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SOMNINI DE MANONCOURT, C.N.S.
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TRAVELS
IN
UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT.
BY
C. S. SONNINI.

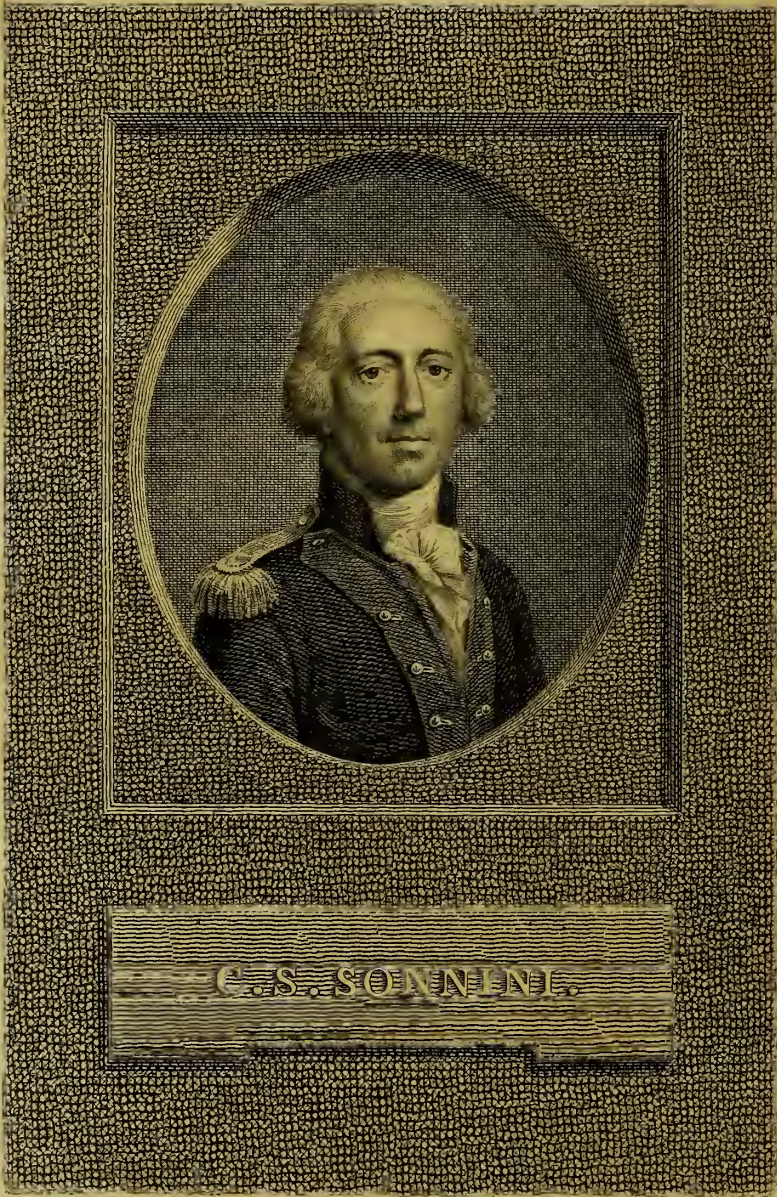
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Bonnet del. 7^o Year.

Maker Smith sc.

Published by J. Debrill Piccadilly, Oct. 12. 1799.

TRAVELS
IN
UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT,

UNDERTAKEN BY ORDER OF
THE OLD GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE;

BY
C. S. SONNINI,
MEMBER OF SEVERAL SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY SOCIETIES; AND FORMERLY
AN OFFICER AND ENGINEER IN THE FRENCH NAVY.

Illustrated by Engravings,

CONSISTING OF
PORTRAITS, VIEWS, PLANS, ANTIQUITIES, PLANTS, ANIMALS, &c.
DRAWN ON THE SPOT, UNDER THE AUTHOR'S INSPECTION.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED
A MAP OF THE COUNTRY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

———Tolerantia rerum
Spernebat cunctas infuperata minas.
Vertice nudato, ventos pluviaſque ferebam.
Non mihi ſolſtitium, non grave frigus erat.
.....
Quamvis exiguo poteram requieſcere fomno,
Et quamvis modico membra fovere cibo.

CORN. GALLUS, *Eleg. prima. Senecæ. Deſer.*

L O N D O N :
PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

1800.

TRAVELER

1900

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN presenting to the public the following translation, I should probably have refrained from troubling them with any address, had not a rival production appeared, and under such circumstances as to render some explanation on my part more a matter of necessity than of choice.

