaled and crowned the heights, which form the southern portion of the crescent, and being unable to take up their artillery, they were soon obliged to abandon this position. As regards an attack, indeed, even the eastern side difficult of access, from its marshy broken neighbourhood, while the vicinity on all sides of mountain spurs, of such

great extent, present equal difficulties to an investment; and attempts made at that time to invest the place were, after considerable loss, obliged to be relinquished.

During the last war something of the same kind occurred, and these results have established among the Turks a very exaggerated notion of the strength of Shumla, which opinion has, in consequence, spread into Europe; but men of professional experience, who have visited the spot, have at all times been greatly disappointed with its real condition. Even an ordinary observer is astonished to find that the town is placed at the base of the heights, instead of having an elevated position within the strongest portion of its defences, entailing the necessity of an elaborate and extensive system of artificial defences below, to prevent an enemy from forcing his way into the place, or destroying its dwellings by bombardment; and the intrenched camp, with its small citadel on the mountain, seems so distant (more than a mile), and so inaccessible from steepness, as to involve great inconvenience and loss of

time to the garrison in passing between it and the town.

The small citadel, or fort, terminates the north-east extremity of the narrow plateau, which forms the summit of the heights. This work, which is of solid masonry, consists of two enclosures, shaped somewhat like a bastion, with a cavalier, thus forming a double *enceinte* at that spot. I have remarked the same arrangement in treble as well as double ranges of masonry, in the more extensive citadels at Corinth and Napoli di Romagna, and I believe this was the usual style of defence with both Turks and Venetians, at the period when these fortresses were erected.

The other Turkish works above, once extended along the edge of the plateau alluded to, and were connected with this fort (which is a well-constructed work of its class), and had a slope *en glacés* in their front, sprinkled with low brushwood.

The camp itself, notwithstanding its precipitous position, does not give the impression of having ever been very strong, and there

is a want of connection in it, especially between its most elevated portion and the works below, which must prove very detrimental in a defence. It seems as if the loss of the plateau would involve that of the whole stronghold, as the town and many of its detached defences are commanded from different parts of it. I remarked that the position of Koulefsha is visible from these heights; and it seems extraordinary that the advance of Diebitsch's force towards it from the Danube should not have been noticed and communicated to Redschiid Pasha in time, when returning from his ill-judged expedition against Pravadi.

The measure of blockading Shumla, and passing on with the main army, has been looked upon, by those who have written upon the subject, as the best which could be adopted, although it seems one of very doubtful expediency, if the possession of Varna, and a preponderance on the Black Sea, were on the side of the defending party.

Even though not impregnable, and liable to a blockade, the situation of Shumla must

always render it very important to contending armies. The valleys at the head of which it lies, run with a constant descent towards the gulf of Varna, skirting with their two rapid rivers the northern face of the Balkans, one passing through the lake which terminates its course, and finally entering the Black Sea at that fortress, and the other between the marsh already mentioned and the adjoining mountainous headland.

CHAPTER VI.

The last Russian War—Defeat of Redschid Pasha—His Retreat from Pravadi—Conflict with Marshal Diebitsch—Defences of Pravadi—Road to Varna—Bay of Varna—Fortifications of Varna.

ON leaving Shumla for Varna, the route passed near one of the detached forts at that time in progress, which is commanded from the heights behind the town, and afterwards by the remains of some well-constructed Russian redoubts, opening an extensive grassy plain, the scene of many affairs of cavalry during the last war. For about eight miles it resembles a racecourse in smoothness and elasticity; and although after the snows melt, and during the rainy season, it is said to become very deep and muddy, nothing could be more agreeable for the traveller than the ways between Shumla and Varna at this time. We reached Koulefsha, so

famous as the scene of the route of Redschid Pasha's army, about one hour after leaving Shumla, the distance being about seven miles. It is not very easy to obtain intelligible accounts of this action; but there can be no doubt that Redschid Pasha sallied forth from Shumla with a force of about thirty thousand men, to attack the Russians at Pravadi, which formed a fortified advanced post, as it were, to the fortress of Varna.

The Pasha failed in his attempt, and retired upon Shumla, followed, as one narrator asserts, by a single regiment of cavalry, supported by part of the Pravadi garrison, which pressed his retreat so much, near the village of Markofska, about half-way from Pravadi, that he was arrested by it for four hours in his march, having turned upon his pursuers, and ultimately repulsed them; while another statement—I believe, of German origin—sets forth that Redschid Pasha found at Markofska a “*strong body*” of cavalry, posted in his front with six guns, and supported by infantry in the rear. It is added that, although the Turks mistook this

force for the two corps under Generals Roth and Rüdiger, which were known to be in the neighbourhood, they merely attacked with their cavalry and some artillery, but quickly routed it, causing a loss of four hundred men and five guns to their opponents, but that the Russian infantry, more fortunate than the cavalry, which was destroyed, escaped to a neighbouring wood by "quickly changing front," and the Turks having thus opened a road across the mountain, continued their retreat. On reaching the Shumla side of the height, however, they discovered another strong Russian force occupying the defiles in their front, and consisting of not only the corps of Generals Roth and Rüdiger, but of a force amounting in all to about the same number as that of Redschid; Marshal Diebitsch having hurried up with a strong reinforcement from the besieging army in the neighbourhood of Silistria, on hearing that Redschid Pasha had quitted the fortress of Shumla.

Although the forces on each side are said to have been nearly equal, and respectively to have exceeded somewhat thirty thousand

men, the Turks had only about fifty pieces of cannon, while the Russians are averred to have had three times that amount.

Opinions vary as to whether the Grand Vizier could have regained Shumla without risking a battle, even with the loss of his baggage. Be that as it may, Redschi Pasha is reported to have attacked his opponents, after some delay, across the broken ground between him and the villages of Koulefsha and Chirkovna, where they were posted, and to have carried the position, and nearly cleared the plateau which they occupied, when, just as the remainder of the Russians were giving way, a body of hussars, under Count Pahlen, arrived most opportunely, and saved the army and its overpowering force of artillery from the impending defeat. No very distinct account can be obtained of the number of Russian troops so nearly routed; but it appears that it did not consist of their whole force, for now the "main body" began to come up from Matara, a village at a short distance towards Silistria. Their first attack was

made on the left of the Turks by fourteen battalions of infantry, with thirty-five pieces of cannon, and a lancer division with a twelve-gun horse-battery.

The Turks, whose field train is described as having been chiefly composed of siege-guns, drawn by oxen and buffaloes, are alleged to have suffered severely from the enemy's artillery, yet they succeeded in repelling this attack. By this time the whole Russian force had arrived in the strong position its commander had chosen, which not only outflanked the road to Shumla, but both sides of that occupied by the Turks. Under these unfavourable circumstances, the Vizier, with more valour than discretion, made a grand attack with his infantry on the right wing of the Russians, in hopes of forcing it back on the main body, and opening the road to Shumla.

A large body of Russian troops and guns had, however, been very naturally posted to defend this road, and Redschild Pasha was repulsed, and retired to his original position.

Having detached a division to Marask, in the rear of the Turkish left, Diebitsch, with his entire force, now made his final attack, chiefly directed against that flank of the Turks, doubtless anticipating that the flight which was soon to follow would take the direction of Shumla.

At first the Grand Vizier's army, again constrained to occupy the narrow portion of the valley, stood firm, and engaged with the enemy in a cannonade, in which it suffered to a fearful extent. This lasted till four in the afternoon, when it was terminated, most fatally to the Vizier's troops, by a catastrophe which has so often occurred in the military operations of the Turks, and which ought to make their allies cautious of too great an approximation to the Ottoman magazines, in the hurry and confusion of action, namely, an explosion of ammunition, which completed the catalogue of disasters, and was followed by a general *sauve-qui-peut*.

To show how difficult it is to obtain particulars of these campaigns, I may state

that two of our officers, of professional reputation and undoubted talent, who visited these countries while they were still in Russian occupation, differ most materially in their statements of facts as to this and other engagements; and while one was informed that previous to the battle, Diebitsch's force only reached Koulefsha in detached bodies, after Redschid Pasha had arrived there, the other learnt that the Russian commander was already formed in his position on the west side of the Koulefsha Hills at daylight on the 11th of June (the day of the battle), but disposed his forces so as to deceive the enemy as to their strength.

Again, in speaking of the final rout of the Turkish force, one states that the Grand Vizier, after in vain trying to rally his followers, cut a passage through the enemy with his cavalry, and reached Shumla by a circuitous road two days after the battle, followed by his infantry, who continued to make their way through the woods in small detachments, and also gained the fortress in

about ten days, with a total loss of only three thousand men, being little more than that given as the loss of the Russians.

According to the other account of the last Russian attack, Diebitsch, displaying his whole force, opened a tremendous fire on the Turks, and the rout became general, both among their horse and foot, the latter throwing away their arms, and some being seen to cling to the tails of the cavalry horses as they clambered over the hills; while the flight was so complete and instantaneous, that the Russians scarcely made a single prisoner; and that the Vizier himself, after gallantly striving to check the panic, was compelled to fly towards the Kamchik, with only a score of personal retainers, and crossing the neighbouring mountains, reached Shumla on the fourth day. It is added, that of the whole Turkish army engaged, few, except the horsemen, returned to their colours; but we are not told, either by this account or the other, what became of the Turkish artillery.

An hour after leaving the ravine at

Koulefsha, the traveller reaches the village of Markofska, which is surrounded by fine trees. The neighbouring country presents a peculiar appearance, being intersected in its smoothest parts by deep and rugged ravines, descending like cracks through the calcareous sandstone, which lies below the soil. When beginning to despair of reaching Pravadi, we suddenly came in sight of one of these precipitous openings in the grassy upland, disclosing in a valley below, of about a mile in breadth and of great length, a bird's-eye view of the town. Descending slowly, we were struck by the appearance of poverty and ruin which reigned around. Pravadi contained formerly about two hundred houses, chiefly Turkish, as may be inferred from its having possessed six mosques and only two churches; but all these have suffered greatly, having been the scene of a conflagration during the war.

No traces of its former strength were to be detected at the period of my visit, although, as we have seen, it resisted but a few years before the attack of Redschid

Pasha, with thirty thousand men, and fifty pieces of cannon.

We must turn for information respecting this subject to the contemporaneous authorities I have already quoted. One of these terms it an insignificant place, defended by a redoubt on the hill above, and garrisoned by five thousand men. "To storm this redoubt," says our author, "and then march into the place, would have been the work of an hour; but instead of so doing, it was cannonaded for three days without effect, and three days longer it might have been cannonaded, had not a Tatar arrived with despatches from the Pasha left in command in Shumla, acquainting Redschild that while he was endeavouring to take Pravadi from the Russians, they might take Shumla from him, as Roth was marching in that direction." The second authority gives a different view of the subject. Redschild Pasha's plan was, he says, "to endeavour to overwhelm General Roth and retake Pravadi, in the hope that after the fall of that place, and of some of the other forts, he might

possibly recover Varna, and, finally, relieve Silistria, assisted in this brilliant plan by expected support from Hussein Pasha at Rustchuk, in which he was, however, disappointed. Unable, in a first attempt, to make any impression on Pravadi, he retired with some guns he had taken and some prisoners to Shumla, but soon paid Pravadi a second visit with nearly the whole garrison of the former place." Our authority states, very differently from that first quoted, that Pravadi had been most carefully fortified by the Russians; an inundation covered by a battery protected the northern side of the town; a horn-work had been constructed on the commanding ground to the west; and the town itself, being surrounded with a wall flanked with *tenailles*, was perfectly defensible, notwithstanding its position in a deep valley.

All vestiges of these defences had disappeared when I visited it; but their erection proved its importance as a position in the eyes of the combatants. Redschild's attack is here said to have been irregularly made

from the heights north-west of the town against the crown or horn-work (it is called by both names), by a desultory fire from a battery, and by attacks of cavalry against the garrison, stated at eight thousand men. We have already seen what followed this unsuccessful attempt.

Leaving Pravadi, or rather its ruins, we proceed about a mile up the valley, enclosed in abrupt cliffs of sandstone, and, on emerging on the Varna side, find before us an exact counterpart of the opposite plain; so much so, indeed, as to seem merely its continuation, when the spectator, advancing about one hundred yards, loses sight of the declivity. Monastir, and several other Bulgarian villages, lie on the way to Varna, which may be twenty-five or twenty-six miles from Pravadi; the plain just mentioned extending for the first four miles. About half-way, a wooden bridge carries the road over the Varna river below a good mill, leaving the Lake Devna to the right, at this time reaching high upon its banks. There is a valley here broader than that at

Pravadi, and a little after crossing the river, we pass below the rocks which bound it on that side, and the shores of the lake. The country now opens, but continues undulating. We see in our front the bay and town of Varna, and the Black Sea beyond; while the Balkans rise to the right, and, at some distance to the left, a lower range of heights. Near the lake we pass remains of Russian intrenchments, and of a work resembling a horn-work, possibly a *tête de pont*, for close to Varna is a ledge separating the lake from the sea, near which are some low eminences resembling ancient tumuli.

At the town we found repairs in progress on the works; old walls being strengthened by earthen parapets, and so on, but somewhat rude in plan and execution. On the isthmus a new fort was nearly finished, also like a horn-work in design, but with a very long curtain, having a battery or *tenaille* in advance of it.

Varna, as I have before observed, is described by writers of the beginning of

the century, as being surrounded with a simple wall flanked with towers. It still bore marks of the presence of the Russian forces in the war of 1828, and of the destructive operations which followed. On the Shumla side, we had passed remains of the Russian redoubts erected round the place, at some distance beyond its own detached works, according to the system which they adopted in their siege operations here and at Shumla.

The repairs now going on were upon an extensive scale, but on a plan apparently of very doubtful expediency. The enclosure, which is quadrilateral, is about three miles in extent, and the portion to the north and west lying towards the land, and, consequently, that most liable to a regular attack, consisted only of a thin earthen rampart, with a narrow ditch of considerable depth in its front, reveted with masonry, but with no covert-way or glacis. Several forts, besides those I have alluded to, the plan of which it was difficult to understand, were in course of construction along the line of wall. It was

said that nine in all were intended to be erected, but only four were then begun, and the portion of the wall not flanked by these was very great. One at the north-east angle seemed to be intended for a star-fort, and another at the north-west extremity resembled a horn-work, or single front of fortification. At the south-eastern angle of the place is a fort or castle, with bastions, looking to the harbour, which is connected with the enclosure of the place in a similar style; but along the sea, to the eastward and westward, towards the lake, there is only a loop-holed wall in the Turkish style.

The bastions separated by long curtains, which existed on the land side previous to the siege, are described as having been very flat. Those in Turkish works are generally so, and the salient angle, where any exists, is so obtuse, that the faces of the bastion bear the appearance of a continued straight line.

It is said that one cause of the great loss sustained by the Russians, in the siege of 1828, may be traced to their engineers

having carried on their siege operations without the aid of ricochet batteries. This may, in some degree, be accounted for by the extreme flatness of the bastions and absence of a covert-way, ricochet batteries being usually erected in front of the flanks of the breaching battery, raised against the salient angle of a bastion or ravelin to sweep the *terre-plein* of its faces, and the covert-way in front of the counterscarp. The Russian attack seems to have been carried on, in great measure, by mines, which were also much resorted to by the defenders.

Very detailed accounts of the defence have been published, in which the besieged appear to have displayed much bravery, and the siege of Varna, however unscientific may be its fortifications, was protracted in all to a period of nearly ninety days, of which about a third part elapsed after a breach, said to have been practicable, had been made.* Seven hundred sappers, besides other labourers, were employed by the assailants in carrying on the siege, and sixty-

* Col. Chesney's Russo-Turkish Campaigns.

five guns, of different sizes, were brought into operation. The fortress fell, at last, under circumstances which warranted suspicions of treachery. I remarked that the interior of the town was higher than the walls, and to the north, the country beyond them also rises into heights.

The works of the town, as they now stand, are stated to coincide very much with the foregoing description. The sandy soil of which they are formed makes it necessary, at the angles at which their profile is constructed, to employ fascines to retain the earth, which equally applies to the detached redoubts lately raised some hundred yards further on ; and the usual objection to Turkish fortresses exists—that the circumference of the *enceinte* is so great as to call for an inconvenient number of defenders. The works, however, are said to be now well mounted with heavy ordnance, of more modern construction than formerly.

CHAPTER VII.

Belgrade—Current of the Danube—Frontier defiles—
Orsova—Trajan's Bridge—Widdin—Nicopolis—Position
of Passage—Sistova—Rustschuk—Giurgeva—Silis-
tria—Turtukioi—Ibrailoff and Galatz—Matchin—Tulcha
—Ismail—Readjustment of Boundary—The Drobrud-
scha.

ALTHOUGH descriptions of the line of the Danube and its fortresses, handed down with slight additions from one author to another, are by no means wanting, it would be an omission not to give in these pages a brief sketch of this important locality, notwithstanding that, at the time I was in Bulgaria, the Russian occupation of fortresses on the right bank, as well as a quarantine of some weeks imposed purposely to exclude travellers, prevented my personally inspecting it.

The first fortress situated on the Danube, after it becomes the Austrian boundary, is Belgrade, which was formerly considered the best Turkish fortress on the river, but its

situation on the Servian, and not the Bulgarian frontier, many miles above the Principalities, renders it a position not likely to be available during a Russian war, unless operations extend on that side. It has the form of an irregular triangle; one side being covered by the Danube, another by the Save, and the third lying in a curve towards the country, and having at its extremity a crown-work, called the castle. Towards the junction of the rivers is a citadel, on a rounded eminence, fortified with considerable regularity. The town, standing between the castle and the citadel, is enclosed towards the country by a bastioned *enceinte*, but on the other sides by curtains with redans, and, consequently, here are its weakest points. The side on the Save was attacked with success in 1789, but that towards the country effectually withstood the attack of the Austrian General Laudon, who is said to have made the parapet of his trenches too low and weak, owing to a want of earth; and as the Turks commanded these with a plunging fire, at about eighty paces from the

crown-work, their numerous artillery ought soon to have destroyed them.

A chain of heights runs along the Save, from the eminence on which the citadel stands, but soon turns towards the Danube; and it was from this point the place was attacked when besieged by Prince Eugene. It is reckoned the most accessible part for a regular attack, though the undulating and broken ground between it and the citadel would also favour the operations of the defenders.

The Danube's general course from Belgrade to the Dobrudscha is from west to east, but with a slight curve to the south, running nearly parallel to the Balkan range. The right bank is the highest and the most undulating, the Wallachian side being almost everywhere low and marshy. A little below Belgrade, the current, in a channel of seven hundred yards broad and eighteen feet deep, is four miles an hour. Towards the mouth of the river its speed is diminished one-half.

From Belgrade to Semendria the forts are

merely what the Turks term *palankas*, being at most simple enclosures with flanking towers, and they are sometimes only earthen works. Semendria is important simply as what the French term a *position de passage*, being situated at the point where routes branch out towards Adrianople and Silistria.

The right bank of the Danube is elevated and crowned with small heights, where excellent wine is made, as far as the junction of the Morava, the *Mons Aureus* of the Romans. Below this point the mountains on both sides approach nearer the river, enclosing it within granite rocks. Here the current is so strong that vessels can only ascend by tracking; and the channel abounds with large rocks, which sometimes show themselves above the surface. Both banks are precipitous, and enclose the defiles which communicate between Hungary and Wallachia, as well as Servia and Bulgaria, the roads being excavated in the sides of the rock—that on the right bank, in the form of steps, by Trajan, as an existing inscription

attests ; and that on the left, winding round an immense rock, which contains a cave, celebrated from the memorable defence of Major Stein, in a former Austrian war with the Turks. The river makes a great bend to the north at the entrance of these defiles, which terminate at its extremity, where the ruinous fortress of Orsova, situated on a small island in the river, separates Hungary and Wallachia. The fortress is a long quadrangle with redans, flanked with four bastions; and considered the key both of Hungary and Wallachia, though, from the conformation of the neighbouring mountain chains, its importance as a frontier fortress is, according to the general opinion, greater to Austria than to the neighbouring powers.

Here the frontiers of Servia, Wallachia, and Hungary all meet ; and the Danube presents for a time a noble sheet of water, but is soon enclosed again in a bed of granitic rocks, at a point where the Carpathians meet the lower spurs of the Balkan.

The navigation of the river, which is very dangerous at this spot, might, it is said, be

avoided, by re-establishing an ancient canal cut in the left bank. Below, between the villages of Castol and Czernetz, once stood the Trajan bridge, of which some piles and arches still exist, attesting the boldness and solidity of the work. The river here is about one thousand yards in breadth, and the bridge is said to have had twenty arches. It was situated at the extremity of the bend made by the Danube in its curve to the south, before descending to Widdin, where the mountains, retiring on the right, give passage to the Timok, which separates Servia from Bulgaria.

Lower down, on the right bank, between the Servian frontier and Widdin, there is a bomb-proof work of Austrian construction, situated on an island, and it is described as being well calculated for the defence of the passage across the river. Hence, it would have importance, should any attempt be made to turn the fortress, which is, however, improbable, as long as it is properly garrisoned.

Widdin, also situated on the right bank of

the river, is of a semicircular shape, the Danube forming the diameter. Its western portion was formerly regarded as the citadel, and the remainder as the walled suburbs. The fort is a long and irregular pentagon, flanked by five bastions; and the walls, once stated to be a simple enclosure with redans, is described by later writers as having seven bastioned fronts, with ravelins of tolerably regular construction, and a revetment of forty feet in height, as well as a covert-way and glacis beyond a deep and wide ditch, which can be filled and emptied at pleasure.

Widdin must, therefore, if this description is correct, be capable of making a very good defence on the land side; and it is defended towards the river by a rampart, with square towers at intervals. Between the town and the celebrated *tête de pont* of Kalafat, lies an island. Omar Pasha, being aware that the proximity of the island to Widdin rendered the safety of the *tête de pont* of much importance, enveloped it, at some distance on the side facing the enemy, with strong and

extensive additional works, forming a large intrenched camp.

From Widdin to Rassoza, the sole defences on the right bank of the Danube are Lom and another work, both described as *palankas*; and even at Rassoza there are only two detached works of a similar kind. The defences from hence to Nicopolis are equally weak and insignificant; so that, in a distance of about a hundred miles on the line of the Danube, namely, from Widdin to Nicopolis, no permanent fortress has yet been erected, though so necessary, whether to interrupt the passage of an enemy, to menace his rear if he advanced from the river, or to harass his retreat should he be obliged to recross it: and this is a deficiency which ought not to be passed over in silence by any one giving a description of the locality, for the benefit of those who may have to carry on operations in the neighbourhood of the Danube.

Nicopolis is built on a height, and is connected with the river by an irregularly-revetted enclosure of earthen parapets, and

a ditch flanked with flat bastions. On the left bank, according to former descriptions, is a *tête de pont*, said not to possess sufficient development, and which might be taken in reverse; but, as it is averred by a recent author that two forts, called the old and new castle, exist, both of which are commanded and protected by the guns of the place at the distance of nine hundred yards, and exactly opposite to it on the left bank, it is to be presumed that the defences there have been augmented.

Nicopolis is important as a position of passage, being situated opposite to where the junction of the Alout with the Danube opens the way to all Wallachia. An undulating plain extends from the town to the base of the Balkans, and was, in 1396, the scene of a famous and sanguinary conflict between Sultan Bajazet and King Sigismund of Hungary, in which the army of the latter was completely routed, and the King forced to seek safety in flight. The Turks were at that time better tacticians than their European antagonists, but sullied

their success by the massacre of their prisoners. Beyond Nicopolis, the hills bordering the right bank retire and approach alternately, and in the basins thus formed lie Sistova, Rustschuk, Turtukioi, and Silistria.

Sistova, at the point where the Yatras joins the Danube, is, like Nicopolis, enclosed with works erected at different periods, and built on heights; on one of which is a castle of ancient date, and the western acclivity is defended by recent constructions, consisting of long curtains, having earthen parapets faced with hurdles, flanked by semicircular bastions. In general, Turkish fortresses are a combination of old works, on a system which was approved at the period of their construction, strengthened more recently by imperfect modern works, still more imperfectly executed, and generally deficient in strength, and requiring many men to occupy them.

About forty miles lower down stands Rustschuk, which is commanded by heights to the south-west, within cannon-shot of the

walls; but these are stated to have been recently occupied with five detached bastioned redoubts, executed in earth, and armed with a mixture of heavy guns and field pieces. The regular enclosure of the place towards the country, consists of eight bastioned fronts, without ravelins or other outworks, which are revetted half-way up with masonry, and have a ditch and counterscarp; while on the eastern side of the town there is a bastioned citadel. It is alleged, indeed, that the old works in this direction have been dismantled, and a new area, which is connected with them, enclosed beyond, in order to command the plain, where it is traversed by the route from Turtukioi and Silistria. As, owing to the flatness of the ground, and the nature of the soil, which would afford the enemy great facilities in carrying on their operations, this side is very likely to be chosen for making an attack upon the place, it is desirable that the works within should not be left dismantled.

The front towards the river is very irregularly fortified, the engineer trusting,

doubtless, to the improbability of its being attacked, as the opposite town of Giurgeva (lately occupied by the Russians), was looked upon as a *tête de pont* covering it on that side. Between the two places lies an island occupied by a fort. Further on comes a pentagonal work in stone, protecting the harbour on the left bank ; and beyond this again lies the town of Giurgeva, forming a semicircle towards Wallachia, and which had been strengthened in its defences just before it was occupied by the Russians. All these works have been considered by some as without the range of the cannon of Rustschuk ; but batteries have recently been constructed, mounting on the right bank close to the river, guns which reach as far as Giurgeva, although distant two thousand yards, and from these the Russians, while occupying that place, were seriously annoyed by the Turks. It is, however, to be feared that Rustschuk, besides requiring much repair, is very indifferently armed for its great extent. Less than two hundred pieces of cannon, many of which are in a faulty

state, are said to have been lately present in a place four miles in circumference, and therefore requiring a large garrison, and a powerful armament for its defence. Rustschuk and Giurgeva have been compared, as regards situation, to Mayence and Cassel on the Rhine, but the party occupying the island, which lies between, might from thence batter whichever of these places was held by its opponent.* Rustschuk is said to contain as many as forty thousand inhabitants.

The next Danubian fortress is Silistria, containing about twenty-five thousand inhabitants; for Turtukioi, which has lately become celebrated in connexion with Oltenitza on the opposite bank, from Omar Pasha's successful repulse of the Russians, is not a fortified place, but owes its present strength to judiciously placed field-works, erected on both banks of the river, and on

* Published opinions certainly differ very strongly as to whether even the island is within reach of the cannon of Rustschuk; but we have, on the other hand, accounts of thirty-six-pounder guns having thrown shot from Rustschuk to Giurgeva.

the island between them. Turtukioi stands at the junction of the Argish and Danube, and is the best place for passing that river from Bucharest. Silistria has much importance among the towns of the right bank, from being, like Rustschuk, a chief commercial *entrepôt* between Bulgaria and Wallachia. Like most of the other fortresses, it is of semicircular form, the Danube being the chord, and the enclosure on the side of the country the arc.

Although the descriptions given by different writers of the works of this place vary considerably, all give an impression that they are neither regular nor strong. The older descriptions speak of it as being rather an intrenched camp than a fortress, having on the side of the country six earthen redoubts, connected by curtains with *chevaux de frize*, augmented on the river side by a small square fort, on a height flanked with four towers. By later accounts it is said to be surrounded by ten fronts of fortification, each having an extremely long curtain, connecting two small bastions, which

give an imperfect flanking fire on the ditch—with a scarp and counterscarp, possessing scarcely a relief of fifteen feet, the scarp having a hurdle parapet, and a row of strong palisades rising within and above its crest. There is a low and imperfect glacis, without a covert way or outworks of the usual description ; but, instead of these, there are three detached redoubts closed at the gorge, while a fourth stands at the western angle of the town, and the eastern extremity is guarded by a fifth, flanking the works on the river side, and giving protection to vessels at anchor. The neighbourhood, especially to the south-west, is said to command the works.

Beyond Silistria, the heights retire on the right towards the village of Kousgun ; and the Danube, bending towards Rassoza, forms a great curve, at the commencement of which is Hirsova, the next place of any strength ; and at its northern extremity Ibrailoff and Galatz. Isatcha and Tulcha are situated where the river resumes nearly a straight easterly course towards the Black Sea.

Hirsova is described as having previously to 1809 been a small place, simply defended by an old castle to the westward, and as deriving its sole importance from then possessing a permanent bridge of boats "the only one on the Danube;" but this led to the Turks adding to its defences, and constructing around it five bastioned and revetted fronts, surrounded by a ditch, having, however, a defective contour with several dead points, and being commanded by ground without, especially by the island below the town.

From Silistria to Galatz, the left bank is very low and marshy, and as far as Hirsova only a few miserable villages, inhabited by fishermen, are to be seen; but here we begin to discover at intervals isolated heights, which rise like islands from the plain, and on two of these stand Ibrailoff and Galatz. The right bank is little more elevated, and communication from place to place is frequently kept up by means of causeways, often inundated by the waters of the marshes.

Ibrailoff stands on the left bank, and the

height on which it is situated, sloping gradually towards the river, commands its course. It was originally a simple square enclosure, with towers at the angles, but this *enceinte* has since been surrounded with a bastioned pentagon, and a ditch eighteen feet in depth. The curtains, although carrying artillery, were not, when constructed, faced with masonry; but it is stated that both the scarps and counterscarps of the work are now revetted, and that it has a glacis and a castellated citadel within the western flank of the town, but no outworks. Matchin lies at some little distance from Ibrailoff, on the right bank, and is separated from it by some desert islands. It is said to be a small, but pretty well-constructed fort, surrounded with seven bastioned and revetted fronts of fortification, with a sort of citadel towards the Danube, on a height commanding the town. Matchin contains about fifteen hundred inhabitants.

At the bottom of the rounded curve, made here by the Danube, stands Galatz, on the left bank, in a corner, as it were,

of Moldavia, at the only spot where that Principality is washed by the waters of the river, and between the points where the Sireth and the Pruth flow into it. It is a great commercial *entrepôt*, having twenty thousand inhabitants, but has no fortifications except a castle, where the governor resides. At Isatcha, which lies beyond Galatz, on the other bank, to the east of Matchin, there is a small fort, surrounded by a town of two or three thousand inhabitants. It is the crossing-place for travellers going into Bessarabia, and is supposed to have been the spot where Darius passed into Scythia. Here, too, the first Russian corps, assisted by a dyke, made at the time by the neighbouring Cossack tribe, invaded the Dobrudscha in 1828.

From the ferry at this place, two causeways skirt the left bank, the best of which leads to the town of Reni, where the Danube first becomes the boundary between Russia and Turkey, dividing itself at some distance on into three branches, which flow through a low and marshy plain. The middle, or Sulina

branch, which is about two hundred yards wide, with a mean depth of eighteen or twenty feet, is the only one navigable for vessels of any size. There is a muddy bar at its mouth, where the water varies in depth from eight to ten or twelve feet, according to the care which may be taken to cause vessels in passing over it to drag a kind of rake astern, so that it can only be kept clear by constant attention.

The next fortified place on the right bank is Tulcha, which consists of a hexagonal work without ravelins, and an indifferent citadel. It is situated at an angle in the river, near to where the three branches divide; the two which lie to the south being defended by Tulcha, while the northern branch is guarded by the Russian fortress of Ismail and the fort of Kilia, from which that branch derives its name. Tulcha was the *tête de pont* of Ismail, when both belonged to Turkey; but since the acquisition of Ismail by the Russians, its proximity to that place is full of danger. Its works are said to present many dead points, and the neigh-

bouring ground is described as being unfavourable to defence.

Ismail, destroyed as a town by Suvarrow, and now resembling an intrenched camp, is about three miles in circumference, and forms a polygon, with a brick revetment, which reaches to two-thirds of the height of the scarp, with a ditch and covert-way.

It is very difficult to ascertain the recent condition of Russian fortresses ; but Ismail has been described as not having been strengthened with judgment since it changed masters, and its original plan has not been improved in the manner which its situation would have rendered easy, the curtains being represented as out of proportion, while the bastions abound in dead angles. It stands nearly on a flat, except to the north ; and care should have been taken in erecting new fortifications, to have left the heights on that side at a distance, as their proximity, by affording cover for an enemy's approaches, materially weakens the place, and the enclosure should at the same time have been extended towards the west.

The place thus corrected would have had the Danube to the south ; to the west a marsh ; and to the east would have included a height, from the summit of which a plunging fire could have been directed over the neighbouring country ; and, lastly, to the north, it would have had a solid front, commanding a view of the chief points liable to attack. It is highly probable, I think, that Russia may have profited by these opinions, since they were published by a French engineer ; and this point ought, when an opportunity occurs, to be made the subject of investigation.

The fort of Kilia, owing to its branch being hardly navigable, is thought of little importance, and I do not know the details of its defences. The channel of St. George, which is now the Turkish boundary, is about one hundred yards wide, and ten or twelve feet in depth, but the bottom is encumbered with mud. Subsequently to the last Russian war, an experienced engineer expressed an opinion that the line of the Danube possesses too many fortresses,

nearly all ill constructed ; and, indeed, the only bastions existing in these defences at that time, which he considered regular, were to be found at Belgrade, Widdin, and Ismail, and those places alone, in his estimation, were capable of withstanding a regular attack. He considered the space left without defence between these fortresses to be too great, and that the river, notwithstanding its enormous volume of water, presents a very insufficient barrier. The only fortress now Turkish, in fact, to which he attaches any real importance, is Widdin ; and he recommends that three new ones should be erected on a different plan, and all the old works, with the exception of Widdin, destroyed. As to the situations of the new forts, according to this authority, one should be on the Belgrade side of Widdin, and the two others in well-chosen sites on the eastern side of that fortress, between it and the Black Sea, one probably at Turukioi. As this officer, however, counts on Belgrade as a Turkish fortress, I presume that if his plans were carried out, four

instead of three new fortresses would now have to be constructed, when no Russian army could advance beyond the Danube without taking at least two of these strongholds as a preliminary step.

At a moment when the permanent defence of the Ottoman Empire is so great an object, I have thought it not inopportune to refer to these opinions, and I shall now say a few words respecting the Delta, or peninsula of the Dobrudscha.

The Dobrudscha may be said to commence at the remains of Trajan's wall, running between Tchernavoda on the Danube, and Kustendjeh on the Black Sea, which bounds it to the eastward, while the river flows round it to the west and north. An author, who has written on the strategical peculiarities of this neighbourhood, describes it as presenting four lines of defence, which might be successively occupied with advantage against an army crossing from Bessarabia. The first, covered at its centre by the town of Babadag, extends from Matchin to Kara-Kirman, a small ill-fortified place ;

the second, covered by Karasoo and Trajan's Wall, from Rassoova to Kustendjeh ; the third, covered by the town of Karazatch, from Kusgun to Mangali ; and the fourth, covered by Bazarjek, from Silistria to the port of Kavarna : all affording natural and artificial obstacles to an enemy's advance.

The last line is considered very important, from being connected, on one side, by Bazarjek with Varna, and on the other by Kainargi with Silistria ; and as presenting to an army in march towards Constantinople, a base of operation resting at once on the Danube and the Black Sea, where the port of Kavarna would be very useful for the disembarkation of supplies.

The wall of Trajan is, at the present day, traceable only by a succession of earthen embankments, such as are to be met with in the Roman camps in Britain ; but I do not know how far these could be made available in the construction of field-works. A chain of shallow lakes runs partially across this isthmus ; but as the ground towards the east is stated to be several hundred feet higher

than the sea, no canal could be constructed across it, nor can the Danube ever have flowed into the sea at this point, as was at one time supposed.

The northern portion of the Dobrudscha near Matchin and Babadag, is described as granitic, but southwards a porous limestone prevails, with a great scarcity of water on its surface ; and hence we find the Dobrudscha rather a desert region, and poorly peopled, though it is said to abound in horned cattle.

Kustendjeh stands on a promontory, where the limestone cliffs rise high above the sea, and shelter its small harbour, which possesses an ancient and ruined mole ; but it is shallow, having in many places only seven feet of water.

The great value of the Principalities to Russia, for purposes of aggression on Turkey, must be very apparent to every one ; Wallachia having been more than once the *place d'armes* in which she has assembled her invading army, while Moldavia is equally convenient, when the intention may be to cross the Austrian frontier. It is very

essential that, hereafter, these two large provinces should not remain in the anomalous position in which they have hitherto stood, and for this reason, the connexion of Wallachia with Turkey should be cemented, so as to be more real and distinct, thus establishing a strong frontier for her towards Russia, with an armed force always present, more proportioned to that kept up immediately across the boundary-line by her hereditary foe.

If the hostilities in progress are brought to the successful close there is every reason to hope for, it is out of the question, I should presume, that Russia can expect to retain possession of territories acquired by treachery and aggression, in defiance of the laws of nations, particularly as such retention would be dangerous to the peace of Europe. The point, therefore, to consider, and to decide beforehand, is, what line of boundary should be established between her and Turkey, as the strongest and best for the latter power, as well as for the neighbouring States bordering on Russia

The Danube, of course, would cease to be a Russian boundary; but Turkey, never possessing a very powerful or manageable military establishment, would be rendered less vulnerable, by a short well-defined frontier, properly fortified, than with one of greater length, more distant from the base of operations. From the sea to Galatz, her best frontier would be nearly that which now exists, with this difference, that the right bank of the Sulina, instead of the St. George's branch of the Danube, should be the limit of her empire in that direction. From Galatz a straight line might be drawn westward, which would join at the distance of a few miles the present border between Wallachia and Moldavia, and proceed with it till it intersects the Austrian frontier, where it passes along the Carpathian mountains. This new frontier would rest on the Carpathian range to the left, and on the Black Sea to the right, and would not much exceed one hundred and fifty miles in length. One-half of this distance is strong in natural defences, and already furnished, to a small

extent, with fortified places, bordering the river, and the construction of a few strong fortresses in well-chosen positions, between Galatz and the mountains, would complete a short and defensible boundary.

The protectorate of Moldavia is really of no value to Turkey, when weighed against the acquisition of a frontier, which would place her, for the future, in comparative safety against the constantly-repeated assaults of her enemy. Let her, therefore, resign it, as the present condition of Moldavia not only subjects that Principality, even more than Wallachia, to the risk of perpetually-recurring misfortune as the seat of war, or, at least, of foreign military occupation, but is also dangerous to the protecting power, and to the States in nearest proximity to her.