Having long been informed that Sonnini intended to publish his Travels in Egypt, I was induced, from my taste for natural history, and a knowledge of his talents as a naturalist, to engage in the difficult task of giving them to the public in an English dress. Accordingly, through the medium of the daily papers^a, I announced my intention as far back as the 4th of last June; and, the moment I obtained a copy of the work, I put the plates into the hands of some of the most eminent engravers, and was proceeding in the prosecution of my design with all imaginable ardour, when, on the 20th of August, a translation of the same work was published, under the name of HENRY HUNTER, D. D. Notwithstanding the forward state of my plates, and the considerable progress made in printing

^a Morning Chronicle, June 4—Morning Post, June 4 and 28—True Briton, June 5 and 28—Sun, June 7—Star, June 5—General Evening Post, June 8—Times, June 28—and Evening Mail, June 7.

my-manuscript, I was more than once inclined to suppress the whole, conceiving that one good translation of a foreign work was quite sufficient. But upon a perusal of Dr. Hunter's production, I discovered, that it abounded with so many *lively* images, so many brilliant sallies of wit, such a multiplicity of flashes of merriment; in short, that the ingenious translator had so greatly improved upon his original, and indulged so much in beautiful paraphrases, that I could not help considering he had carried his pleasantries rather too far, and that this exuberance of fancy might not suit the taste of every class of readers. For these reasons, I judged that a *serious* translation of Sonnini's Travels might not, perhaps, be altogether unacceptable. Should therefore a person who takes up my work, expect to find any thing more than a mere transcript of the original, he would be most egregiously disappointed. No—my sluggish imagination could not take so high a flight as the soaring genius of Dr. Hunter; yet admiring, as I do, talents even in a rival, I shall present my readers with a few specimens of his wondrous production.

In vol. i. p. 199, the reverend translator thus martially describes a misadventure which befell Baron de Tott, Sonnini, &c. on their journey from Alexandria to Rosetta^b:

“ The ass, loaded with *provisions* for the belly, enraged at bearing
 “ a burden of *so much importance*, shook off her paniers: bottles,
 “ pies, plates, &c. all was reduced to *shivers*. Half an hour almost
 “ was spent in collecting the *wreck* of this *balt*; and a horse, less
 “ *headstrong*, was loaded with the fragments. We were speedily

^b Vol. i. p. 220 of the original—P. 130 of this edition.

“ overtaken

“ overtaken by the night ; it was impossible to have been darker ;
 “ and *besides* the *irksomeness* of *marching* a long time without seeing
 “ any thing, in regions utterly unknown, it was to me as if I had
 “ not quitted Alexandria. I had, as my particular *suit*, an old fer-
 “ vant, *versed in the art of travelling*, a young draughtsman, and a
 “ naval gunner. We *proceeded* in a *close platoon*, and, together with
 “ a janizary, *composed the advanced guard*. After having got half
 “ way on our *route*, we *halted* to take a little rest. - - - - - In the
 “ midst of this *burly-burly*, my little *cohort* was *mounted* from the
 “ moment the signal for *decamping* was made, &c.”

Let any one read a detail of military movements from the pen of the Archduke Charles, Suwarrow, Massena, or Buonaparte, how languid, how tame must it appear, after this soldier-like recital of Henry Hunter, D. D. !

Who tunes his lyre to more heroic strains,
 And *marches* his *platoons* o'er Egypt's plains ;
 Then to firm *cohorts* changes those *platoons*—
 What more could Melas^c with his brave dragoons?

But, if I fall so far short of my reverend competitor, in improving upon the original in the narrative part, I am still less able to keep pace with him in *ὑποτυπωσις*, or lively description, in which he verily *outhunters* Hunter, and represents objects in such strong and glowing colours as to make them appear present to the reader's imagination. Thus, by the pencil of the skilful artist, the canvass is animated by those masterly touches which give life to the picture,

c A celebrated Austrian general of cavalry.

and irradiate the furrounding scenery. In vol. i. page 362^d, the Doctor says: “ *On the top of the tower, the view extends itself all around; it has no other bounds than those which nature has set. Immenſe plains develope themſelves to the fight; but how diverſified are the pictures which it is permitted to wander over! How majestic are they! and on what other ſpot could we behold ſuch an aſſemblage as this!*”

See in their courſe, each tranſitory thought,
Fix'd by his pen, a laſting eſſence take;
Each dream, in Fancy's airy colouring wrought,
To local ſymmetry and life awake!