It will be perceived that a line drawn in prolongation of the frontier of the Austrian province of Galicia, would very soon join the course of the Pruth, and continue with it till its confluence with the Danube; or by trending a little to the eastward it would

meet the Dniester, and include Bessarabia. Why should not the protectorate of Moldavia, and even the territory of Bessarabia, be accorded to Austria, if she were to join heartily in a war of territorial settlement? No nation understands better the science of erecting fortresses; and even the Poles, if they knew their interest, ought to be happy to exchange the sway of Russia for a protectorate, at least, under Austria. Should, however, the Pruth, and not the Dniester, still continue to be the Russian boundary for a certain distance, then the Turkish frontier should be made to include all the branches of the Danube below Galatz, so as to restore Ismail and Kilia to the Porte.

While Russia can, by taking advantage of the situation of salient and wedge-like portions of her own territory, or by the occupation of weak countries in her vicinity having a similar configuration, penetrate, at any moment, the frontier lines of her neighbours, she must continue to possess not only a most baneful degree of underhand influence in such States, and the ready means of

exciting political commotions among the disaffected, as she is now doing towards the Adriatic, but be at all times enabled to rush suddenly across the frontier with an armed force, in any direction where she may think proper, to seize upon a territory to which she has no right, for the purpose of enforcing arbitrary terms opposed to the laws by which civilized nations consider themselves mutually bound towards each other.

A few concluding words may be offered respecting the Dobrudscha, as a possible scene of operations of the French and English armies.

The climate of that peninsula is so insalubrious as to afford a strong reason against making it a field even for the more active description of proceedings of so fine and valuable a force,—not very numerous, and brought, at so great a cost, from such a distance. Apart, however, from this important consideration, there can be no doubt that the Dobrudscha being cleared of its

present occupants, and the fortresses between the mouth of the Danube and the termination of the old Roman wall at Chernavoda, being taken, strengthened, and occupied by such garrisons as could be depended upon for their defence, would be a very great desideratum, with a view to a subsequent and more direct advance across the Danube into the Principalities. We may conclude that the Russians were fully aware of this fact, before they lately occupied that locality at such an expense of life; for although their Government is not much influenced by feelings of humanity, even towards its own subjects, when carrying on war, they are fully aware of the value of men and horses in relation to contemplated results, and of the effects produced on the success of a campaign by their loss. No doubt our men and our horses are of vastly more value to us than an equal number would be to the Russians; but there is a difficulty in finding any locality where hostilities can be actively carried on against that empire, which is not subject to some objection.

Supposing, then, it should be determined to drive the Russians from the Dobrudscha, it appears that an important, and even a preliminary step to a land attack would be to occupy the Sulina branch with such steamers as could pass the bar, armed with guns affording the longest range. These fairly in possession of the navigation, nearly to Tulcha, a rapid advance might take place from some healthy position in front of Varna, of as strong a corps as could be mustered, so that the risk of want of supplies and loss of health should not be of long continuance. Some picked Turkish troops, and intelligent natives, to assist in getting supplies, and in giving general aid, should form part of the attacking force, and, in my opinion, Ismail, although it is not within fire of the branch which we should chiefly use, ought to be at once reduced and occupied, and its defences improved, particularly those to the northward.

The portion of the Dobrudscha lying north of Babadagh, is understood to be higher, and consequently more healthy than its other extremity; and the rocks are granite instead of limestone, as in the south end.

The large lagoons called Raselm Bay, &c., which open to the sea in that vicinity, could probably be used by small steamers and ships' launches, or at least by smaller boats, for the transport of supplies, which could be brought up a branch of the Danube running into the lagoon. I do not know how near steamers could approach to Ismail, so as to assail it at long range, or for the purpose of landing troops, but I believe the depth of water in the Kilia branch, till fairly below that fortress, is quite sufficient. The reduction of Tulcha and Isacha—which the Russians are most probably already employed in strengthening—to command the Sulina branch at the former, and the part of the river at the latter place, which is so important, should not be delayed a moment after the undertaking may seem practicable. With their left flank threatened by the occupation of the forts of the Dobrudscha, their right flank still held at bay beyond Widdin, and the navigation of the river opened to Galatz, a much more favourable state of affairs would exist with reference to an advance into the Principalities than is now the case.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sinope—Trebizond—Starting for Erzeroum—The Dereh Beys—Mountain Paths—The Ten Thousand—Crossing the Snow—Stavros—Silver Mines—Ghumesh Khaneh—Baiboot—Route to Batoom—Necessity of Defences—Pastoral Country—Erzeroum—Hassan Kalleh.

SOME time after visiting Bulgaria, I left Constantinople in a steamer for Trebizond, with an English party proceeding officially to Persia. The weather was exceedingly fine, and passing rapidly on, we stemmed with ease the different strong currents of the Bosphorus, soon reaching the Black Sea, where evening found us in view of the wooded shores of Bithynia.

The voyage continued pleasant, and running along the Paphlagonian coast, in sight of the blue outlines of Mount Sagara, and doubling Cape Karempré, which presents a fine, bold, and thickly-wooded shore, we passed

several villages nestling in the valleys, which lay at the foot of the surrounding mountains. At intervals the soil appeared to be well cultivated, but we could discern no trace of a road along the beach ; nor did the traffic or communication seem to be provided for by water-carriage, as we saw very few boats.

Doubling Cape Sagra, we came in view of Sinope, since rendered so famous by the Russian massacre. The town, which is situated on an isthmus, is enclosed by ancient walls, resembling in appearance those of the suburb of Galata, at Constantinople ; and at its western extremity there is a castle, also of antique masonry. We rounded the peninsula, which is composed of high rugged land, near an isolated rock, rising a short distance from the shore, in water of about twenty-two fathoms depth, and immediately opened the fine harbour, which is well sheltered from the prevalent winds of the Black Sea. There are numerous rocks in the vicinity, apparently of volcanic origin.

Crossing the Gulf of Sinope, with a

similar shore to the south, we reached the mouth of the river Kizzil Ersmeck, the ancient Halys, which empties itself into the sea through a long, low delta of sandy soil, broken into numerous islands, covered with wood; which, in fact, almost conceal the numerous branches of the stream itself, and we should probably have passed the mouth without suspecting its existence, only for the discoloured appearance of the water, here seeming to be mixed with yellow sand. A fine amphitheatre of mountains rises in the background, shutting in the view, while the same low coast extends as far as Cape Oros, a bold mountainous promontory, somewhat resembling Cape Emineh, which terminates the range of the Balkan on the Black Sea.

We now cleared this coast, and sighted Trebizond, which is finely situated in a country rich in wood, highly cultivated near the shore, and backed by mountains. A small promontory beyond the town, guarded by a castle in a dilapidated state, forms one side of the roadstead, which ap-

pears to be very much exposed; and, on casting anchor, we experienced an extremely heavy swell. At the moment, indeed, the weather was inauspicious, and one of those heavy thunder-showers so frequent near the Caucasus, burst around us, almost shrouding the shore, which loomed through the haze in dim outline. It was not till the following day that we landed, when we established ourselves under the hospitable roof of the Vice-Consul, and enjoyed a few days' leisure on shore.

About a mile to the rear of the town is a remarkable isolated height, which I lost no time in visiting. It occupies an area of about two miles in length by one in breadth, and was then covered with verdant turf, the finest and smoothest I ever saw. The foundations of numerous old walls, of a very solid character, present themselves in all parts of the hill, and, from their material and style, appear to be the remains of the ancient Trebizond, which, no doubt, stood on this spot, and derived its name from the table-like form of the eminence. Large but

low steps cut in the rocks facing the present town, seem to mark ancient flights of stairs, and at the south-western extremity are the ruins of a small chapel, and of a square building, evidently of a more recent date. A Tekeh, or Turkish convent, with its garden, surrounded by a stone wall, stands on the northern slope of the hill, and commands a pretty view, embracing features of considerable interest.

The neighbourhood presents many old castellated walls and towers erected in the time of the Lower Empire, which are wonderfully perfect, and have a very picturesque effect. The castle, which dates from the Comneni, is of great extent, and in a good style of Byzantine architecture. In many places, the walls enclose marble blocks, bearing both Greek inscriptions and European coats-of-arms, which seem to lend some foundation to the assertion of the Turks, that the walls were erected by the Genoese; and, at any rate, warrant a belief that the town was once in Italian occupation.

Trebizond has the appearance of a populous place, and is said to contain 18,000 inhabitants. It is governed by a Pasha of the first class. In ordinary times, the military service is, I believe, performed by the inhabitants, but the town might be made to accommodate 15,000 men. The best places of disembarkation, in a heavy surf, are at Platain, six or seven miles to the west, or the river's mouth, one mile to the east. Packages of one and a quarter hundredweight might easily be dragged through the surf. The castle appears to be no defence.

On leaving Trebizond, we determined, as our party was rather numerous, to set out for Erzeroum in two divisions. The second, with which I travelled, formed a goodly cavalcade of thirty-three horses and mules, completely exhausting the means of transport which could be collected at the post-houses for the conveyance of travellers. Many of our company, indeed, were but indifferently mounted, and among these was a Persian Sooltan, or captain of one

of the regular infantry corps, who cut a very sorry figure on his Rosinante-looking steed.

We commenced our preparations at an early hour, but it was past eight before we set out, after repeated delays, consequent on the arrangements indispensable at the outset of such an expedition. The morning was delightful, and everything looked fresh and cheering. Climbing the rocky heights behind the town, a slippery and precipitous path on the other side brought us, by nine o'clock, to a small Turkish coffee-house, situated in the great valley which we were to traverse for our day's work, intending to confine this first start to a journey of six hours, or about eighteen miles. The country was mantled in all the verdure of spring, while its interesting and diversified features, including the picturesque effects of wood, water, and luxuriant vegetation, attracted the eye on every side. Streams fed by the snow of the mountains, poured down in numberless channels to the river, which had overflowed its banks and irri-

gated the adjacent land; and the air was redolent with the odours of the azalia and rhododendron, growing around in dense thickets, while the prospect was embellished by a variety of trees only found in perfection in Eastern climes, from the solemn cedar and waving pine on the summit of the mountains, to the chinar, or Oriental plane, at their base.

As we proceeded, we discerned from the higher points of the road a chain of distant snow-capped mountains to the north-east, one of the last branches of the Caucasian range in that direction. Soon afterwards we passed a road striking off to our left, carried over the river by a stone bridge, and leading up a deep valley to a large fortified konack, or dwelling, situated on the shoulder of a scarped mountain, considerably further to the east. This place of strength, now held by a dependent of the Pasha of Trebizond, had formerly been the residence of the Dereh Bey, by whom the surrounding district was governed; but like the other functionaries of that class, he had forfeited his territorial pos-

sessions when the late Sultan commenced his reforms, which, imperatively as they were required, have for a time had the effect of crippling the resources of the Ottoman Empire. The Dereh Beys, indeed, were accused—and perhaps justly—of being the secret chiefs of banditti, who, under their connivance, plundered travellers through their territories, like the old knights of the Rhine, for the benefit of the ruling authority; and there can be no doubt that, if they did not actually maintain these gangs, they were very remiss in punishing their depredations, which, in rude and semi-barbarous communities, are not considered offences of the deepest dye, and were formerly very prevalent in Turkey, particularly on the outskirts of the empire, near Kurdistan and Arabia. Still they were much looked up to by the irregular but warlike militia, which formed the most efficient portion of the Turkish military force; and their deposition, however beneficial on other grounds, has destroyed the authority round which the population of the provinces were accus-

tomed to rally in times of danger, while the regular commanders appointed in their place, do not inspire the same confidence, and are guilty of as much, or probably more venality, without displaying the martial qualities so highly esteemed in a primitive state of society.

The fortified konack overlooks a village of about twenty houses, called Toufek-kioi ; and, from the point where we stood, the general bearing of the valley was North 70° East. At two o'clock we crossed to the right bank of the river, which here flowed with great velocity towards the sea, and for some time the road was on an ascent, having a fine view down the valley. The konack was visible for half an hour longer, directly down the valley. Descending a little, a ride of half-an-hour brought us to a small Greek chapel, standing on a square isolated rock close to the river : it is apparently an ancient structure, and is dedicated to St. Theodore. From this spot, the mountains on the left bank of the river, directly opposite, had a very peculiar appearance, rising

in cliffs of schistus, at a very acute angle, and to a great height.

A little further on is the small hamlet of Gheveslik, lying close to the river, in the midst of picturesque mountain scenery, and near the junction of two valleys, each of which is watered by a considerable stream. That to our left had an upward bearing of South 10° East, and was crossed by a bridge of two arches, just above its junction with the branch along which we were to pursue our road on the morrow. Here we passed the night in tents, and in the morning we set out at half-past seven o'clock; and crossing the bridge which spanned the nearest branch, ascended the right bank of the further one, till a zig-zag path led us up a mountain, guarded by a fortified konack, occupying a height on the opposite bank. From a commanding point above we discerned the confluence of the rivers, and the bearings of the valleys were, respectively, North 70° East, and South 28° West. At this spot paths branched out on both sides; and, notwithstanding the elevation, there were still a

great many evergreens around us, while the summits of the mountains were clothed with pines. Just beyond, there formerly stood an old fort, of which little more than the foundation now remained, though its situation was good, commanding a view of the fork of the valleys, and the road by which we had ascended. The heights above were mantled with snow. This fort might be advantageously restored.

Soon afterwards we passed a neck of high land attached to the mountains, with valleys to the right and left, forming a very strong pass; and from the end of this ridge, we observed a high pointed rock to the left, crowned by the remains of a monastery, well situated for defence, and commanding a view of the country all round. Our route now lay along an old causeway, in the midst of very wild scenery, carrying us past a deep valley to the right, where we discerned the forlorn remains of a khan; and ascending a rocky bad road, we came, in about half-an-hour, to the ruins of another old building, probably a kafaneh, or a guard-

house, standing on a ridge, covered with a variety of well-grown trees; amongst which I noticed some very fine beeches and pines, interspersed with large oleanders and other shrubs. A second ridge, somewhat narrower, extended for about forty yards in an arched form, and, giving forth a hollow sound to the foot, was no doubt artificial.

After a short halt, we resumed our progress, ascending the causeway, which became more and more steep, till, at length, we obtained a view of the sea west of Trebizond, and of part of the intervening valley, bearing North 35° East. It was probably from this vicinity that Xenophon and the Ten Thousand, after their wonderful retreat from Persia, first beheld the sea; and the country-people still warn strangers not to eat too freely of the honey made by the swarms of bees seen everywhere in this district, as it has a stupifying or intoxicating effect upon persons unaccustomed to it, which explains Xenophon's story of the "madness" caused among his troops from a similar indulgence. The bees feed on the flowers of the yellow

azalia, a well-known narcotic, very likely to produce the results alleged by the inhabitants; but the statement of Xenophon must be regarded as an exaggeration not unnatural in those remote times.

Continuing our way for another half-hour, we came to an old khan, and some other ruins, where we made a short halt, to muster our energies for climbing the remainder of the ascent, which was extremely abrupt. This toilsome stage occupied us nearly an hour, when we reached the summit of the Koresh-Dagh, and here we found, for the first time, a good deal of snow, mantling the very narrow ridge at which we crossed. We discovered also the remains of a battery and trench, thrown across the road, as we learnt from the Turks, when the Russians advanced from Erzeroum, in 1829, forming some defence of the pass. A little to the left rose a lofty peak, whence we obtained a fine view towards the sea, with the Caucasian chain in the distance, probably in the neighbourhood of the Mingrelian coast. Our road lay along the sum-

mit of the ridge, and was frequently interrupted by broad, deep furrows of snow, which we had to traverse, causing great inconvenience and delay, as the baggage animals sank repeatedly, and the others plunged and floundered about, not a few throwing their riders. Just as we began to descend, by a very narrow path along the face of an earthy mountain, with a rapid torrent running on our left at a considerable depth below, a heavy thunder-storm burst overhead, imparting a new feature to the scene. This was, indeed, of the wildest description. High above on our right and left rose steep cliffs and mountains, of a ferruginous schisty appearance, terminating in peaks now mantled in gloom, while a precipice yawned at our feet. As we rode along, one of our party fell over, and was precipitated with his horse into the river, but escaped unhurt, with the loss of his cap; and we pursued our descent without further interruption, crossing the torrent by a bad and very narrow wooden bridge, and following the left bank for some distance, when we turned off

to the village of Stavros, where we were to pass the night.

Stavros is a miserable place; and two villages adjacent, on the opposite side of the river, are of a similar character, all being inhabited by herdsmen, who, at the moment we arrived, were driving in their cattle and sheep from the pastures. There are about a hundred houses in Stavros; but they are of small size, and are constructed with flat roofs, after the custom of the country.

From this village our direction lay nearly west, and was within a short distance twice crossed by a deep stream, which soon afterwards emptied itself into a more considerable river, called the Yaghli Dereh Soo, at a point where its course ran due north, and just before its junction with the stream we had descended on the previous evening. The river was spanned by a bridge, which led us into a contracted valley, flanked on both sides by precipices of grey sandy schistus, and we followed a very narrow path, running nearly west, to a small tributary stream, which we had to cross several

times. Before us rose a lofty central peak, the highest of a snow-capped range, bearing 70° West 20° South ; and our path quickly becoming steeper, brought us, at length, to the summit of a ridge, whence a very abrupt zig-zag track descended to the town of Ghumesh Khaneh, which we could see lying at the foot of an opposite mountain.

The descent from the ridge was both arduous and difficult, and occupied us nearly three hours, when we reached the banks of the Teriboli Soo, a fine river, running in a westerly direction, and proceeding over a good bridge, we rode on to Ghumesh Khaneh. The town derives its name from the silver ore found in the vicinity ; and in our way we passed some places for smelting metal ; but the mines, which are about a mile from the town, are said to be much neglected ; and operations are frequently interrupted by what is called "bitter," or salt water, which accumulates in the excavations. The miners are chiefly Greeks ; and the town seems to contain a mixed population of

Greeks, Turks, and Armenians. The road, all the way, is exceedingly precipitous, and only practicable by a path, which is kept in good order, but might readily be destroyed by a handful of expert workmen in a few hours. It is said to be the easiest of three routes leading from the interior by Ghumesh Khaneh to Trebizond; though I should think the lower road, by Ardessi Boghas, is in general the most practicable. There is a good road from this spot to Kara Hissar, a distance of about twenty-four hours; and a direct road across the mountain leads to Zileh, said to be nine hours' distant. But though the whole country is extremely difficult, and admirably adapted for defence, there were, with the exception of the small works on the summit of the Koresh Daggh, nowhere any traces of artificial defences having been raised to withstand the advance of the Russians, if they had pushed on, as might have been expected, for Trebizond, at the time they occupied Erzeroum. It appears, indeed, that in the campaign under Paskiewitsch, a Russian force of five thousand

men, with four pieces of cannon, actually advanced as far as Ghumesh Khaneh, and remained there for ten days. The road from this town to Erzeroum was reported to be practicable for carriages ; but thence to Trebizond, it is, as we have seen, inaccessible in this respect ; and, indeed, the one we had traversed is shut during the winter months, from December to April, though there is a route open for horsemen by Ardessi Boghas.

At Ghumesh Khaneh, we took up our quarters in a very respectable house, the landlord of which was an intelligent Greek, well acquainted with the locality and its inhabitants. He told us the Turkish authorities had all left the place on the advance of the Russians, who, however, during their occupation, respected the property of both Christians and Moslems, and did little damage. This, no doubt, was with the view of conciliating the good-will of the inhabitants. The town is situated in an extensive valley ; and due west, at the distance of a few miles, rises an isolated

rock of considerable height and magnitude, crowned by an old church, forming a very striking object from Ghumesh Khaneh.

We had now to ascend the main valley along the opposite side of the river, close to its bank, keeping this direction past a hill to the left, of singular form, shutting in the pass, and succeeded by several others. Soon afterwards we opened a valley to the right, bearing east, and another nearly due south. The country presented the same features, with frequent rocky eminences, interrupting the course of the road for about three miles, when a fine stone bridge of two arches again carried it over the river, near its junction with another stream; and from hence it became less rugged. A precipitous rock, called Khaghaz Kallassi, near Tourkal, a village on the right bank of the river, is surmounted by the ruins of an ancient castle, and the height is occasionally faced by arches, which appear to have supported the approaches to the fastness. Close by is a small coffee-shop, where we made a brief halt, and obtained some bread; and

then, to avoid being overtaken by night, proceeded at a quickened pace up a rocky ascent, with occasional patches of good road, till the valley gradually contracted, and the river became an insignificant stream, stealing almost unseen through grassy banks. Soon we passed its source, and attained the highest point of land, looking down on a fine country, interspersed with heights and sloping downs, the former exposing here and there the stratification of the rocks, twisted in a very peculiar manner. The soil appeared to be very rich ; but from the greater severity of the season at this elevation, vegetation was not so forward as in the neighbourhood of the sea-coast ; and in our way from Trebizond we had passed localities where the trees presented no more traces of foliage than if it were the middle of December.

A small river to our right, winding to the eastward, was the first indication that we were descending, and the road was soon met by a brook, running into the river, which itself met us below, at the forlorn village

of Ballahora, situated on its banks. The beautiful country around, endowed with so many advantages and capabilities, is both uncultivated and unpeopled, awakening the most melancholy reflections in the mind of the spectator, who beholds here the calamitous results of misrule and neglect.

At Ballahora we passed the night at what in the western parts of Turkey would be called the *oda*,* which here was nothing but a large stable, with a raised platform in one corner for the guests, whose horses reposed in the other part of the chamber. The building, however, was furnished with a chimney, and, in a short time, a large fire, rendered highly necessary by the increasing coldness of the atmosphere, was blazing on the hearth.

Leaving Ballahora at an early hour in the morning, we pursued our way, over a recently-erected bridge of two arches, to the right bank of the river, and entered a country of open downs, quite bare of trees for a considerable distance, when, crossing ano-

* House for travellers.

ther brook, we arrived at Akoekosi, a village of about twenty houses. Here a road branches off to the south, joining the great highway between Erzeroum and Constantinople; while the road we were to follow was continued by a bridge over a brook, running north. The country was still a succession of downs, though, as we advanced, it became more hilly and stony, and at Akoekosi, the mountains to the eastward were still capped with snow.

By noon we reached Baiboot, situated on the Chorok, a very important river, running rapidly below a steep precipitous rock, surmounted by an ancient castle of great extent, but in a very dilapidated condition. The river runs through the town, dividing the Turkish from the Armenian quarter, and communication is maintained by two wooden bridges. The buildings, for the first time since Stavros, are of a good freestone, but the town is a dismal straggling place, presenting a very different appearance from the snug-looking country towns in Asia Minor, where every traveller is struck with

the picturesque and sheltered aspect of the reddish-brown roofed houses, mantled with vines, and standing in the midst of gardens, while shady balconies, half masked by groves of cypresses and other evergreens, offer a grateful refuge from the heat of summer. Such a decided change in the appearance of the village is probably owing partly to the cold high situation, and partly to the proximity of Persia, where the style of building is totally distinct from that prevalent in Turkey.

The river Chorok, which, after a course of about one hundred miles, enters the Black Sea near Batoom, runs nearly north at this spot; and the range of the Koresh Dag, which we had just crossed, stretches along its left bank at no great distance. There is now no road to Batoom; but I believe it would be practicable to make a very good one, and, though somewhat circuitous, this would probably afford the easiest land route to Trebizond from that place. The road we traversed may be considered very defensible, as the country beyond Ballahora is naturally

strong. Of the other two roads between Trebizond and Erzeroum, that over Karakapan has an elevation at one place of seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, and is indeed, in general, little more than a narrow rocky path, impassable in heavy storms, and often choked up by snow. On this account it would be unsafe in winter, as regards the passage of troops, though it is considered that two thousand men, with one hundred barrels of powder, would render it practicable at all times. But it should be borne in mind that the journey occupies fifty-two hours for animals carrying two and a half hundredweight, and that, though the cold in winter is excessive, there are no means of obtaining fuel.

A large sum of money was allowed by the Turkish Government, not many years ago, for the improvement of this route, chiefly with a view to facilitate the passage of caravans with goods to and from Persia, but owing to the misappropriation of the funds by the governor of Trebizond, who was entrusted with its execution,

it was, like many other works projected in that empire, never carried out, except for a few miles near the town. It has, indeed, been doubted whether the improvement of this line of road would be advantageous to Turkey in a military point of view, since it would afford equal facilities to Russia in the event of her advancing further into the country; and in case of such an improvement, it is very certain that the passes ought to be fortified as quickly as possible, in the same manner as those on similar improved routes between the German and Italian possessions of Austria, in order to retard, if not altogether to stop, an enemy endeavouring to force his way forward.

The use to Turkey of such a route would be to throw reinforcements and military stores into Erzeroum from the Black Sea, particularly if the Batoom road should become unavailable from the occupation of the pashalik of Kars by Russia—an event unfortunately of too great probability. There are cross roads of little difficulty, which reach the great Erzeroum road from Asia

Minor into Persia, leaving that of Trebizond near Ghumish Khaneh and Ballahora, in a southerly direction, and through these a force might reach the great thoroughfare even after Erzeroum had been occupied by a hostile army. Neither the western road from Baiboot by Ashkaleh, which I followed, nor that more to the east by Khosha-poonar, is barred by any mountain range of great difficulty, although the latter, being the most elevated, is often rendered impassable by snow-storms in winter. It is known that there is a route which, leaving Baiboot, proceeds nearly parallel to the great Erzeroum road during a portion of its course, and leads through Ispeer and Tortoom towards Kars and the Russian frontier, and there is also a road from Ispeer to Rhiza on the Black Sea. These routes are, however, so difficult in their present state, as not to be important in a military point of view, although it is advisable that they should be properly watched. From Tortoom there is a tolerable road to Erzeroum.

The route by Baiboot can be trusted at all

seasons, as the difficulties are confined to a distance of six hours, between Zingana and Ghumesh Khaneh; and at the former place there is abundance of good fuel, as well as timber for bridges, carriages, and sledges. On the march it might be necessary to transport the guns on mountain carriages, or occasionally to place them, dismounted, between logs of wood, so that they might be dragged by main force over portions of narrow path, particularly if encumbered with mud or snow in unfavourable weather. The draught animals might be assisted at the worst ascents by bullocks, which could be procured from the neighbouring villages; and, in fact, as there is pasturage at the foot of every hill, they could be kept in readiness at certain spots to await the arrival of artillery. The ground generally being hard and stony, horses should be provided with the broad, light, cold-hammered shoe of the country, as the English shoe does not sufficiently protect the tender part of the sole; and on such a road, lameness cannot be too much guarded against.

Before guns leave Trebizond, the line of the River Chorok should be secured by light troops, who should also occupy Batoom, where the river enters the Black Sea, and Ghumesh Khanch, as well as the villages on the route, where the peasantry, who are armed, would assist for their rations. Hospitals, well supplied with remedies for intermittent fevers and agues, should be provided, and, in winter, very warm clothing would be indispensable.

From Baiboot an excellent road led up the valley along the right bank of the Chorok, between hills of some elevation, and over grassy pasture lands, till it crossed the river by a wooden bridge, the pastures on the south being terminated by mountains capped with snow. Soon afterwards the valleys separated, one running to the south-east, while the other, traversed by the Chorok river, bore nearly east. Our direction was towards the south-east, and was twice intersected by a stream running to the north, and by which, after going through a pass, we were met a third time, at a spot,

where the face of the rocks exhibited some curiously-twisted strata. Riding on for more than an hour the stream was again crossed, and then we came to a small village, called, as near as I could collect the sound, Kopa. It was situated on the stream, which was very rapid, and was commanded, at a very short distance, by hills of shingly conglomerate. The road crossed the mountains at a considerable elevation, overlooking a very picturesque valley watered by a brook ; and, as we ascended, we came upon some patches of snow, which covered the ground at the summit ; a narrow ridge, whence there was a steep descent, past two brooks, to Tinchuk. This was a wretched village, composed of small houses, with roofs formed in an obtuse angle, probably to resist the heavier snow, as the roofs in the neighbourhood are almost invariably flat. The mosque was a plain square structure without any minaret.

The country, as far as the eye could extend, now presented an appearance altogether pastoral. Green hills, streaked with

snow near their summits, enclosed valleys threaded by copious streams, whose waters, flowing between picturesque and overhanging rocks, were continually augmented by the melting snow. The inhabitants are a simple people, and live in a state of primitive rudeness, tending their flocks and herds, which constitute their only wealth, and share the same roof with themselves. Wood is very scarce; and the walls of the houses are frequently nearly covered with the earth dug out for the foundations. The road we traversed, though unmade, was everywhere excellent, and only one or two spots in the mountains, which were covered with snow, occasioned any difficulty. The country people here supplied us with good horses, including two fine mares, followed by their foals, and which their owners attended on foot, to bring back from the next stage.

The next day we entered a hilly plain, skirted to the south by a long horizontal range of snow-capped mountains. This was the valley of the Euphrates, a branch of which we crossed near Ashkaleh, a poor

village with a mosque; and two other streams were crossed before we reached the main channel of the Karasoo, or Western Euphrates, whence good roads lead over a fine plain to Alaja. This village, which is about half-way between Ashkaleh and Erzeroum, contains a bath, and a warm fountain, the latter having a salt bitter taste, and rising to a temperature of 100° Fahrenheit. The approach to Erzeroum was over a flat open plain, bounded in the distance by mountains, still retaining patches of snow; and owing to the elevation of the ground, here about 5600 feet above the sea, vegetation, for the season of the year, was extremely backward.

Erzeroum is visible for several hours before it is reached. It lies at the base of some high mountains, terminating the hard and parched plain; and travellers suffer equally from the reflected sunshine and the cold winds which descend from the heights. The city, though surrounded with walls, built in the Turkish style (one taken from the Byzantine), cannot be considered a place of strength, if attacked by an army whose

siege arrangements are organized on the European principle. It is overlooked by heights, surmounted by a castle of some extent. It suffered much during the Russian occupation, and a great portion of the Armenian inhabitants were induced to accompany Count Paskiewitsch across the frontier, for the purpose of settling in the Russian territory. It has been stated, indeed, that they were taken by force both from here and from the Persian frontier, but I have never been able to ascertain clearly that this was the case; and, though aware of the anxiety of Russia to increase the Christian population in her provinces of the Caucasus, am more inclined to believe that they were induced by specious promises to emigrate. There is little doubt, however, that they are generally by no means satisfied with the change; which is, in great measure, owing to those promises not having been fulfilled.

The houses of Erzeroum, according to the prevailing fashion of the country, are flat-roofed, and were, at this season, covered

with grass. The heavy weight of snow in winter makes it indispensable that they should be solidly constructed; and they are, therefore, first laid with strong beams, and then boarded across, when a deep layer of earth completes the structure. It is not unusual, when the situation is easy of access, to see sheep and goats grazing on the tops of the houses in summer; and sometimes, when the houses are placed against the side of a hill, even cows.

The castle, which is built in the manner usual in this part of the East, comprises an outer enclosure, formed by a rampart of rude bastions and curtains of masonry, and an inner one, of similar construction, rising higher, but not backed with earth. The usual stairs exist, running up the interior of the walls, constructed in the same manner as the passages called ramps in modern fortifications, but with the difference of their having steps, with a space above of seven feet broad, for troops to stand on, behind the thin stone embrasures of the parapet. Most of the cannon, 500 pieces, were removed by

the Russians in 1829, but a few old pieces of brass ordnance, chiefly long, and of small calibre, remained on the walls, together with two large brass guns lying dismounted, which are said to have been brought here by Sultan Mourad. They are 12 feet long, carrying a ball of about 36 lbs., and are of good material, and well cast, but considerably damaged. Another piece, of much larger calibre, for projecting stone balls, lies in a worse condition beside them.

The buildings within the walls of the castle have been entirely destroyed, but, beneath, several subterraneous chambers are still entire. One, a kind of dungeon, covered with a grated trap-door, was reported to have been a place of execution, but was most probably merely a prison.

Among the lions of Erzeroum are two minarets built in the Persian style, coated over with glazed brick of various colours, and standing near a structure approximating in its architecture to the florid Gothic style. The purpose for which this building was

erected, as well as its origin, is unknown, and we heard it attributed by some to the Persians, and by others to the Genoese. It resembles most the Saracenic architecture. There is a double-headed eagle carved on the right side of the entry, surmounting a large plume of peacock's feathers, springing apparently from a crescent, from which also issue two serpents. This is a symbol I do not recollect having seen anywhere else. From the crescent it might be thought a Mussulman device, and I have seen the eagle on some of the Sultan's barges at Constantinople, although I never remarked its being used before in any other way in the Ottoman empire.

The interior of the building has somewhat the form of a cross, with its front to the north, and resembles the Saxon-Gothic architecture, having short pillars supporting high pointed arches, of which there are two rows, one above the other. It is called the arsenal, in consequence of the only part which has the roof entire, serving as a repository for a few old arms, together with

several hundred ancient steel skull-caps, or helmets, said to have been lying there ever since the time of the Tartars, and which resemble in form those still worn by the Circassians, and other mountain tribes of the Caucasus.*

At the south end of this building is one much smaller, and of great beauty. Its form without is round, and the inner part of the roof is in the shape of a cone. The body of the building, however, in the interior, is polygonal, and each face forms a lofty arch, very richly sculptured in the same style as the gateway. The whole of the interior, as well as the gateway, is of a fine alabaster, said to be from Moush, and a beautiful gate of the same material was removed from the building by the Russians after their last campaign. The fabric, which swarmed with pigeons and their nests, is falling rapidly to decay, but might be very easily restored. It was, no doubt, the mausoleum of some distinguished personage; and descending by a ladder through the centre of the floor, we entered

* Also by some Koordish tribes.

what appeared to be the place of sepulture, an arched chamber, built of a fine limestone, and looking quite fresh. It had four niches in the sides, giving it the form of a cross. That towards the north had a second chamber within, the partition wall of which had been but recently removed, and the earth of the floor disturbed; and in one of the four niches without we observed human bones, in such a quantity as to indicate that as many as ten or twelve bodies had been deposited in the chamber.

Further to the west, and nearer the walls of the town, is another ancient building of great extent, and which may have been a palace or castle, or possibly a medrasseh or college. Solid stone walls with round towers attest its ancient importance, but it is unroofed and ruinous. A building somewhat resembling the mausoleum stands close by, its walls blazoned with the double eagle before described, surmounting the Persian lion and sun: there are also several inscriptions. Contiguous to the arsenal is an old mosque, which is worthy of a visit, as the interior;

with its massive central pillar, has a curious appearance. One of the gates of the town is ornamented by a bas-relief, indifferently executed, representing a man on horseback and another on foot, with a short Greek inscription, nearly effaced, and apparently advertising to the building of the gate.

Determining to visit Kars, I set out with a single companion, and as we had only one servant each, and no great quantity of baggage, we determined to trust to the post, and left Erzeroum well mounted, after a few days' repose, furnished with letters from the Pasha for many of the minor governors whose districts we expected to visit.

It was my intention, on leaving Kars, to cross the chain of mountains which extends to the west of Mount Ararat, and to gain the great valley traversed by the Persian road, somewhere about Byazeed. The track is not a common one, and passes through a country almost entirely Koordish; but I was assured that the risk of being plundered was at that time not great, and that the different governors would supply me with

escorts at the most dangerous places. We had some thoughts, on our way, of visiting the source of the Western Euphrates, but were dissuaded from the enterprise by our guides, who urged that, as it lay at some hours' distance to the north of the road, it would occupy more time than we could spare.

After crossing various streams and rivers, we arrived, towards evening, at Hassan Kalleh, situated immediately at the base of a mountain, which extends into the plain in a precipitous, rocky spur, crowned by the castle, whence the place derives its name. The town, which probably contains 300 houses, is surrounded by the usual wall, and this we observed to be double near the gate at which we entered ; but, although it bears the marks of having been partially repaired at a recent period, it is, on the whole, in a very dilapidated state. On inspection, we found the walls of the castle, on the height above, were also double, and crenellated in the usual style, but appear to have been built at various dates, in a very indifferent man-

ner. The whole is much dilapidated, and the various buildings which once occupied the interior have been razed to the ground, while the cannon forming its armament, for which stone platforms still exist, has been carried off by the Russians. A kiosk, now destroyed, had overlooked the plain from the south-east angle of the fortress ; and near this point are the remains of a singular stair and gateway, leading down the rock, while a large aperture, like a window, in the walls above, seems to denote that a habitation of some size had once stood here for the accommodation of the commander of the garrison. Immediately to the south is a ruinous bridge across the stream, close to which are two hot springs, where there are baths ; and the range of hills to the right, forming a continuation of those south of Erzeroum, are composed of volcanic rock.

We had crossed several branches, or counterforts, from this ridge in our way over the plain, the last being connected with a low chain from the Caucasus, dividing the valley of the Euphrates from the broad and

extensive plain on which we now stood. The same total dearth of wood prevailed all around ; and while the mountains were still streaked with snow, we had no fuel but dried cow-dung, which, as in almost all the unwooded parts of the East, is the only substitute, and is certainly the very worst that the inhabitants of any country are driven to the necessity of employing.

The inner enclosure of the castle contains a curious polished stone, of the porphyritic trachite of the country, deeply and firmly fixed in the ground. It is upwards of four feet in length, by two in breadth and three in height, and is perforated through the base by an aperture of about a foot square, having a projection of about the same diameter above, and about four inches in height, and one at each end. The natives affirm that it occupied the same spot before the Mahometan conquest, but can give no other explanation of it. It struck me that it might possibly have been an altar of the ancient Ghebers, or Fire-worshippers.

CHAPTER IX.

Persian Caravanserais—Korassan—Fording the River—
 Pass of Barduze—Strong Position—Kars—Koordish
 Horsemen—Turkish Cupidity—Armenian Village—Ani
 and its Ruins.

NEXT morning we set out at half-past six with fresh horses, and rode round the base of the mountain to the north. After several ascents and descents, during which we crossed a river and several minor streams descending from the mountain, and continued our course till near the village of Keopry-Kioi, we passed a large but ruinous caravanserai. This was the first of those buildings we had seen as they exist in Persia; and though so dilapidated, it was calculated to create a very favourable idea of the accommodation afforded to travellers in such establishments, at least as far as regards room, and the certainty of obtaining food and shelter. Six round

towers connecting five arched ranges, which supported vaults of twenty-five feet in height, were still standing, the whole composed of fine solid blocks. Caravanserais are to be found in every part of the Persian dominions, and even on the other side of Bagdad, towards Babylon. I afterwards, when travelling, usually passed the night in these acceptable refuges. They appear to have been constructed principally in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; although some, more or less ruinous, are of a much older date; and on the other hand, many have been built within the memory of man. The Persians believe all the more ancient ones to have been erected in the reign of Shah Abbas the Great, and there is no doubt that many of the finest, particularly in the neighbourhood of Ispahan, are really the work of that magnificent monarch. A large number will accommodate upwards of a thousand people, with a proportionate number of animals, and are quite defensible, and generally copiously supplied with water within their gates.