It is generally admitted that, in order to impart appropriate energy to his language, a writer ſhould feel his ſubject. Of this feeling we have a ſtriking inſtance in the following paſſage, in which the *ſeraphic* tranſlator has, in point of grace, delicacy, elegance, ſoftneſs, and warmth of expreſſion, outdone Ovid, Catullus, Propertius, Tibullus, Sappho, Lucian, or even the voluptuous Johannes Secundus. *Cedite Romani ſcriptores, cedite Graii!*

“ After having *glutted* his favourite and criminal inclination, the man of thoſe countries retires to his harem, and there burns a few grains of incenſe in honour of Nature, to whom he has juſt been offering a horrid outrage; and with what worſhip, *ſpirit* of love, does he honour her! Abominable ſacrificer! he knows nothing of thoſe *gentle reciprocations* of affection, of that delicious oblivion, of thoſe ardent tranſports of two ſouls which underſtand *each other*,

^d Vol. i. p. 404 of the original—P. 235 of this edition.

“ and cleave to *each other*; no *delicacy* in the *accessories*, no *decency*
 “ of *arrangement*, nothing *graceful* in the *details*; *all* is brutal;
 “ EVERY THING WANTS ANIMATION, every thing is restricted
 “ to physical propensity the most disgusting^e.”

Sedley has that prevailing gentle art,
 That can with a resistless charm impart
 The loosest wishes to the chafest heart. }

IN ANCIENT HISTORY, Dr. Hunter's classical readings vie with his improvements in science. The author of the Greek Itinerary, called by historians *Antoninus*, has received from him the more apt English surname of *Anthony*^f. To *Canea*, a city in the island of Candia, he gives the new appellation of *Caneus*^g. A *Curdeen* he calls a *Curd*^h; and the celebrated Egyptian city, built by Adrian, in honour of his favourite Antinous, is, by the Doctor, entitled *Antinoe*ⁱ, instead of the more harsh-sounding *Antinoopolis*. Lastly; the ancient *Heracleum*, mentioned by Diodorus, Tacitus, Strabo, &c. he has not only himself called *Heraclea*^k, but also adduced Dr. Shaw as his authority, although, in *my* copy of Dr. Shaw's Travels, the passage to which Sonnini alludes, is to be found in page 337, in the following words: “ At *Medea*, the ancient *Heracium*, four
 “ leagues further, is another branch, &c.” *Heraclea*, I was fo

^e Vol. i. p. 252—Vol. i. p. 278 of original—P. 163 of this edition.

^f Vol. iii. p. 191—Vol. iii. p. 191 of original—P. 616 of this edition.

^g Vol. iii. p. 106—Vol. iii. p. 120 of original—P. 560 of this edition.

^h Vol. ii. p. 270—Vol. ii. p. 311 of original—P. 426 of this edition.

ⁱ Vol. iii. p. 37, &c.—Vol. iii. p. 41 of original—P. 515, &c. of this edition.

^k Vol. i. p. 204—Vol. i. p. 226 of original—P. 134 of this edition.

ignorant as to think, was the name of an ancient city in Sicily, near Agrigentum, and of forty other cities, built in different parts of the world, in honour of Hercules.

Let me now do justice to my reverend rival as a NATURALIST.

IN ORNITHOLOGY, I strove to attain all possible accuracy; but, to parody the lamentable ejaculation of poor Agnès Sorel, the beautiful and tender-hearted mistress of Charles IX.

C'est donc en vain que l'on fait ce qu'on peut,
N'est pas toujours bon traducteur qui veut.

Here, *miserabile diètu!* I again stumbled; for upon comparing my book with that of the sapient divine, I find that we differ not a little, both in our nomenclature and descriptions. To a bird called in French *lavandière* (*motacilla alba*), which I translate *wagtail*, he gives the denomination of *laundress*¹. The *upupa epops*, the bird known to naturalists as the *hoopoe*, or *dung-bird*, he calls a *lap-wing*^m, &c. The Doctor has, moreover, enriched the English language with the words *goëlands* (*larus canus*)ⁿ, *chevaliers* (*tringa littorea*)^o, *maubêches* (*tringa callidris*)^o, *chevêches* (*strix passerina*)^p, &c. though I had the stupidity to imagine that

¹ Vol. i. p. 358—Vol. i. p. 398 of original—P. 232 of this edition.