A fine bridge of seven arches crossing at the confluence of two rivers, one of which is the principal branch of the Aras-chai or Araxes, carries the road through Byazeed into Persia. We kept on the left bank, and continued descending the river, having rocky cliffs of a hard red sandstone close to our left, which at one place fell in a regular slope of naturally-broken stone, resembling a Macadamized road. The bridge and caravanserai seem to have been formed of this rock.

Korassan, a poor Koordish village, with a wooden mosque and minaret, is situated about half a mile from the Aras. The journey to this place was chiefly over the plain, on the left bank of the Araxes, and which has every appearance of having been covered with water at no very remote geological date.

The soil seemed, on the whole, to be sterile, for though, as a great variety of flowers covered its surface, it presented a good deal of verdure, there was as yet but little grass. We passed many flocks of

sheep, of the large-tailed breed, which are common all through Asia, except in the most northerly and coldest parts. As may be supposed, the inhabitants, a primitive people, live much upon milk and its various preparations. This day the thermometer ranged comparatively high, standing in the shade, in the middle of the day, at 78° Fahr., for the warm season had fairly begun even in this elevated region. The river, as the country-people informed us, is fordable here when not unusually swollen. At this time, indeed, it was considerably flooded, but it was still considered safe to make the buffaloes swim across it, and drag the waggons when light behind them.

The dependents of the post establishment and proprietors of horses here, began to show reluctance to accompany us without additional horsemen as a guard; and those we secured manifested all the following day considerable dread of a Koordish attack, but none occurred. At Korassan they were desirous of increasing their force with some armed horsemen, but were unsuccessful

in this object. In all this vicinity oxen and even cows are much used as beasts of burden, and we frequently saw persons riding upon them at a brisk pace.

Having descended into a valley, we proceeded up the rocky bank of a stream, which runs, deep and rapid, in an east-south-easterly course towards the Araxes ; and after crossing it several times, as it wound hither and thither in our road, reached the village of Kara-Oglan, a few miserable huts, situated below a high rock where trees, brought from the woody mountains to the north, were sawing up. Here our people, with the aid of some communication from the principal man at Korassan, procured an accession of force ; but the party seemed mortally afraid for the remainder of the day, and seemed to think no *détour* too great to avoid the suspected parts of the road.

A short distance from Kara-Oglan, we passed to the right the ruins of what looked like a Cyclopean structure, of a square form, hanging over a precipice, and pro-

bably the foundation of a rude tower which had fallen down. Further on, a solitary castle, called by our guides Kara-Oglan Kallesi, was seen to the right of a stony track of moor, looking like a Highland deer-forest. Kara-Oglan, which signifies literally "the black boy," was probably the popular name of some Koordish freebooter. A quarter of an hour's ascent from the stream reaches the summit of the pass, which is 100 yards broad, and presents a splendid scene on all sides.

To the southward was the country we had left, extending over our journey of several days to the mountainous range, stretching eastward from Erzeroum. On the north the road descended suddenly into a deep valley of great extent, leading into another still more capacious, nearly at right angles with it. The first valley, which was carpeted with verdure, afforded rich pasturage, and was studded with pine timber, climbing to the summit of the mountains beyond, where patches of snow still rested. The great valley below us to the north-west

seemed equally green and luxuriant, and was intersected by a river, apparently of considerable size, while steep hills, rising probably 2000 feet at once, appeared beyond, their summits crowned with basaltic columns.

Hence we descended to the village of Barduze, to the right of which is a pass, where the Turks long arrested the advance of the Russians in 1829.* The town is situated close to a river, and contains many comfortable dwellings; but we were not received at first with any great appearance of hospitality, and the keys of two different houses, to which the chief of the village conducted us, were not for some time forthcoming, the occupants having, in apprehension of what might happen, quitted them, until they should know that we were settled for the night. During our progress through this tract, and very often afterwards while in the East, it occurred to me how effectually Martello towers, placed in the passes, would contribute to defence, and might pre-

* The mountainous pass of the Soganlu Dagh.

serve communication with larger places of strength in the plains; for as the cold and snow last a long time in both these situations, it is necessary to be prepared for an isolated state of the garrison. In the plains, large magazines of forage for the cavalry horses and other animals ought to enter into the plan in such localities.

Leaving Barduze, and descending a rocky bank, we immediately crossed to the right bank of the river by a short wooden bridge. This is a very strong position on both sides of the river, but especially on the Turkish, where a series of works in the direction of the pass would effectually command the road.* A good road which we ascended (used by the arabas or waggons of the country) led us to the summit of the ridge, past the granite rocks, and a dry water-course to the left, and on the right a pretty valley, with rocky heights covered with wood rising beyond. A round-shaped valley, of small extent, was succeeded by a

* There was formerly a castle here, built by one of the Sultans.

tract of level ground, where we observed there had been a peculiar and very general descent of loose fragments on the side of the mountain, resembling an avalanche, and the whole verge of the ascent was covered with basaltic fragments. Beneath flowed the Barduze river, in a deep valley, where it is crossed by a ford, while a road conducts up the opposite bank. Our course afterwards turned suddenly to the north-north-east, among fine pine trees and pasture lands, which covered the side of the mountain.* The road was strewn with obsidian or volcanic glass, looking like dark cairngorms, and the highest portion of the mountain to our right seemed a perfect mass of this material. The ascent terminated on an extensive flat commanding the vicinity, and having a good road branching off to the south-west. A fine grassy valley between mountains, having a distant mountain range to the east, soon opened to us, and at its mouth we turned along the

* The large forests of Soghanlu begin here, and extend southward.

heights to the left. Passing a tract, watered by streams and abounding with villages, we came, at six o'clock, in view of the town of Kars, at no great distance, bearing east-north-east, and having on our right an extensive plain, backed by mountains. We were met at the gate by the agent of the Consul of Erzeroum, a young Greek, who conducted us to the house of a Turk of some consequence, where we took up our abode; and were, as usual, worse lodged than we should have been in the house of a Rayah. This was the more provoking, as the weather had become bad, and we were wet on our arrival. Kars stands at a higher elevation than Erzeroum, water boiling at 200° Fahr.,* with the same thermometer which at Erzeroum had indicated 202° as the boiling-point. Communication is maintained between the two banks of the river by a couple of bridges.

The next day proving fine, we visited the Kaimakam, or deputy of the Pasha we had

* Six thousand feet is believed to be nearly the elevation of Kars above the sea.

seen at Erzeroum, to whom the latter had given us an introduction. The serai, or residence, where we found him, is situated in the castle, which commands the town as well as a fine view of the adjacent country. He of course gave us a very good reception, and promised to make arrangements for our visiting agreeably the neighbouring ruins of the Armenian capital of Ani. He conducted us to the roof of the highest part of the house to show us the neighbourhood, on our expressing a wish to view it, and said he would take care that we should have an opportunity of examining whatever we desired to see without being interrupted. We accordingly walked through the town, and crossed to the other side of the river, ascending an elevated height on its left bank, whence we could view the castle and the country round it. The town of Kars was formerly occupied by a population in great measure Armenian; but as the emigration from this place into the Russian empire was more general than from any other locality, many of the houses are now in ruins, or at

least, unoccupied, and this gives the town a very desolate appearance; the town-walls, castle, and all the mosques and churches looking the picture of decay.

While we were with the Kaimakam we saw in the court below a party of Koordish horsemen, habited in showy and somewhat fantastic garments, in the Mamluke style. They were very well mounted and completely armed, carrying in addition to other weapons, lances of about twelve feet in length, with a bunch of black horse-hair near the point. Their appearance accounted somewhat for the panic of our late guides; and, picturesque as they looked, a small party of travellers would by no means have been pleased to meet them in a secluded spot.

On the second morning we set out for Ani, accompanied by a Kavass of the Pasha, and on quitting the gate of the town, were joined by a showy-looking horseman, who turned out to be Demetri, the Consul's agent. He had exchanged his black turban, and other distinctive marks of a Rayah,

which he wore in town, for a smart-looking suit and turban of the Koordish cut, with a Damascus silk sash round his waist, in which were stuck, instead of the brass inkstand which he had worn the day before, a pair of silver-mounted pistols and a yataghan. He rode very well, and was certainly the best mounted of the party.

Proceeding over the plain in a direction east half south, we passed many of the country arabas, conveying large logs of timber towards the Russian frontier town of Goomri. We had heard something of military works being erected in that neighbourhood, but hardly expected to find that materials for their construction were collected within the Turkish territory. The information we gleaned from the Pashà's Kavass left no doubt on our minds that such was the case. He said that from fifty to one hundred waggon-loads were transported to Goomri daily, and were paid for by the Russian authorities at about ten shillings a tree, under a contract which they expected to last some years. In ad-

dition to the trees, wheels and other parts of carriages, all made after one pattern, were constantly forwarded to the same place, in large quantities, and all the arrangements were under the superintendence of an agent from the Russian frontier.

Passing occasional heights, we reached the village of Hadgi-Veli-Kioi, consisting of twenty or thirty Armenian houses, with flat roofs, and nearly buried in the ground, where we were to take up our quarters for the night. The Bey of the place came out to receive us, and showed us into an apartment, far better than we could have anticipated from external appearances. There is a ruined castle in the village.

On the morning after our arrival at Kars, the thermometer had been only 63° in the shade, but the temperature again became high; and we found the advantage of having the dwellings constructed in the prevailing mode, which protects the inhabitants from the heat of summer, as well as from the cold of their long and severe winter. Goomri

was visible from this spot, a distance of about sixteen miles.

The road this day had led over extensive plains, bounded by two tributary branches of the Araxes in one direction, and by mountains in the other. It is generally on basaltic rock lying very near the surface, and is consequently stony; there is, however, plenty of grass, and quantities of small flowers, but the whole country is destitute of wood.

From some neighbouring heights we saw, for the first time, the distant summit of Mount Ararat, rising like a white cloud above the adjacent green hills. Some way to its left was a high mountain of the second class, with sloping sides, called Allaya-Dagh. A low conical mountain appeared between them, which, we were told, lay in the direction of Etchmiazin, and below was a peculiar volcanic-looking peak, resembling many in our immediate vicinity.

We left Hadgi-Veli-Kioi early next morning, and proceeded over the plain till about six o'clock, when we came in sight of Ani.

Numerous towers and pinnacles rising in the distance, gave us a very favourable impression of this singular city, of which no distinct description had at that time been given to the world, and which, indeed, had hardly been mentioned by any European writer, except the talented author of Hajji Baba, who has made it the scene of a more recent work.*

Ani was the capital of the Pakredian kings of Armenia ; Nisibis and Orfat, in Mesopotamia, having been the seats of government of that ancient people under the Arsacidæ. After the destruction of the dynasty of the Arsacidæ in Persia, the Sassanian kings of that empire overturned the Armenian race of the Ascanidæ in the year 428 ; and their country was divided between the Greeks and Persians.

The Arabian monarchs, after having destroyed the Magi, and established the Mahomedan religion in Persia, again subdivided Armenia in the year 637. Tabreez subsequently became subject to the Caliphs ; and

* The romance of Aysha, or, The Maid of Kars.

about 200 years afterwards, the Pakredian family, which, at the Mahomedan destruction of Jerusalem, had been transported from thence into Armenia, and had been highly distinguished by the Mahomedan governors, were presented in 885 with a tributary crown by the Caliph of Bagdad.

At length the Turkish hordes, bursting forth from Central Asia, invaded Armenia, and the head of the Pakredians bequeathed his kingdom, with Ani its capital, to the Greek emperor, on condition of being defended during his life from foreign invasion. In the year 1046, in accordance with this provision, the Pakredian family (descended according to traditionary belief from King David) were transferred from the throne of Armenia, where they were styled Shahin Shahi, or kings of kings, to the government of a few towns in Cappadocia. The destruction of Ani, which was dictated by a spirit of fanatical persecution, was one of the acts which stained the glory of Alp Arslan, who otherwise, if we may credit history, was a generous and humane conqueror, as was

evinced in his conduct to the Greek emperor Romanus Diogenes.

After having made arrangements for passing the night in a place whence we had ejected the cattle, we proceeded on foot towards the ruins, crossing a deep rocky ravine resembling one of those fissures so frequent in the Crimea, and other countries bordering upon the Black Sea. About a mile from the village we entered several subterraneous houses, or rather caves, situated without the ancient walls, and in which the miserable inhabitants of the neighbourhood seek refuge from the heats of summer. Many of these retreats are formed on similar sites both in Asia Minor and Persia, and it is highly probable that they were originally constructed for sepulchres.

The situation of Ani is very peculiar and striking. A branch of the Araxes, called by the people of the country the Arpa-Chai,* winds round the south-east side of the city between steep crags, yawning in the

* Barley River.

green and treeless plain. A row of massive and beautifully-finished towers, with their connecting walls, extends from the river to the ravine before mentioned, which, running down in a south-easterly direction, joins the other valley at an acute angle, intersected by the river. The masonry has, until closely examined, considerable resemblance to the Greek, but the style of architecture, though in the religious edifices partaking of a Byzantine character, and sometimes of the Gothic, was in general in the Asiatic or Saracenic style. The churches and palaces, after a lapse of eight centuries, are still in such a condition as to attest that, at the period of their erection, solidity was as much an object as beauty of design.

The people in the neighbourhood attribute all these structures to the Persian Nu-shirvan; but the profusion of crosses introduced in the walls of the buildings leave no doubt of their Christian origin. With the exception of one mosque, in a very ruined state, and an octagonal minaret, we could see no Mahomedan build-

ing. The towers of the walls,* which are most entire on the north side, are of different heights and sizes : and are built of the stone of the neighbourhood, which is of three colours ; a buff calcareous sandstone, which is the most general ; a red ; and a very dark basalt, nearly black. Devices are introduced in these three colours with great taste in the construction of all the buildings.

The first gate we reached was flanked with very lofty towers ; but the passage was blocked up with fallen fragments, and we entered the town by a gate beyond. The walls are double at this spot, and the entries are not opposite to each other, as is usual in old fortifications in this part of Asia. A lion and inscription are carved upon the wall, and crosses are seen inserted and carved upon the towers and other masonry. The walls, which are 40 or 50 feet high, are built with mortar, but it is only used internally, the outer stone being jammed into it in a point, so that it does not appear.

The first building we observed on passing the gates was a small chapel to the right,

in a wonderfully-entire state. The interior, which we examined with great interest, was supported on slender pillars, terminating in beautifully-formed vaults. A little beyond, towards what seemed to be the citadel, we found a fine octagonal minaret, bearing a long Arabic inscription, and ornamented near the top with two sculptures in relief, one representing a lion, the other a head, apparently intended to typify the sun. Ascending to its summit by a stair, a good deal worn, we obtained a fine view of the ruins. The minaret was the last relic of a mosque, and its own foundation was very insecure. A palace with pointed windows, in the Saracenic style, stood close by, much ruined, but bearing witness to ancient grandeur.

The most beautiful building in Ani is a fine church in a very perfect state, the stone roof being still entire; and, indeed, very slight repair would make this building fit for use. The architecture is in a mixed style, which neither my companion nor myself had ever seen elsewhere, and which

might with great justice be denominated the Armenian. The arches are rounded in the same way as the Saxon, and are of great height. The building, like almost every other in Ani, is much covered with Armenian inscriptions: I think in two different characters. We ascended a winding stair near the altar, and reached an arched passage looking down upon the interior, which was at that hour filled with cattle and their keepers, reposing during the heat of the day. Near the precipice above the river are the remains of the fine mosque already mentioned, the only one in Ani.

The town, which is of a triangular shape, is situated on the extreme frontier of Turkey, on a kind of rocky peninsula, defended on the east by steep cliffs, washed by the Araxes, which winds round their base in a deep gorge; and bounded on the west by a broad ravine, which, as well as all the precipices round the city, has its bluff sides perforated with numberless tombs and caverns. The rocky hill which terminates the city towards the south is

enclosed between the precipitous ravines which join immediately beyond it. It may have been a citadel, although little appearance remains of any works of defence. Towards the country it is of great natural strength, especially on the side next the river, which is here too deep to ford. The abutments of a fine bridge still exist, which has been opposite to an entry communicating with the left bank of the Arpachai—now the Russian frontier. On the hill are various other churches and chapels, one or two very perfect, and having the roof and pointed cupola in the centre still standing. The private dwellings in the ancient city seem to have been handsome and substantial, if we may judge from the style of their still existing foundations. On the summit of the precipice next the village stand the ruins of what seems to have been the palace, a very extensive building in the Saracenic style, having a fine imposing arched window over the gateway. This building is composed of massive square

blocks, beautifully polished and fitted. It has been built in several stories, and many apartments remain almost entire. Nearly opposite we observed masonry, apparently erected for the purpose of damming up the brook.

CHAPTER X.

Position — Works of Goomri — Turkish Frontier — Salt
Rocks — Ferry of the Aras — Khagasman — Gelalee Koords
— Route to Hadgi-Bairamlu.

RETURNING to our former quarters we were tormented all night by fleas, and were glad to escape in the morning soon after six o'clock, when we set out on our way towards Goomri, determined to inspect it as closely as we could without crossing the frontier, which is here bounded by the Arpachai river.

A fine road leads over the plain from Hadji-Veli-Kioi to the village of Arasogloo, whence our course lay across heights, and through several other villages,* to the Kars branch of the river, which we crossed by a ford deeper than usual, and commanded

* One of these hamlets, called Meyerek, would be a good situation for forming a reconnaissance to examine Goomri.

by some heights branching forward from a longer range towards the west, as well as by the flat ground between it and the village. These heights form the advance of a position, traversed also by the road from Kars to Goomri, which lies in their front, and is hollow, but commanded. Here we joined a direct road to Goomri, passing over a flat between heights, when we reached a narrow elevated flat looking towards the Arpachai. The road now bore north-east by east, the ground in our front sloping in every direction towards the river. About a mile or two in our front some heights terminated in a kind of bluff, surmounted by an old castle looking down on the village of Seraïghul, on the banks of the river; and beyond this the road, here leading over a flat, was very muddy. At a hamlet further on called Païndereh, there is an old castle and a small Armenian church, and opposite is a Russian village, succeeded by heights and streams, till a range rises whence a view may be obtained of the fortifications of Goomri, but not of the town itself, which, though only two

miles distant from us, was concealed by the elevated ground on which the works, some yet in progress, are extended. The first, a mass of masonry, rose near the eastern extremity, and appeared to be about 100 yards in length, its front being partially concealed by lofty scaffolding. High-arched timber frames, such as are used in the construction of bridges, and of bomb-proof buildings, occupied the centre; and the whole, as I found on a subsequent visit, formed a horse-shoe work of solid masonry, mounting sixteen guns, which point through embrasures in the casemate. On its right were extensive earthen parapets; and further on in the same direction were others of a similar appearance, on which the workmen were still employed. Piles of squared stones and timber were heaped up in the vicinity of the parapets; and here, as well as along the whole extent of the works, large numbers of men were busily occupied (as far as I could judge by my glass), in quarrying and other labour. Many carts were moving about, and at the right or

western extremity of the heights there was an encampment, capable of containing about 2,000 men, with a considerable number of guns and tumbrils standing near. From these appearances no doubt remained that our surmises had been correct; and being aware that the erection of these works was quite unknown to the English authorities in Turkey, we felt anxious to visit them; but the existence of the quarantine and our want of passports prevented our doing so on this occasion, though I was enabled to carry out that design at a later period, as will be seen further on.

While we were employed on the heights, the Kavass of our Consul at Trebizond, who was one of our party, went on as far as the ford, close to which on the other side were some huts, occupied by a party of Cossacks. With these he attempted to enter into conversation, but they showed the jealousy usually evinced by Russian authorities of every grade at having their proceedings at all examined, recommending him to take his departure; and I have often remarked

that the transactions of the Muscovite Government are regarded by its subordinates as something sacred, from which it is a crime ever to attempt to withdraw the veil. Goomri may at present be considered the key to the whole plain of Kars, which can at any time be overrun from it.

The ground on the Turkish side of the river rises in a fine tract of table-land of about the same elevation as the works at Goomri. The situation seems good for a frontier town, but does not possess even a village; and the road to Hassan Kalleh and Erzeroum, though the plain of Kars would furnish supplies to an enemy advancing through the passes, is undefended by any works. Hassan Kalleh, commanding the roads into Turkey, is an eligible point for a fortress.

Driven from the heights by a thunderstorm, accompanied by wind and heavy rain, we took the direct road for Kars, whence we ultimately turned to the south, and reached the village of Oozan-Klissa (signifying in the dialect of the country

the "long church"), where we passed the night.

Next morning we made our way over several heights and streams to a ford on the Kars branch of the Aras, at a village called Yamesh-lu, where there is a strong position. The ford, though the river was very full, was good, but commanded on all sides by heights; and from one of these, on the left bank above the ford, a view is obtained of the road towards Kars, while another on the right bank rises to a greater height. The road passed over elevated flats and plains, here and there crossed by streams and in our progress we overtook numerous arabas with timber for the Russian works, and at one place came up with a couple of Turks conveying a file of Russian deserters, seven or eight in number, and tied by a single cord, to the same destination. We re-entered Kars about 4 P.M., and returned to our old quarters.

At the village of Oozan-Klissa, where we slept, there is a church of an old date, merely consisting of four walls of consi-

derable height, and of very substantial masonry. It is about thirty feet square, and flat-roofed, with a single low door in the south side, which, being locked, we did not enter. No window was visible, but an aperture not much larger than would admit a man's hand appeared over the door, and above it, near the roof, was a larger opening, covered without by a stone slab, projecting at a distance of four or five inches. It struck us that this contrivance was meant to enable those within to let down a bucket, as it is probable that this building was at once a church and a place of retreat in case of danger.

During the whole of this excursion on the fine plain between Kars and Goomri, we were particularly struck by the absence of trees and shrubs of every kind, although the grass was at that moment very fine, and mixed with vast quantities of flowers; and on the mountains not far to the south, timber was abundant, so that the great elevation does not explain its absence on the plains. There was plenty of basaltic rock for the

construction of walls, yet not a single fence was to be seen, and the cattle scrambled about wherever they pleased.

The Pasha's Kaimakam promised to have instructions ready in a couple of days for the authorities of the places through which I must pass on my way to Tabreez. I spoke to him very unreservedly as to what was going on at Goomri, observing that the Turkish officials were assisting the Russians, both with materials and the labour of the country, to erect a fortress which would enable the Czar to command, and at any time to overrun, the whole Pashalic of Kars. He declared I must be mistaken, as the timber I had seen was merely used for the construction of dwelling-houses, bazaars, and caravanserais for the merchants; but he seemed curious to know what I had actually observed, and having sent for his telescope, asked me if I thought it was powerful enough to enable him to survey the works—a point on which I gave him satisfaction; when he said he would proceed to the river forthwith, and examine them. I heard afterwards

that the Pasha himself was engaged in the contract; so that his deputy must have been acting with a full cognizance of what was in progress, and I told him that the result must be that, by the time the contract was completed, the mountains would be cleared of the finest timber at the spots where it is most accessible, and Russia would be strengthened by the resources which should be used for the defence of Turkey.*

On departing from Kars, I rode due south towards Khagasman, a place distant about nine hours, and situated on the Araxes, over a country of alternate precipitous ascents and descents, relieved by small plains, and occasionally presenting a village, till, after traversing a narrow plain, surrounded by heights and mountains, we crossed a branch of the Aras, and found ourselves on a low gravelly island, washed by the main branch of that river, which was running with great rapidity, and was much

* Recent events have verified this prediction. Kars is still nearly an open town, while Goomri, since christened Alexandropol, is a strong fortress.

too deep to ford. We, therefore, gave the signal to the people of the ferry on the opposite shore to come to our assistance. While waiting their arrival, I observed a large bird soaring with nearly the same flight as an eagle over the river, but it was evidently a crane of a genus which, I think, I very frequently saw afterwards in various parts of Asia. They are birds of passage, and collect in droves of fifty or sixty, flying in a wedge like the wild-goose, but at a much more obtuse angle.

The Aras at this part of its course passes through a chasm of great height and breadth, rent in the mountains, and presenting everywhere precipitous earthy cliffs of various colours, yellow and greenish hues predominating. The whole soil is impregnated with salt, and just at this spot it takes the shape of large stratified rocks. Salt mines are wrought in the vicinity.

After a few minutes three stout fellows appeared a short way below, on the opposite bank, and drew up a raft of very novel appearance, consisting of a slight wooden

frame, about seven feet broad at one end, and three and a half at the other, and probably ten feet long, with the interstices covered with wicker-work, the whole resting on inflated goat-skins. One of the party took a paddle, and placed himself in front, while the other two sat behind, one using another paddle as a rudder; and, with the assistance of the current, they crossed the river diagonally with great ease. Our horses were swum across, a ferryman mounting one, and leading over a couple more by the bridles, baffling the current with great expertness; and while we crossed with the baggage on the raft, he returned for the remainder of the horses, which were taken over in the same way. The only delay was in pulling the raft up to the point where it got the advantage of the current; and when we all reached the other side by the second passage of the raft, we found the horses ready, with the baggage fastened upon them.

Proceeding up the heights we ascended a stony ravine, and soon afterwards reached Khagasman, which, like the towns of Persia,

is surrounded by orchards, gardens, and vineyards, presenting a striking contrast to the neighbouring country, which is parched and arid. Here, as we were now to part with the people and horses we had brought from Kars, the Muzzelim, to whom we had been furnished with a letter, represented that it would be very desirable, and indeed was absolutely necessary, to have a day to provide fresh horses and a proper escort. He said there were two roads to Byazeed, one passing near the town of Toprak-Kaleh, distant twelve hours, which again was distant twenty-four hours from Byazeed ; the other bearing directly across the mountains through Kooroo-Moosoon, in the country of the Gelalee Koords, the most inveterate robbers in that part of Koordistan, and the terror even of the Pasha of Byazeed, whose country they often ravaged up to the gates of the town. By this road, however, Byazeed was distant only twenty-four hours ; and as I did not know the state of the case so well then, as I did afterwards, I tried to persuade him to send us through by this route, offering to

take any number of men he might think necessary to effect the passage. But he said the Gelalee Koords being in open revolt would not allow an armed man to enter their country. The Turks, indeed, evinced the greatest disinclination to coming into contact with the Koords, and even regarded the prospect of passing by the other road as anything but agreeable.*

Finding that we should be detained here a day, I determined to return as far as the salt mines near the ferry, and in the morning the Muzzelim's kiaya, an old man, who appeared to know something of the locality, gave me what information he possessed, which proved to be tolerably accurate. He called the place Khagasman, by which name I found it was known in the neighbourhood. From him I obtained the following itinerary of the route to Hadgi Bairamlu, the first place beyond the Russian frontier towards Erivan.

Tazek-cheh, a village, half an hour dis-

* I believe I am the first European who has described this road from Kars to Toprak-Kalleh. Koch, the German traveller, followed it some years afterwards.

tant from the Araxes by a bad araba road.

Proceed to Kyrumbat, right bank marking the frontier, where there is a tumulus of stone set up in the Persian time.

To Pernagheet, within the Russian territory, passing over a plain by a good road, a post of two or three Cossacks. Pernagheet contains about twenty houses; about an hour to the right are mountains where the Koords come and pitch their tents.

Koolpa, a large village of 150 houses, where there are generally 100 or 200 Cossacks, under a Major, and sometimes infantry, on account of the inroads made into the mountainous parts of the Russian territory by the Koords. Half an hour above, the Araxes is crossed on a raft, near its junction with the Arpachai. Not far up the latter stream is Hadgi Bairamlu, a village of about twenty houses, but without any fort or military establishment. The quarantine is at Eekdar, nine hours from Koolpa, and between the two places is Karakaleh on the right bank of the river.

Kooroo-Moosoon, containing 150 houses, partly Koordish and partly Armenian, according to my informant, lies at the foot of the mountain towards Byazeed, and is near Mount Ararat.

CHAPTER XI.

Moslem Procrastination—Koordish Chief—Native Warrior
 —Ascending the Mountains—Stationary Guard—Hostile
 Party—Preparations for Action—Koordish Challenge—
 Snow-drift—Thunder-storm—Toprak Kalleh—Visit to
 the Governor—Persian Caravans.

HAVING visited the salt quarry, I retraced my steps to Khagasman, and on the following morning at half-past four, the Turk who was to command our escort, and who held some post under the Muzzelim, made his appearance, having the evening before announced that everything would be ready at this hour. He was a grave-looking man of about fifty, with a large bushy beard, and when in his Turkish dress had a very respectable appearance; but he had now exchanged it for a sort of mixed costume of the new régime, which is styled, in places removed from the capital, *à la Franga*. It consisted of a short, dark green jacket with metal buttons, and trousers

of the same, over which were pulled short red boots, very wide, and turned up at the toe, and a small turban completed his costume. His clothes appeared so stuffed out that it was evident he wore his usual dress below, which had a very ludicrous effect. He merely came to see whether we were ready, for his own followers were not so; and he was not only unarmed but had his pipe in hand, which I thought a little ominous of delay, although he assured us the horses were coming immediately. We waited, however, till five o'clock without their appearing, when a remonstrance was made to the Muzzelim, who, as usual, entreated us to have patience; and notwithstanding repeated renewals of our demand, only half the number of horses required for the party had arrived at half-past six, with three horsemen for our escort. But I insisted on the full number which the Kaimakam at Kars had ordered, as a less force would only have invited the attacks of the Koords, and I soon found they had themselves no intention of setting out with so

small a party, but meant to wait till others should be collected. The Muzzelim, indeed, on my threatening to return to Kars, and to complain of his conduct, admitted that to proceed with this escort would be as dangerous as going alone, but added that the place could not furnish a larger number of horsemen; though if I would consent to advance at a slow pace, he would furnish me with any number of men on foot, who, he said, would act better in the mountains than horsemen. Accordingly a dozen of Tofengees, or musketeers, were sent for, and I waited at the Muzzelim's house till they arrived. In the same room was an old Koordish chief, who had some time before submitted, and was now under the charge of a Kavass, by whom he was to be conducted to the Pasha of Erzeroum. He appeared to take the matter with the utmost coolness, and his countenance expressed perfect cheerfulness and good humour. His long dress was much in the Turkish style, but his turban, as usual among the Koords, was wound round a red fez or cap, shaped

like a bag, and falling down behind. Many of the younger men here wore Persian turbans, which are much higher and not so broad as those of the Turks, and the red fez was superseded by a drab-coloured felt cap, such as is worn, without any turban, by the country-people in the south of Persia.

While we were waiting, one of the mounted men who were to accompany us came into the room. He was a very warrior-like person, and rode a handsome active horse, and indeed was the only one of those intended to accompany us who seemed fit for the purpose. In remonstrating with the Muzzelim I said, if you can give me three other fellows like this man, I will dispense with all the rest; an observation he had overheard, and which was not lost upon him, as he certainly distinguished himself very much on the journey by his vigilance and activity. At the moment, indeed, he began, like a true Oriental, to express his contempt for the

Koords, declaring he was a match for at least twenty of them, when a young man of about eighteen, who had hitherto sat without speaking, got up in a very angry way, and denied the fact with great warmth of manner and much gesticulation. I found that he was a Koord, although living in the town, and having friends among the Turks ; and I expected something serious to follow, but it passed off. The Koords, like the mountaineers in almost every country who are of a different origin from the lowlanders, appear to be looked upon with antipathy by the people of the plains ; a feeling they fully reciprocate.

Everything being prepared at ten minutes after eight, we set out with about a dozen people on foot, armed with long firelocks, and the three horsemen, and commenced the ascent of the high range of mountains behind the town. As we cleared the gardens and orchards around, a steep ascent led past a small defile in the mountain on the left, and a deep precipitous valley

on the right, with a fine view of the course of the Araxes. The way now became much steeper, and soon the mountain was quite precipitous above and below, the road winding up its nearly perpendicular face. Through an opening in a cliff of whitish clay, we advanced in a south-south-westerly direction, over green hills separated by ravines, many of which afforded a bed to a fine stream, and one of these we crossed. Soon afterwards we saw an Armenian village called Larawan, with an old castle, distant about four miles. Half way between us and this place was a small round lake. Passing in a longitudinal direction over a long, narrow connecting ridge, having fine picturesque valleys on both sides, we obtained on the right a view of the great valley of the Araxes; while the prospect on the other side was bounded by a jagged mountain dashed on the top with snow. A ruinous-looking village was visible on the height above us. In a hollow on the side of the mountain,

a cluster of ravines formed a junction, moistening the surrounding tract with their overflowings. Most of our route this morning, indeed, had been partially invaded by the melted snow, which trickled from the summits in streams down the whole side of the mountains; and as the sun here had great power, vegetation was extremely rapid and luxuriant. We stopped for about a quarter of an hour at a fine clear spring, no doubt produced by filtered snow water; and here the horses moved about up to their knees in young grass, mixed with a profuse diversity of plants and flowers of various colours. Those who have read Tournefort's description of his botanizing excursions near Mount Ararat, of which this is a branch, will easily understand how interesting this region must be to a naturalist.

Resuming our progress we reached a fine run of water, flowing evidently from the snow above, and proceeded on to the Tigh-Tash, a buttress of lime rocks, running out

from the main mass of mountains, and rising in an apex. On this spot we found a stationary guard, placed there for the purpose of watching the Koords; as the road here fairly enters the pass into their country. About noon we turned into it in a south-westerly direction, crossing a little snow, and began descending among some deep valleys. A precipitous descent, enveloped by a large tract of rocks and bushes, was succeeded in the immediate vicinity of a valley by a long steep ascent, when we found ourselves fairly surrounded by mountains, at a very considerable height above the Aras, and about ten miles distant from any village. A deep and rapid river, called the Vizier-Khaneh, ran through the valley from the south-east by south, and a little below joined another river from the south, called the Akboolak. As we descended I observed that the men immediately in our front had stopped, and were examining something on the opposite side. It turned out that they had discovered a party of men on foot,

accompanied by a horseman, retiring towards the brushwood which flanked our road on the opposite mountain ; and as we were now in what they considered the enemy's country, they viewed everything with suspicion. With the aid of my glass, I ascertained their surmises to be well founded. The party were evidently Koords, and were making for the heights in our front, which were very steep ; but only four men were visible on the look-out.

We now made preparations for action. The Chaoose, who acted as our leader, pulled off his European dress, and appeared as a Turkish Toffengee ; partly, I fancy, to be more at his ease, and partly not to be picked out by marksmen. A moolah (or priest) who had joined the party for the convenience of getting across into the Persian road, made a bundle of his white turban and long robes, and displaying his arms bare up to the shoulders, joined the advance with a long rifle. He appeared a stout serviceable-looking fellow, and was an

addition we had not expected to the fighting party.

Fording the river, which, owing to the melting snow, was running very strong, we commenced the ascent through a thorny glade; and, on gaining the crest, near which we had seen the Koords, everybody had his gun ready, but no enemy appeared. I examined every rock and bush through the glass, but without result, and in a short time we had fairly passed the spot where they had been seen.

I remarked to the Chaoose, by way of amusing myself at his expense, that I thought he had made great preparations to meet four men; but he apparently did not perceive the jest, and, supposing the risk was over for the moment, replied with perfect seriousness, "Never fear, sir, I myself am a match for a thousand such fellows."

Just at this moment, five or six heads were observed over a rocky ledge, which seemed to be somewhat out of shot. They were imme-

diately hailed, and at first replied that they were friends ; but on the Turks asking, in a taunting tone, why they had gone up so far out of the road if they were friends, they invited them to ascend and decide for themselves ; a proposal which the Turks prudently declined, as their place of retreat ~~was~~ extremely well chosen ; and it was, besides, impossible for us to tell how many of them there might be. Had they numbered only the half-dozen, indeed, which we had seen, they might have fired for some minutes in safety on their assailants, before they could have reached them, and then escaped among the large stones and bushes on the opposite side of the hill. From their conduct there could be little doubt that they were looking out for booty, when they first saw us ; but probably they were either not in sufficient force to stop us openly, or expected, by concealing part of their number, to draw the Turks into an ambuscade. A Koord, who was in our ranks, spoke to them in their own language, and, I

imagine, he explained that the party was accompanying Europeans, who are known to give more trouble when robbed than the booty they carry with them is worth.

After this adventure we crossed a vast drift of snow, filling up a precipitous chasm in the mountain. It had become very porous; and, at its edges, the track passed through deep slippery mud, rendering it necessary to ride with great caution. With our utmost care the baggage was several times in considerable jeopardy. From a crest further on we discerned a high snowy mountain to the east, doubtless Mount Ararat. Passing a deep valley to the left, craggy peaked mountains reared their lofty summits on every side, and numerous valleys opened a fine view far below. As we progressed, the face of the mountain was broken by more deep gullies filled with snow, and terminating in rugged valleys, while the convex portions of the mountain, instead of a covering of snow, displayed the most luxuriant vegetation. Among other

plants, wild rhubarb, the stalks of which the people ate with avidity, was conspicuous.

The scenery throughout the day was of an extraordinary and striking character, and the surface presented, in its whole aspect, the appearance of having undergone some vast convulsion. Many of the rocks seemed to be marble,—red, grey, and white, filled with veins. This important mountain chain, over which we had made our way with so much difficulty and fatigue, is unnoticed in most maps, the country here being represented as a perfect flat.

As it grew dusk, twinkling lights marked the situation of numerous Koordish encampments of a few tents each, lying further in the valley. We groped our way down among the valleys in the dark for some time, when we were overtaken by a thunder-storm with wind and rain*. The thunder was, I think, the loudest I ever heard, and the lightning so vivid and dazzling, that it was impossible to see for some seconds after

every flash. As usual, on such occasions, our guides showed a great inclination to hurry on; and, among others, the Chaoose disappeared in our front. At nine o'clock we found ourselves in a poor Koordish village, of about a dozen houses, called Chatchulu, where there were one or two Armenian houses. At the door of one of these refuges was the Chaoose thundering for admittance, and mingling entreaties with threats and abuse in his conversation with two or three old women within, though his voice was rendered almost inaudible by the barking of the immense sheep-dogs which we had alarmed all through the village.