Vol. i. p. 366—Vol. i. p. 408 of original—P. 237 of this edition.

Vol. iii. p. 23—Vol. iii. p. 25 of original—P. 506 of this edition.

^m Vol. i. p. 308—Vol. i. p. 408 of original—P. 199 of this edition.

Vol. iii. p. 27—Vol. iii. p. 30 of original—P. 509 of this edition.

ⁿ Vol. i. p. 50—Vol. i. p. 55 of original—P. 34 of this edition.

Vol. iii. p. 26—Vol. iii. p. 28 of original—P. 507 of this edition.

^o Vol. i. p. 206—Vol. i. p. 228 of original—P. 135 of this edition.

Vol. i. p. 304—Vol. i. p. 338 of original—P. 197 of this edition.

gulls, variegated horsemen, dusky sandpipers, little owls, &c. founded more familiarly to the ear of an English ornithologist. What the Doctor terms the *superior coverings* ^q of the wings, I call the *lesser wing coverts*; and again, I give the name of the *lesser wing coverts* to what he calls the *upper wing coverts* ^r.

If I could commit such terrible blunders in ornithology, it will readily be conceived that I was likely to do the same in ICHTHYOLOGY. Accordingly I find, to my no small mortification, that the *squalus catulus* of Linnæus Dr. Hunter calls the *sea-cat* ^s, and I foolishly supposed it to be the *morgag*. The *esox belone*, which I denominate the *gar-fish*, he names the *eel* ^s. The *perca labrax*, which I conceived was the *basse*, he calls the *wolf* ^s; and lastly, to the *mullus barbatus*, that I took to be the *bearded mullet*, he gives the name of *roach* ^t, which he says it is interesting to the lovers of good cheer to know is to be found at Alexandria ^u.

In ZOOLOGY, I alike feel my inferiority. What I have termed a *Guinea-pig*, I now find should be *Indian-pig* ^x; and the monkeys, which, after the common English zoologists ^v, I have termed *macaque* and *egret*, should be denominated *macaca* and *ai-*

^q Vol. i. p. 309—Vol. i. p. 344 of original—P. 200 of this edition.

^r Vol. ii. p. 238—Vol. ii. p. 274 of original—P. 404 of this edition.

^s Vol. i. p. 196, 197—Vol. i. p. 217 of original—P. 128 of this edition.

^t Vol. i. p. 197—Vol. i. p. 217 of original—P. 129 of this edition.

^u The lovers of *good cheer* will hardly agree with the reverend ichthyologist in his opinion of the roach.

^x Vol. i. p. 302—Vol. i. p. 335 of original—P. 545 of this edition.

^v Smellie's Buffon, vol. viii. p. 140, and Kerr's Linnæus, vol. i. p. 65 and 68.

grette^z. Lastly, by virtue of his unlimited power, the Doctor transforms monkies into dogs.

<p>“ Toutes les figures Egyptiennes “ qui ont des queues, font des <i>cyno- “ céphales</i> ou des finges.” Vol. iii. p. 179.</p>	<p>“ All the Egyptian figures which “ have tails are <i>dogs</i> and monkies.” Vol. iii. p. 159—P. 593 of this edi- tion.</p>
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In the parts relating to BOTANY, I took uncommon pains^a; but, alas! how vain sometimes are human efforts! The *cactus opuntia* of Linnæus, which I rendered in English by *Indian fig*, Dr. Hunter denominates *racket*^b. To the *tageta erectes*, which I vulgarly call *African marygold*, he substitutes the more elegant appellation of *great Indian pink*^c. *Une plante prolifère*, which I translate *a proliferous plant*, he more than once calls *a prolifisc plant*^d; and the *ficus sycomorus* he designates by the familiar name of *fycomore*^e, while I stretched my brain to give it the long title of *mulberry-leaved Egyptian fig-tree*; and in this case I have no doubt but that the reverend botanist is perfectly correct; though, upon my asking my gardener the other day, whether he ever heard of a fycomore bearing figs, the ignorant fellow laughed in my face. Well may the Doctor exclaim—

^z Vol. iii. p. 83—Vol. iii. p. 93 of original—P. 195 of this edition.

^a P. 593 of this edition.

^b Vol. i. p. 316—Vol. i. p. 352 of original—P. 205 of this edition.

^c Vol. i. p. 318—Vol. i. p. 354 of original—P. 206 of this edition.

^d Vol. iii. p. 158—Vol. iii. p. 177 of original—P. 592 of this edition.

^e Vol. i. p. 316—Vol. i. p. 352 of original—P. 205 of this edition.

By heav'ns! I've merit, say whate'er you please!
 Can name the vegetable tribes with ease---
 What monkey walks the woods or climbs a tree,
 Whose genealogy's unknown to me?

IN THEOLOGY, it undoubtedly never could be expected that a *layman* should cope with a *Doctor of Divinity*, or pretend to illustrate the scriptures by the travels of a French republican; but the world is certainly much indebted to the reverend translator for a new exposition of the celebrated axiom of our Saviour, which has much puzzled commentators and alarmed the rich: "It is easier for a camel
 " to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the
 " kingdom of God." Dr. Hunter seems, by his learned note, to be of opinion, that by the eye of a needle is meant the wicket of a convent in the desert of St. Macarius ^f.

IN MYTHOLOGY, the learned Doctor is no less superior to me, and to Sonnini, as well as to Plutarch, Diodorus, and other ancient writers. We had conceived, fervently adhering to the Egyptian legend, that the god Osiris had been murdered and cut to pieces by the giant Typhon; but our divine has corrected this common error, and with strict poetical justice made the monster fall under the more powerful arm of the Egyptian deity,

" Typhon, ce géant, qui avoit
 " ôsé déclarer la guerre aux dieux,
 " et qui enfin avoit coupé en pièces
 " Osiris, l'une des divinités de l'
 " Egypte." Vol. ii. p. 361.

" Typhon, that giant, who had
 " dared to wage war *with* the gods,
 " and had at last *been cut to pieces by*
 " Osiris, one of the deities of Egypt." Vol. ii. p. 313 ^g.

^f Vol. ii. p. 155.

^g P. 454 of this edition.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

For this deviation, both from ancient mythology and his original, Dr. Hunter has a precedent of the first authority in Mr. Sheridan; who, in his late celebrated drama, has, with the same laudable view, made the Peruvians conquer and kill Pizarro, in direct contradiction to history and Kotzebue.

Though the Doctor's travels by sea probably never extended beyond a voyage from Leith to London, he appears to understand SEA TERMS full as well as that thorough-bred seaman Tom Pipes. In vol. iii. page 34, he tells us, that a gust of wind taking our sails *abead*, endangered our foundering^h; and again, in vol. i. page 24, he says, that it was found necessary to dismount the four *sternmost* guns; to make *cabins on deck*; and that the *powder-room* was so encumbered with *temporary* beds, that it was impossible to *turn about* in itⁱ.

The science of NAVIGATION, Dr. Hunter has also vastly improved, by adding a *thirty-third* point to the compass. In vol. i. page 263, he tells us, that the Nile forms a considerable elbow to the *east-quarter-east*^k. This improvement affords the most sanguine hopes, that ere long the Doctor will discover the longitude.

In NAVAL ARCHITECTURE, he surpasses the celebrated *Monge*^l, of invading memory; and, like another *D'Arçon*^m, completely

^h Vol. iii. p. 38 of original—P. 513 of this edition.

ⁱ Vol. iii. p. 38 of original—P. 16 of this edition.

^k Vol. i. p. 25 of original—P. 236 of this edition.

^l The projector of the enormous rafts, by which the armies of France, horse and foot, bag and baggage, were to be conveyed to the trembling shores of Britain.

^m The famous French engineer who planned the formidable gun-boats used by the Spaniards in the attack of Gibraltar on the 13th of September, 1782. These vessels

completely fortifies his vessels; for, in vol. iii. page 278, he begins by making on board a *masch*, or large lighter used on the Nile, a *gun-wall*, and then erects on the *gun-wall* a *bastion* of *fascines* and *mud*; though, in page 281, he very ingenuously acknowledges that his *bastion* of *mud* yielded to the fury of the waves.

IN CIVIL ARCHITECTURE, Dr. Hunter displays no less intelligence. In vol. iii. page 166, he tells us, that the *summit* of the temple (of Isis at Dendera) is *flattened*, and formed of very large stones, which are laid from one pillar to another, or on two *walls* of *separation* ⁿ.

But indeed the Doctor seems to have made himself master of the whole circle of the arts and sciences, and may not improperly be termed an ambulating Encyclopædia: “ He putteth not his candle
“ under a bushel—He hideth not his talent in a napkin.”

IN GEOGRAPHY, I am completely foiled, as will be seen by comparing Dr. Hunter's translation of the following passage, first with the original, and then with my version °.