At length, the door of strong logs was opened, and we found ourselves in a large nondescript building, filled with quadrupeds and bipeds of various kinds. After a little arrangement we were provided with a corner in which to pass the night. We had this day crossed an important mountain chain, hitherto unexplored

In all this part of Armenia and Koord-

istan the inhabitants live in large substantial dwellings, of a very rude construction, and under the same roof with their cattle, which constitute their principal wealth. The houses are generally lighted from the roof only. The winters are extremely severe; snow lying on the ground for six or seven months, to a great depth; and, as fuel is very scarce, the warmth produced by the cattle sharing the same lodging as their owners, is found a great comfort. The domestic compartment of the dwelling is usually a raised platform near the chimney, divided by some kind of railing from the rest of the building, containing the animals. Through the whole of Persia it is customary, from May till October, and even longer in the south, to pass the nights in the open air, the people generally spreading their beds on the flat roofs of the houses, which the great heat and dryness of the climate make agreeable and safe; and in the country where we now were, they have the same usage during the summer. To a stranger the heat,

noise, and exhausted atmosphere, in the houses, with the invariable stench of the stable and cowhouse, are extremely disagreeable at first, but custom and the fatigues of a journey soon make them more endurable.

Before our departure next morning we were assailed by all the old women in the house with cries for backsheesh in the most importunate manner; and their demands were mixed with compliments to Paskiewitsch, who appeared to have been at the place, and in whom they seemed to consider that all Europeans must take a strong interest. We made our escape from the den about half-past six, and proceeded in a west-south-west direction, Kuzuk Dagħ and other snowy mountains appearing to the right.

Our object in taking the last portion of our course, which was rather a retrograde movement, was to reach Toprak Kalleh, a fortress where there is a governor, from whom I expected to obtain fresh horses and guides. The plain, which is here about ten miles in

breadth, is bounded to the south by the Mourad Chaï, the main branch of the Euphrates. It was near this spot that Abbas Mirza, the late prince Royal of Persia, defeated the Turks in 1822. Singularly enough the Persians have almost always had the advantage in their engagements with the Turks, and been defeated by the Russians; while the Turks, on the other hand, have been much more successful in their campaigns with the Russians than the Persians have been.

Toprak Kalleh, or Alaskird, as it was designated by our escort—which, having been destroyed by the Russians and Persians, was now little better than a heap of ruins—is commanded by a castle, which stands on a bold isolated rock to the north. I had sent on one of the horsemen to the governor with the letter I had received for him at Erzeroum, and met my messenger in the town with several of the governor's people, who requested me to come up to see him at the castle. I accordingly proceeded there,

and on dismounting, was ushered into a long hall well carpeted, where we found that functionary waiting, surrounded by persons in various costumes, and apparently of various races. He was the son of Belool Pasha, the hereditary governor of Byazeed, and was named Mehemet Aga. He appeared to be about twenty years of age, although stated to be only sixteen, and, like other Orientals of rank, he seemed to be as much at ease in his situation as the most experienced man. We were now evidently quite out of the atmosphere of Constantinople ; and, instead of the unbecoming sort of uniform worn by the great men of Stamboul, Mehemet Aga retained the old national dress, and wore the turban. The upper garment was a long scarlet pelisse, trimmed with sables and embroidered with gold, and all his attendants wore Oriental costumes. After some conversation about England and India, the latter always a very interesting subject in Turkey and Persia, and some well-directed questions as to the relative

size of the Ottoman and British empires, he conversed with me on my own projects, and it was eventually decided that I should go on that evening with an escort to Byazeed, although he invited me in a very courteous manner to prolong my stay.

The preparations for our departure being completed, we set out at a quarter past twelve. Our Khagasman escort having received their remuneration, with which they were well satisfied, accompanied us about a mile out of the town, preceded by some gipsies who tumbled and danced, as they went along, to the music of squeaking pipes, tambourines, and castanets. It was not surprising, under those circumstances, that nearly the whole population of the village hurried after us to see what was going on. As we passed some crows, the Toffengees of our last escort, who were themselves half Koordish, and having evinced superior spirit had been well rewarded, were anxious to give a parting proof of their skill, killed several of them with a

single ball, at a distance of about one hundred yards. They knelt on one knee before firing, and placed their guns in the notch of a slight forked stick which they carried with them. At length they took their leave, with the rest of the company, from Toprak Kalleh, leaving us with three regular Koordish horsemen well mounted and armed with lances and pistols. One of the two had recently received a ball in his face in an encounter with the roving bandits, so numerous in this region, and with whom conflicts are incessantly taking place.

They galloped about, flourishing their lances, and whenever we approached any heights struck off in different directions to reconnoitre. The plain we traversed had on one side the Gelalee Koords, and on the other numerous races of Koords towards the lake Wan, who are in the constant habit of robbing the caravans which pass from Persia to Erzeroum. The Persian caravans appear chiefly to convey tobacco, but the Koords are well aware that valuable Cash-

mere shawls, pearls, and turquoises, as well as gold coin, are to be found among the bales on a diligent search.

At Toprak Kalleh I had again entered the direct road from Erzeroum to Tabreez, which at Hassen Kalleh on the Araxes I had quitted to visit the Pashalic of Kars.

CHAPTER XII.

The Sultan's Camp—Koordish Shepherds—Russian Predilections—Oriental Habits—The Persian Language—Tumuli—A Troublesome Escort—Persian Horsemen—Incident of the March—Persian Horsemanship—Diadeen—Persian Songs—A Halt.

OUR course at first was over a plain, which became marshy as we approached the river. The latter was succeeded by two other streams, when we entered Kishish-Kioi, a village of Catholic Armenians from Constantinople, settled here in the time of Sultan Mourad. Following the road, we perceived to the right, at the distance of about two miles, a green mound, marking the site of an encampment, occupied by Mourad during his campaigns. It was on this spot that the Sanjak Shireef, or holy standard, had been planted, which always indicates the presence of the Sultan in the camp. Further on, a range of low grassy heights looked very like the old Roman camps seen in many countries.

It was flanked on the left by a marsh, and I have no doubt had at some time been used as a fortified position. On the plain we met people driving flocks of sheep from Byazeed to Erzeroum. These shepherds, who form a large part of the population, wore nothing but a sort of tunic, reaching to the knees, and fastened round the waist with a strap; and some kind of cloak is loosely folded up, and thrown over their shoulders. Their feet are shod in rough sandals of untanned leather, and their appearance altogether probably differs little from that of the shepherd of ancient Greece.

The Darabineh Soo, a good river, running from a bold mountain valley on our left, crossed the plain, and entered another valley on our right towards the Mourad Chaï, or Eastern Euphrates. A short distance beyond is Kara-Klissa, a poor place, like all others I have seen in Koordistan; and here we put up at the house of an Armenian, who, unfortunately for us, was very rich in cattle, and consequently the place was crowded with horses, cows, and sheep,

causing the usual heat, and producing stifling exhalations.

The chief man of the village, who was designated the Bey, paid me a visit in the afternoon. He was a Koord, and wore a handsome dress of the country. I remarked since entering Koordistan that the people did not speak with the same horror of the Russians, or Muskofs, as they are termed, which all classes do in European and Asiatic Turkey; and when I tried to excite the Bey's feelings upon this subject, I found that he leant much more than I had expected to the Russian side. He stated "that the invasion of the country had been conducted upon fair principles, and that no place which did not resist, had been destroyed." Travellers passing through Koordistan have always had to complain of the delays of the post, and we found it quite in vain to attempt hurrying them; perhaps the more so, as they perceived that we had not really any particular reason for expedition. It was therefore half-past six in the afternoon before the baggage-animals were

loaded, and everything ready to start. The people of the East can never understand that there is any satisfaction to be derived from merely seeing the country by daylight through which a traveller passes, and therefore, whenever we urged our postilions to despatch, they invariably replied that there was time enough to reach Diadeen, which was our destination, that night.

The guides, and some of our other retainers, spoke Koordish, and I now learnt from what they said, that the English "no" also signifies "no" in that tongue, which I have no doubt is a dialect of the ancient Persian, or Pehlevec, from which the Teutonic tongues, as well as the Latin, are believed to derive many words and phrases which have a similarity even to the Persian of the present day, seeming to authenticate the Virgilian genealogy of the Roman people. It is also striking enough, that many English words have a closer resemblance to Persian words of the same meaning than the corresponding German terms, as if

the Saxon of the continent, although nearer the original locality, had been more altered there than in more distant regions.

I remember, on conversing with a friend, who is a good German scholar, on the general similarity of the Persian to the German, not only in the signification of individual words, but in its sound and construction, that he differed from me, and said he could not perceive the resemblance. But on meeting him afterwards, when he had made more progress in the Persian language, I observed that he very frequently mixed with it German words, and even whole phrases, when a little at a loss in the course of conversation; and on my noticing this to him as an argument in favour of what I had formerly urged, he said that, remarking the circumstance himself, he had since been led to the same conclusion. This was the more striking, as he spoke French and Italian probably as well as German, yet never mixed either with his Persian.

We conversed a good deal with the old

Koord, who had received the wound in his face. He informed me that the name of the chief at Kooroo-Moosoon, who was at that time maintaining himself in a state of siege against all the neighbouring authorities, was Abduhl Koord Gelalee, the head of that tribe. Another Koord of influence, further to the west among the same mountains, was called Berazee Mahmoud Aga. The largest Koordish place in that neighbourhood, he said, was Agh Gheyul* near Byazeed, which contained 1200 houses.

On setting out, the road had led us towards a pointed hill, apparently terminating a plain; and after crossing a stream, we reached one of those plateaus so frequent in this region, which resemble old earthen fortifications. On its summit there was an old Armenian burying-ground; and near its base was a village. Some low heights of a similar character rose just opposite, and

* On inquiring afterwards, I could hear of no place of consequence bearing this name. It is probably another name for Kooroo-Moosoon, which has a lake near it—Ak-gheyul, signifying White Lake.

beyond lay the river Mourad Chaï, running under distant snowy mountains. A small ravine was succeeded by a second plateau. Proceeding some distance we saw another small conical hill. Both this and the preceding one were called Aga Deveh, and I have no doubt that they are tumuli, such as are scattered over the whole Eastern world. Near Kazikioi, a ruined village, we observed the parallel lines, which, according to geologists, indicate the beds of ancient lakes, emptied by the revolutions of Time.

The top of the Akdereh mountains disappeared behind other heights, bearing west by south; and fresh mountains and heights rose on the right, with the swift waters of the Mourad Chaï, or principal branch of the Euphrates, flowing in their front, its banks bold and steep. We crossed the Mourad Chaï, at a spot where it reached our horses' shoulders—a rapid muddy stream. Some grassy meadows, with boldly-shaped green hills, extended from the opposite bank to our left; and in the same direction we observed a road leading back,

sheesh ; but being determined to mark my sense of his conduct, I made it greatly less than that which he knew I had given to the escort from Khagasman. This produced a growl of remonstrance ; but finding me immoveable, he addressed a few words in Koordish to the three Persians, which induced them to turn round their horses' heads, and trot off towards the stable, leaving me unattended. I immediately said to the Koord, "You have been intrusted by the son of the Pasha of Byazeed with my safe convoy to that place, in obedience to a special letter from the Seraskier Pasha of Erzeroum, who, as well as your master, read my firman from the Sultan. If anything occurs to me on this journey, through your negligence or disobedience, it will certainly be visited on your head. I have suffered a long detention here, which I shall not pass unnoticed when I see Belool Pasha at Byazeed ; and being determined not to lose another minute, I shall go on immediately, with only the Sooragee." We accordingly started, and for about two miles

were amused by the remonstrances of the Sooragee, who said this was the worst part of the road.

The stratagem of the Koord and the Persians to obtain a larger remuneration, however, was completely defeated; and we saw the Persians following us at full speed. On coming up, they commenced a series of salutations and apologies for what had occurred, throwing the whole blame on the Koords, whom they said they were afraid to offend in so secluded a place, although one Persian, he assured us, in the same breath, was able to overthrow Heaven knows how many Koords. As if to convince us of this fact, they began scampering about, pointing their long firelocks at each other, till one of them fell down; his high saddle, which had been badly arranged, fairly turning under his horse's belly while he was at a gallop, but he escaped unhurt.

The plain we had been passing over extended in length for probably sixty miles, and was bounded by a rocky ridge, composed of a white calcareous sandstone.

From the summit we had a fine view of Mount Ararat, bearing north-east, and the conical mountain, east-north-east. The descent was by the side of green heights, leading over a brook, and through hills of stratified trachite, to a very striking place, Utch Eklesia, signifying "the three churches." It is an old Armenian religious establishment; but only one church is to be seen, and there is no appearance of there ever having been any other: I presume, therefore, the appellation must have had some mystical meaning. The church is surrounded by a village, and the whole is enclosed in a quadrangular wall, flanked with towers. Our arrangements obliged us to pass this curious place without entering it, which I much wished to do, though I confess I was not fully aware of the interest it possessed at the time. The church is said to date from the fifth century; and its site is supposed to occupy the highest plateau of Armenia, from which there must be a constant general descent, and in some places a very rapid one, to the Persian

Gulf, as the Mourad Chaï, which rises close to it, has a considerable current even below Bassorah, a distance of 900 miles. The sun was very low when we passed Utch Eklesia, and as it was lying to the west, we could not distinguish the style of the masonry; but it seemed to resemble that of Ani, though it had a ruder and less finished appearance.

Mounting another ridge, some steep heights presented so abrupt a descent, that, although we dismounted, we had some difficulty in getting down our horses: I think we must have deviated from the proper road, which probably lay a little to our left, and we did not re-enter it again for some time. From the spot where we descended we obtained a view of Diadeen, distant about an hour's journey. The whole prospect was very beautiful, although a kind of scenery which I had never seen anywhere else. The country immediately around was composed of sloping hills, covered with the richest grass, and furrowed with numerous deep concave ravines, threaded by streams, and having

their sides completely mantled with grass and herbage, like the downs above. Diadeen lies on the rocky bank of the Mourad Chaï, which rises to a considerable height above it; and at this spot the river glides through a chasm. Behind Diadeen some very striking rocks, resembling castellated buildings, rise from the perfectly-green hills in detached masses; and in the distance appears Mount Ararat, covered even at this season more than half-way down with snow. Hardly any country can present a more verdant aspect than this neighbourhood did at the time I passed through it; yet I have been assured by those who have crossed it in the month of August, that it does not then show a single blade of grass; and as there is neither tree nor bush within sight, it had left on their minds the impression of one of the most sterile countries in the world.

Nothing, indeed, can be more opposite than the estimates formed as to the fertility of the soil by travellers hurrying through many regions of the East, according to the

season at which they make their journey ; and nowhere is this more the case than in Persia, and the adjacent territories. The snow is, in many parts, still on the ground in February and March, and is succeeded in May and June by intense heat, so that in July the most abundant crops are cut, trodden out, and fairly housed and out of sight ; and the parched-up land, undivided by hedges, and nowhere presenting a single shrub except the camel-thorn, looks for the rest of the year like a desert.

The road led over the grassy surface till we reached the edge of the steep cliff on the left bank of the river. Both sides of the ravine appeared in the twilight almost as perpendicular as a wall, and were composed of very smooth rock, and of great height. On the right bank is a large enclosure, or castle, and the left affords a zig-zag pathway among the rocks, where the stream is crossed through a deep and stony channel. Soon afterwards we entered the town through an old but handsome gateway, leading us to indulge in anticipations respecting the

place itself, which were completely disappointed.

The Persian horsemen had shown a great inclination to stick to us during the latter part of the journey ; and finding that we were likely to be overtaken by night, I could only persuade one of them to go on with a message to the governor, by consenting that my Constantinople servant should accompany him, as a sort of pledge for his veracity, and consequent security. They joined us soon after we had entered the gate ; and my domestic, although he had been a Greek Palikari in his day, and had subsequently travelled in Egypt and Syria, was full of lamentations as to the ultra-barbarism of the country, adding, that he could get nobody to listen to him, but that when he demanded admission to the Serai, he had been informed that the sun had set, and the governor had gone to his harem, and that nobody dared for his ears to disturb him till the following morning. We accordingly, happy to save time, followed the Sooragee to the post-house, and passed the night in an

apartment from which some oxen had just been turned out. Soon after we had thus settled ourselves, we were joined by the Persians, who begged us to give them a little bread—a request which occasioned us some surprise, as they had just received their backsheesh, and had expressed themselves well satisfied. But it turned out that the townspeople had refused to sell them any, because they were Sheehs or sectarians, and they were afraid to return to their own village before morning. These poor fellows seemed of quite a different nature from both the Turks and Koords. They were far more civil, and their demeanour was more gay and pleasing; the contrast reminding one of that which presents itself on leaving the northern countries of Europe for the southern. At the same time, I fear the change was accompanied by a corresponding deterioration of integrity; for though such people as the inhabitants of Koordistan, and the parts of Turkey we had lately traversed, where there is no scruple as to robbing on the highway, cannot be rated very high in that

respect, they are not addicted to such constant speculation and deception in everything connected with their own interest, as the more polished races inhabiting the whole of that country, which in the East is called Iraun. The Persians with us were constantly singing; and as I had never heard a Turkish Sooragee produce anything but a howl in the course of his journey, I was much struck by the difference. I found that an extraordinary shake, which they introduced certainly in a rather monotonous manner, was common to the vocal music of the whole of Persia; and was considered, when well performed, a great excellence in their national music. This style of singing in Persia is, I believe, very ancient; and some months after this, while travelling through the Buktiaree mountains, which lie between ancient Susa and Persepolis, I heard it in the greatest perfection. The language there is probably less changed from the ancient Pehlevey, or Persian, than at any other place, and the mountaineers are in the constant custom of reciting in this manner

the poetry of Ferdoosee, and still older songs of their own, no longer understood in the other districts of Persia. When I was in the tent of the chief of the Mahmoud Senai tribe, between the ruins of Shahpoor and the singular natural fortress of Killahsefeed, in company with Colonel Shee, whose long residence in Persia had made him perfectly master of the language, a chorus of young men, at his request, sang some stanzas of this music, and the effect was far from unpleasing.

Early the following morning I sent to the Serai for our horses, and to expedite the escort; but it was seven o'clock before they arrived, and, meanwhile, we were a perfect show to gaping crowds, who came to gratify their curiosity by staring at us. Being anxious to save time, I did not visit the governor, but left the place about half-past seven, making for the nearest range of heights. A deep valley on the left towards Ararat led past an old castle, on an isolated rock, through a green and smooth tract, falling with a gradual slope on both

sides of the road. At the mouth of another valley, the adjacent hills were apparently basaltic, and of a very porous appearance, while the ground was strewn with fragments of ancient lava. A good bridge of one arch, in the Armenian style, spanned a large stream, probably the Ghimoos; and here we saw a large party, in the service of the Pasha of Byazeed, with a number of horses, refreshing themselves. We made a short halt ourselves, and lost another quarter of an hour from one of the baggage-horses running out of the road, and turning over its load, which had to be readjusted. All travellers complain, and with reason, of the carelessness of the Koords in these matters, as well as their total want of system in performing the service of the post, and it is only in Turkey that good arrangements for this purpose exist in the East.

CHAPTER XIII.

Byazeed—Visit to the Castle—Belool Pasha—Inspection of the Castle—Turkish Exactions—Demir Pasha—Russian Intrigues—Importance of Byazeed—Pass of Byazeed—Routes through Koordistan.