“ Leur situation est facile à re-
“ connoître par le tombeau d'un
“ Saint Turc, lequel est bâti *vis-à-*
“ *vis* sur la rive *orientale* du Nil.”
Vol. ii. p. 278.

“ Their situation is easily distin-
“ guishable by the tomb of a Turkish
“ saint, which is built *in a line* with
“ them on the *same* bank of the
“ Nile.” Vol. ii. p. 242.

IN AGRICULTURE, Henry Hunter shines superior to Arthur Young. What Sonnini calls *wheat*, this reverend translator constantly terms

vessels were deemed impervious, either to shot or shells. Drinkwater, in his History of the Siege of Gibraltar, minutely describes their construction.

° P. 598 of this edition.

° P. 406 of this edition.

corn, and *vice versa*^p; and spurning the common dialect of cultivators, he catches figures from animal life, and boldly speaks of wheat being liable to *miscarriages* and the *ricketts*^q.

In *NOSOLOGY*, Dr. Hunter has made some valuable discoveries. The plague, which has generally been considered to be of all diseases the most alarmingly contagious, we find from the Doctor's learned work to have nothing of that character in Egypt.

“ Il est néanmoins très-certain que
“ la peste, *endémique* dans plusieurs
“ autres contrées de l'Orient, ne l'est
“ point en Egypte, et qu'elle n'y
“ prend jamais sa source.” Vol. ii.
p. 18.

“ It is a matter of absolute cer-
“ tainty, however, that the plague,
“ which is *epidemic* in several coun-
“ tries of the East, is not so in
“ Egypt, where it never originates.”
Vol. ii. p. 16^q.

And again, in vol. i. page 230^r, the Doctor says, that Mr. Pauw erroneously supposes the pestilence to be an *epidemic* disease in Egypt. In vol. iii. page 107, the Doctor likewise informs us, that

“ C'étoit aussi, suivant Galien,
“ une maladie *endémique* à Alexan-
“ drie.” Vol. iii. p. 120.

“ This (leprosy) was also, accord-
“ ing to Galen, an *epidemic* disease
“ at Alexandria^s.”

In vol. iii. page 255, the learned nosologist communicates to his readers the following important fact, namely, “ that the fat of the
“ hog renders the Egyptians more liable than elsewhere to the *le-*

^p Vol. iii. p. 198—Vol. iii. p. 224 of original—P. 620 of this edition.

^q P. 254 of this edition.

^r Vol. i. p. 255 of original—P. 150 of this edition.

^s P. 500 of this edition.

“ *profy* ; a disease peculiar to them, and which, under a burning sky, might easily *degenerate into leprofy* †.”

In ΖΟΟΤΟΜΥ, I shall adduce, in proof of my ignorance, a solitary fact, taken from the Doctor's able history of the jerbo †.

<p>“ Il a lieu de croire que l'ac- “ couplement des jerbos a, comme “ celui des chats, des instans dou- “ loureux, ou même que le <i>gland</i>, “ une fois gonflé dans la <i>vulve</i>, ne “ peut en être retiré qu'au bout de “ quelque tems, ainsi qu'il arrive “ aux chiens.” Vol. i. p. 174.</p>	<p>“ There is reason to believe, that “ the copulation of the jerbos must, “ like that of cats, be accompanied “ with moments of pain, or even “ that the <i>gland</i>, once inserted into “ the <i>female organ</i>, cannot be for “ some time extracted, as is the case “ with the canine species.” Vol. i. P. 157.</p>
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The *lively* translation of Dr. Hunter abounds with so many Hibernianisms and Gallicisms, that his readers might suspect him to be an Irishman or a Frenchman, rather than a native of Great Britain. The Gallicisms are so frequent, that I may refer to almost every page of the Doctor's production. I cannot, however, suppress my admiration of the two following :

<p>“ Il y en a de toutes les nations, et “ leur affluence qui <i>formoit épigram-</i> “ <i>me</i> avec l'un des vœux des che- “ valiers étoit singulièrement perni- “ cieuse aux équipages des vais- “ seaux,” &c. Vol. i. p. 66.</p>	<p>“ They (the courtesans of Malta) “ are the refuse of all nations ; and “ their concourse, which <i>formed an</i> “ <i>epigram</i> with one of the vows of the “ knights, was singularly pernicious “ to the crews of ships,” &c. Vol. i. p. 60 †.</p>
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† Vol. iii. p. 292 of the original—P. 660 of this edition.