THE castle and part of the town of Byazeed were discernible at some distance. The road was intersected by a couple of dry water-courses, one of considerable extent, running from escarped heights to the right, where we commenced the ascent towards the town, passing, as we advanced, an Armenian cemetery and an old church. The castle stands on a rocky eminence overlooking the town, which for a time was concealed from view by some detached and precipitous heights rising in its front. The castle itself, indeed, was at first only distinguishable as a lofty square-looking structure with many windows, and apparently highly ornamented. It is erected on a succession of stone ter-

ances, of fine solid masonry, and a minaret gleaming in the sun showed that it included a mosque among its buildings. At length, a kind of gorge in the heights opened a full view of the place. Byazeed, at a distance, is a complete optical⁴ illusion, having the appearance of a fine city built on a mountain, which on a near approach dwindles down sadly. The deception is, in great measure, owing to the wild and peculiar situation in which the town stands, among masses of rock of various colours, interspersed with frequent patches of verdure; and the intervening plain, with the background of Mount Ararat, adds to the effect, which is also heightened by the strong sunshine of the climate, throwing over the landscape a multitude of broad lights and shadows. On drawing nearer, it was but too evident that the castle was the only building in the place possessing any pretensions; that all the others were of small size, and much dilapidated, if not altogether in ruins. Nor was this extraordinary; for Byazeed had been occupied,

and it may be said sacked, by the Russian, Persian, and Turkish armies successively, in the course of a few years.

As we wound up the precipitous ascent, crossing broad chasms in the surface, every fresh glimpse we obtained added to our disappointment. I was met at the gate by the leader of our small escort from Diadeen, who described himself as the son-in-law of the governor of that place; and as all Koords, like mountaineers generally, consider themselves gentlemen, he very possibly spoke the truth. He said he had delivered the letter to Belool Pasha, who had only recently returned from Toprak Kalleh, which, he said, prevented him from receiving me at his own abode. But, I believe that, although well disposed to show hospitality to Europeans, Belool Pasha is frequently prevented from doing so, by the positive exhaustion of his funds. My Diadeen friend then conducted me to the best Armenian house, delivering many compliments by the way from the Pasha, who begged that I would see him on the following day. The

house was anything but good ; but it had the advantage of being altogether separated from the receptacle for cattle, and there were scarcely any other inmates but ourselves—which was equally agreeable.

A few minutes after arriving, we were visited by two of the Pasha's suite ; one of whom called himself his Khasenadar, or Treasurer. They said they had been sent by him to inquire after my health, and to apologize for the badness of the konak, which would be accounted for by the desolated state of the town. After some more civilities they took their leave, and we were not troubled with any other visitors.

Next morning I repaired to the castle, ascending by a steep road under the high wall of the terrace on which the structure stands. The entrance was through a magnificent gateway, in the Saracenic style, though it had no appearance of antiquity. It reminded me of edifices I had seen at Erzeroum and Ani, the archways having a peculiar-niched termination, belonging to the Persian school of architecture, and a

rich Arabesque relief, in which the lion was introduced. The architecture within the court was equally imposing. The circumstances attending a hurried visit of ceremony prevented my examining, and noting more particularly what I saw in this part of the building; but I was particularly struck by the great height of the arches, and by the admirable contrivances for producing shade in a climate where the constant glare of sunshine is so much felt.

Passing through a hall filled with attendants, we entered the place of reception, or Salamlik, as it is called by the Turks—a very handsome apartment, well painted and paved with marble. At the extremity was a low wooden platform of about thirty feet in length, covered with carpets, and furnished with silk cushions. The Pasha was sitting with his back to a large window, which projected from the room, and the upper portion of which was composed of coloured glass, while the lower panes commanded an extensive view of the plain, backed by the towering peak of Mount Ararat. He im-

mediately rose, and in a very courteous manner advanced to meet me, when he placed me near him, and commenced the compliments and inquiries after health usual in the East. Very few persons of his rank in Turkey rise on the introduction of a stranger, although the Persians invariably do.

The manner of the Pasha was more European than I had been accustomed to among the Orientals, probably from the vicissitudes of his life, which had thrown him occasionally among Europeans.

His family obtained from Sultan Mourad a firman, creating them hereditary Pashas of Byazeed, and the dignity had been held in the first instance by Mahmoud Pasha his great grandfather. On the death of his grandfather, his uncle, Ibrahim Pasha, had attempted to dispossess his father Mahomed, but, by the intervention of the Sultan, Mahomed and his son Belool were ultimately re-established in the government. The present Pasha had, at different times, been made prisoner in turn by the Persians,

the Turks, and, I believe, by the Russians. His misfortunes seemed to have impaired his mind, which was probably never very robust ; and he was said to be very unfit for controlling the turbulent spirits around him, and of whom he lived in constant terror. His appearance was prepossessing and agreeable. His turban, as well as his inner garments, was in the smart showy fashion of the Koords, which much resembles that of the old Mamelukes ; but he wore over his under dress a kind of military cloak of crimson cloth, with a gold-embroidered collar, such as is now used by the great men at Constantinople, and generally by the Sultan himself, who is in the habit of presenting these mantles to his officers. They are a cheap substitute for the expensive *kelauts*, or dresses of honour, of former days. Belool Pasha's countenance was animated and intelligent, and lit up by an agreeable smile, giving me more the impression of a man calculated for the repose of civilized society than as a ruler over barbarians. Our approach to Persia was marked among other things by the darker

complexion of the people ; and the Pasha's beard, which was of ample dimensions, was of so dark a shade, that I am inclined to think the artificial means so universally used in Persia had been adopted in his case. He made many inquiries as to how I had fared on my journey, how I had been escorted, and how the people about me had behaved, expressing his regret that he could not do more to render travellers comfortable in their passage through the country. After some general conversation, in which the great men of the place who were present joined, and communicated very freely respecting the history of his family (who, I believe, were almost all exceedingly tyrannical and unjust), I expressed my admiration of the handsome architecture and fine situation of the palace. He said it had been commenced about fifty years previously by his grandfather, Isaac Pasha, and had occupied more than twenty years in building. The masons had been brought chiefly from Wan, and the architects, painters, &c., from Ispahan. The Persians now understand but

little of building in stone, except for the formation of foundations and pavements: but their brick-work is the finest I ever saw. The Pasha asked me if I would like to go through the building, and I eagerly assented. Accordingly the Khasnadar, appointed as our cicerone, led us through the open court below to the largest mass of the building, overlooking the plain, and forming the most conspicuous portion when approaching from the west. A heavy massive doorway admitted us to a dark vestibule, opening into a large square hall, arched round, and lighted from the top through a domed roof, with doorways leading in various directions. Through one of these we entered a suite of numerous apartments of large size, the walls and ceilings richly painted in the Persian style, and inlaid with small compartments of enamelled glass and pieces of mirror. It was quite evident that we had got beyond that portion of the Mussulman world which looks upon the representation of any living animal as connected with idolatry, and an infringement of the second commandment, and

were now within the limits of those regions which, although they look upon themselves as Soonees, have adopted the usages of the Persians. The ornamental part of the palace, however, had suffered terribly from the successive invasions, and, according to the Khasnadar, chiefly from the Persians, and least from the Russians. Much was said as to the insatiable extortions of the Turkish Pasha, who had even ripped up the walls and ceilings of all the apartments in the house, except those of the Salamlik, in search of concealed treasure.

Ascending to the roof, we found ourselves on a fine flat pavement of polished stone, where, from different points, we obtained the most extensive views of the surrounding country, and the best survey of the various parts of the building. I now saw that, in constructing the latter, the object of defence had not been forgotten,—the walls, at some points eight feet in thickness, being pierced by loopholes, and surmounting the terraces, while the upper portions of the building, both on the roofs and within the

covered passages, had all their respective commands over courts below, and, in some instances, over each other.

The Koords are said to entertain a great dislike towards the three neighbouring nations, and especially towards the Russians; but although it must have been quite obvious to them, when I spoke on this subject, that I entertained politically Turkish or anti-Russian sentiments, as all Englishmen in the East do, more or less, they did not hesitate to declare that they had suffered more from the invading armies of their own faith than from the Russians, and accused the Turkish Pasha who had invaded the country, of having committed more devastation during a short residence, than the two other hostile armies had done together. He had utterly ruined some Christian villages, which never recovered his exactions; and he thus paved the way, in great measure, for the subsequent emigration of the Armenians within the Russian frontier, to the number it is believed, from this neighbourhood alone, of about two thousand

families. The Khasnadar concluded by observing that Temir or Demir Pasha, the Turkish commander, did not escape unpunished, for petitions having reached the Sultan, he was subjected to the usual consequences of incarceration and "squeezing" incident to such accusations.

One thing particularly worthy of notice in the castle was the good arrangement of the different kiosks, overlooking the splendid prospect below, as well as the general view from the numerous windows. The Turks universally appreciate a beautiful prospect, and they always conduct strangers to points where it may be obtained, without making any comment, as if it were unnecessary further to direct attention to it. The interior courts of the castle I had not an opportunity of minutely inspecting, as they formed the lodgings of the female section of the establishment, but by the Khasnadar's account, they were far superior to the portions we visited; which I can easily believe, having afterwards observed in Persia, where I sometimes lodged in the

largest palaces quite unoccupied, that the anderoon, or female apartments, were usually the only ones that could be called handsome. It may be worth while to observe that the whole building had, to the eyes of a person arriving from Turkey, a mosque-like appearance, if I may use the expression. High arches, very light yet solid, were surmounted with domes and points, which carried on the lower portions of the building quite into the sunshine in a most agreeable manner.

The neighbourhood, like that of Ani, abounds in stone of an excellent description for solid and ornamental building. Basalt is found in the heights rising from the plain just opposite the town, and an orange or rusty-coloured stone can be obtained in the direction of Diadeen, and a fine white calcareous sandstone close to the town.

From all I could learn during my excursion in this part of Koordistan, the peculiar situation of this race has not been overlooked by Russia. The Koords have always had the misfortune to be surrounded by con-

quering nations, possessing nothing estimable in their political or moral character, and who have uniformly endeavoured to subdue and oppress them. It is not extraordinary, therefore, that they should regard all strangers with distrust and suspicion, and even consider them as their natural enemies. Isolated and cut off, as it were, from all connexion with civilized countries, they have assumed the character of lawless freebooters; and as the Sultan, in all his attempts to establish his authority in the country, has shown that, in point of trustworthiness and fair-dealing, he was not exalted a single step above themselves, he has confirmed them in these habits. While I was in Koordistan, everybody spoke with indignation of what they termed his persecution of the Bey of Ravendouz, one of their highest chiefs, who was believed to have been strangled on his way back from a visit to the Sultan at Constantinople. The Russian Government in this quarter is well aware of the existence of these feelings among the Koords, and, of course, no way

anxious that the Porte should recover its influence in this remote portion of its empire. But here, as in Persia, it is quite apparent that, carrying on fruitless and exhausting hostilities against the distant provinces in revolt, or neighbours who can never be solidly incorporated in either empire, is retarding everything like improvement; and, as the Russian Government well knows, is quite as effective in deteriorating the resources of Turkey as an invasion of Cossacks: while, at the same time, it has the advantage of entailing on Russia no expenditure either of men or money.

Nothing could be more easy than for the Russian authorities on the opposite side, to have ejected from Kooroo-Moosoon, a position almost on neutral ground, the Gelalee Koords, who had established themselves there when I was passing, under their chief Abdullah; but, in point of fact, they wish the Koords not to be deprived of their strength upon the Turkish frontier, knowing that an approach to regular government is

impossible in a country where these fellows exist in their present state. The Turks, under Russian encouragement, on the other hand, are attempting, in their usual inefficient, and, to use a familiar phrase, bungling manner, to exterminate, or at least to overcome the Koords, in which they altogether fail, while it was very perceptible to me, from a conversation I had with the Russian consul at Erzeroum, that the prospect of establishing a good footing among the Koords was a primary consideration with the Russian officials.

Every step which Russia makes from the frontier towards Tabreez, is most important, not only to Turkey, but equally so to Persia.

Constructing a fortress such as Goomri, in an advanced and commanding position, may be compared to making a breaching battery near the walls of a city. In this, Russia may be said to possess, in a military sense, the whole open plain of Kars, and she can occupy the entire portion of the road between Erzeroum and Byazeed, and cut off

all communication between Turkey and Persia. As to the attempts at fortification on the road itself, such as Erzeroum, Diadeen, and even Khoï, they are worse than useless, begetting a false confidence on the part of the natives. Their very situation (being on the road, instead of in its front and covering it) is objectionable. It would probably be the best mode of strengthening these frontiers against Russia, to select points as nearly as possible opposite to those she has fortified, or is in course of fortifying, as sites for defences of simple construction, enclosing within their walls no more space than is requisite for garrisons perfectly capable of maintaining them.

In their desire to win over the Koords, the Russian authorities proceeded so far that, on the pretext that they were a migratory people, they claimed a right for them to cross the frontier for the purpose of grazing their cattle; and that even in Turkey they should still be looked upon as Russian subjects, and have no imposts to pay on that side. The whole eastern fron-

tier of Turkey is in the possession of the Koords, the Turk being only there occasionally as a governor, for most of the chiefs who have any power are Koords. This is part of the half-policy of the Turkish Government, which, without relinquishing its right to the countries at a distance from the capital, is satisfied everywhere to come to some compromise of this kind as regards a portion of the power, or rather, the profit derived from such districts.

The various tribes speaking the Koordish language extend from the Persian Gulf to the Caucasus, occupying a mountainous or extremely difficult country. They are a brave, hardy, and active people. As irregular cavalry they are far before any of the neighbouring nations; and among the mountains act on foot as first-rate riflemen. The absolute possession of such a country would be of great utility to a popular government, but altogether the reverse to one of a contrary character. The Koords, although they have occasionally

served zealously against the Persians, appear to have never liked the Turks ; and this feeling has always been kept alive by the ineffectual attempts of the Sultan to complete their subjugation. The feeling of nationality is a predominant feature in their character ; insomuch that for a native to describe anything as Koordish, signifies that it is of the best possible quality. Naturally, therefore, attempts to annihilate their chiefs, and introduce in their stead branches of the Constantinople government, excite their liveliest hostility. The attack, some years ago, on the Koords of Ravendouz, in which, for the first time in a very long period, the Turkish forces united with the Persian, added very materially to their distrust and dislike of both these nations ; and even tribes who had not been attacked, such as the Gelalees, broke off all intercourse with them, and retired into the mountains, plundering in every direction. I have no doubt it is the interest of Russia that the Koords should, to a certain degree, be weakened and scattered, though it has been

her crafty policy, while urging or encouraging Turkey in this course, to pretend to be their champion and friend. She has pursued a similar course among the Turkomans to the eastward of the Caspian; and, when in a contiguous part of Asia, I heard of dresses of honour having been given to the chiefs, at the same time that the Shah of Persia was encouraged to attack them from the south. The more these various tribes of barbarians weaken themselves by their incessant conflicts, the more they are paving the way for the dominion of such a power as Russia.

I do not think there is a place of greater importance than Byazeed, in a military point of view, in the whole of Western Asia. There is a continuous descent along the banks of the Euphrates to the Persian Gulf; but as this great valley conducts through the range of Mount Taurus into Syria, its value to Russia, on this account alone, must be obvious. It is much nearer to her present frontier, and much more accessible than Erzeroum, which lies on the

western branch of the Euphrates; and should the contingencies of the present war render it possible for Russia to push on a force into the northern part of Syria, the good-will of the Koords, at the moment of undertaking such an operation, would afford her an immense advantage.

There is another exceedingly strong pass at Byazeed, on the Persian side, where a very small regular force might completely seal the entry into Persia from the side of Erzeroum, except through the roads of central Koordistan. It may also be looked upon as a key to Koordistan, and to Diarbekir, Mousul, and the whole course of the Tigris, as far as Bagdad. I have no hesitation in saying that Russia, with the assistance of the Koordish tribes, could speedily establish a route, and march an army down this valley into Syria. The distance from Erivan to Aleppo is not above 500 miles,* if so much.

* The route by Aleppo, Diarbekir, and Wan, to Aderbyon from the Mediterranean, is quite practicable for an army.

I had an opportunity of obtaining a good account of some of the routes through Koordistan to the south of Byazeed, from an officer who visited those provinces, when the Turkish and Persian forces were carrying on hostilities against the Koordish Bey of Ravendouz. He left Tabreez in the middle of summer, his first object being to visit the Turkish camp, under Redschid Pasha; and passing through the towns of Dilmaun, Kootoo, and Wan, he proceeded along the south shore of the lake of Wan to Bidlis and Sert, crossing the Khabour and Tigris. He passed from there to Djezeereh-el-Omar, and recrossing the Tigris and Khabour rivers, went over the Zahoor range of mountains to Zabaur, when he came in view of Redschid Pasha's camp, established a little to the east of Akara. His regular force amounted to between seven and eight thousand men, besides irregular troops; and he had twelve pieces of cannon. The Pasha finding he had come from the Persian side, gave him, as he

thought, a rather sulky reception, stating what he afterwards discovered to be incorrect, that no one in his camp could read the communications in *Persian, of which his visitor was the bearer. The officer pursued his way nearly south, and crossed the Zaub, turning in an easterly direction to Hareer, where he found the camp of the Pasha of Bagdad. From thence he went to Arbela and Alten Kiopri on the little Zaub, and by Kerkook to Lachigaun, where he found the Persian force, under the Ameer-i-Nizam.

He described the country he passed through as mountainous from Dilmaun to Wan, which lies in a fine plain to the south-east of the lake. The road was good, and might everywhere be made practicable for wheels; and in the country adjoining, it was generally very well cultivated. There were many fine plains, and though the rivers were all small, running chiefly in torrent beds, there was abundance of water. Sheep seemed to be numerous, but there

were few cattle, and villages were very rare.

From Wan to Bidlis the road was chiefly through mountains to the south of the lake, with an occasional plain. A part of the road, for a distance of four or five miles, was difficult even for horsemen. To my informant, who had just arrived from Persia, where buildings of stone are rare, Bidlis appeared "a singular-looking town, built of large stones, with a castle seated on a rock, and each house resembling a fortification."

The Khabour has two branches which join in the vicinity of Bidlis. The first half of the road to Sert is what the traveller described as "really bad." The road, in descending the bank of the river, passed through a remarkable opening in the rock about twenty feet in height, forming for a few yards a sort of tunnel; and this was succeeded by a second passage of the same description. The journey to Sert occupied two days; the road, a difficult defile along

the Khabour, here called the Bidlis-Soo, being nowhere good.

Sert, which stands on a well-cultivated plain, is surrounded by gardens teeming with melons, cucumbers, &c., but having very few trees, and mountains rise in the background. There are said to be antiquities at some distance from the town.

From Sert there is a good road to the Tigris. My informant then traversed a mountainous country to Mediad, a fine large village on the bank of the river, where he entered on a very rocky plain, affording no water except in deep wells. The inhabitants are a mixture of Koords and Armenians, called Yakobees or Jacobites. The road continues flat and rocky to Djezeereh-el-Omar, an island of the Tigris, and an old Roman frontier town. At an Ordoo, or Koordish Camp, he crossed the Tigris in a boat. From the Zahoor range of heights, an immense plain extended to within a few miles of Akara, and must have been the plain of Mousul. Roads quite practicable for horse-

men, crossed the mountains and a hilly country to Redschid Pasha's camp. Ali Pasha of Bagdad's camp, at Harcer, was reached from here by a hilly road; and Sulimanieh was distant three marches, the last part of the way being bad.

END OF VOL. I.

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