‡ P. 104 of this edition,

‡ P. 40 of this edition.

“ Ces mêmes femmes se visitent
 “ fréquemment entre elles. La dé- “ These same women frequently
 “ cence et la retenue ne font pas “ visit each other. Decency and
 “ toujours *les frais* de leurs conver- “ reserve do not always *defray the*
 “ sations.” Vol. i. p. 284. “ *expense* of their conversation.” Vol. i.
 p. 258^γ.

The Hibernianisms could not be surpassed by any Irishman whatever. In vol. i. page 57, the facetious Doctor informs us, that the *ridge* of the houses is a *flat terrace*^z. In vol. i. page 246, he says, that the Orientalists have no idea of *taking a walk*, except on *horseback*^a. Lastly, in vol. i. page 319, he acquaints us, that it is customary at Rossetta to *cut the throat* of the wild ducks, and, *in that state, to keep them alive*, after having broken their wings^b.

There are parts of Sonnini's work, of a certain tendency, which might, perhaps, have been as well suppressed; and had I merely consulted my own sentiments, I could have wished to omit such passages. But some of them are extremely interesting to the naturalist, while others are no less so to the inquisitive observer of the manners of mankind. Besides, as by such scrupulous delicacy I might have incurred the charge of having given a *garbled* and *imperfect* translation, I have thought proper to render this edition *complete* and *unmutilated in any respect whatever*; only taking care to avoid, as much as possible, offending the chaste ear, by rendering the passages alluded to, in a manner adapted to the understanding of the scientific rather than to that of the general reader. This is my apology for

^γ P. 167 of this edition.

^z Vol. i. p. 63 of original—P. 39 of this edition.

^a Vol. i. p. 272 of original—P. 160 of this edition.

^b Vol. i. p. 355 of original—P. 206 of this edition.

not having ventured to translate those parts in that plain and un-foppifhiflicated manner which has been adopted by the Rev. Dr. Hunter.

FOR ELEGANCE OF DICTION, I *cannot hold the candle* to the Doctor, and while I have *ftuck* clofe to the true vernacular idiom, he has *interlarded* his performance with the following elegant and fanciful expreffions: *burly burly* ^c; *fifty-cuffs* ^d; *puzzling one's brains* ^e; it would have been *all over* with me ^f; very much *againft the grain* ^g; *jog-trot* ^h; Jews obliged to be *fbod* in a peculiar manner ⁱ; *choufc* ^k; *belabouring* them foundly ^l; making a *may-game* of mankind ^m: *cum multis aliis*.

IN PURITY OF STYLE, the Doctor is pre-eminent, and infinitely tranfcends the moft claffical writer of the age. *Ex.*

“ Indeed, how can we believe that an animal *whofe* thick fur
“ fufficiently indicates that *he* is the native of a cold climate, *which*
“ delights in hilly and thickly-fhaded forefts, fhould equally ac-
“ custom *himfelf* to live in wafte and fandry plains, which a fcorch-
“ ing fun heats and dries up, and in which *he* could find no means
“ of fubfiftence ⁿ?”

Dr. Hunter feems to be perfectly aware that a due attention to NUMBERS in the compofition of profe as well as in verfification, conftitutes that harmony which “ charms the ear, and captivates the

^c Vol. i. p. 29 and 199.

^d Vol. iii. p. 169.

^e Vol. iii. p. 216.

^f Vol. iii. p. 218.

^g Vol. iii. p. 216.

^h Vol. i. p. 218.

ⁱ Vol. i. p. 242.

^k Vol. iii. p. 232.

^l Vol. iii. p. 150.

^m Vol. iii. p. 46.

ⁿ Vol. iii. p. 182—Vol. iii. p. 206 of the original—P. 606 of this edition.

“ mind.”

“ mind.” Dr. Johnson himself was not more happy in rounding a period; and throughout this veteran translator's whole version a single anticlimax is not to be found. On this point I adduce the first passage that has accidentally occurred.

“ I had in my possession, for a long time, a most beautiful Angora
 “ cat. Long and silky hairs covered *it* entirely; *its* thick tail
 “ formed a magnificent plume, which the animal elevated at pleasure
 “ above *its* body. Not one spot, not one shade tarnished the dazzling
 “ lustre of *its* coat. *Its* nose, and the turn of *its* lips, were of a
 “ tender rose colour. Two large eyes sparkled in *its* rounded head,
 “ the one of which was a light yellow, and the other blue. This
 “ beautiful cat had still more of amability than of grace in *its*
 “ movements and in *its* attitudes. With the physiognomy of good-
 “ nefs, *she* possessed a gentleness truly interesting. *You* might treat
 “ *her* in what manner *you* pleased, never did *her* claws advance from
 “ their sheaths. Sensible to kindness, *she* licked the hand that
 “ carested *her*, even that which tormented *her*. On a journey
 “ *she* reposed tranquilly on *your* knees, &c.” Vol. i. p. 291
 and 292.

In page 653 of *this* translation it will be seen that an Egyptian physician prescribed, in a case of fever, bits of paper with certain characters written thereon, which his patient was to swallow. I would, upon the same ground, recommend the perusal of the preceding passage, as an admirable remedy for a pain in the bowels, for which I am persuaded it will prove as infallible a specific as a draught of four small beer.

Though

Though so superior a production as Dr. Hunter's had no need of a patron, but might well have stood upon the firm basis of its own intrinsic and unspeakable merit, the Doctor wisely thought that any name, however great, would receive additional lustre by being associated with his; and he has accordingly inscribed his work "To the Right Honourable William Pitt, Chancellor of his Majesty's Exchequer, under Providence, the Bulwark between French Ambition and the Liberties of Mankind." Of all the compliments that were ever paid to the *Premier*, certain I am that none could be more gratifying to his feelings than to see his name prefixed to so correct and elegant a performance as Dr. Henry Hunter's Translation of Sonnini's Travels. Surely Mr. Pitt will not have the ingratitude to suffer this luminary of science and literature "to blush unseen, and waste his sweetness on the desert air."

I must here inform the reader that, by a foolish prejudice, I was ridiculous enough to suppose, that, in all literary composition, SOLECISMS were to be studiously avoided; but what innovation may not an established author practise? Dr. Hunter has accordingly availed himself of this privilege in innumerable instances, and, disdainful of the *servile* rules of GRAMMAR, at once confounded singular and plural, pronouns personal and impersonal, &c. in a most unprecedented and whimsical variety. *Ex.*

"The *colours* of the plumage of the percnopters *was* not the same in all the individuals °."

"Funds were set apart for *its* support (speaking of the ichneu-

° Vol. iii. p. 85—Vol. iii. p. 96 of the original—P. 546 of this edition.

“ mon). *They* served up to *him*, as to cats, bread steeped in milk,
 “ or fish of the Nile cut down in morsels, and it was generally for-
 “ bidden to kill any of the race ^p.”

“ I found a *chrysolal* attached to the tuft of my cap ; *she* stuck so
 “ close, that I could not tear *it* off, &c. ^q.”

“ The houhou is not a solitary bird ; *they* go in pairs ; *she* sits on
 “ *her* eggs and rears *her* brood. *It* does not go to seek for the
 “ thick shades of the forest ^r.”

“ But even these asylums, which *the quail* has not always suffi-
 “ cient strength to reach, and the distance of which frequently occa-
 “ sions *its* loss, proves also places of destruction to *them* ^s.”

In his preface, Dr. Hunter, with peculiar modesty, says, “ he
 “ flatters himself that his translation will be found a fair and faith-
 “ ful transcript of the original.” We never feel so bold as in assert-
 ing truth. Armed with this ægis, the Doctor may bid defiance to
 the most fastidious critics, and, without fear of being put to the
 blush, challenge the Reviewers to point out a single instance of *incor-*
rectness or *want* of *fidelity* in *his* translation ^t. The following pas-
 sages from it are only improvements upon the original :

“ L'on

^p Vol. i. p. 295—Vol. i. p. 329 of the original—P. 190 of this edition.

^q Vol. iii. p. 131—Vol. iii. p. 148 of the original—P. 576 of this edition.

^r Vol. i. p. 307—Vol. i. p. 341 of the original—P. 199 of this edition.

^s Vol. iii. p. 320—Vol. iii. p. 364 of the original—P. 704 of this edition.

^t I cannot here forbear inserting, from the preface to Chambaud's quarto Dic-
 tionary, a passage which I am afraid some readers may be apt to apply to the author
 of *this* translation ; for no person surely could have the hardihood to apply it to
 Henry Hunter, D. D. !!!

“ The wretched translations which we daily see of foreign productions, evidently prove
 “ that.

<p>“ L'on apportoit sur les marchés “ de Rosséte une grande quantité “ de ces oiseaux : ils s'y vendoient à “ <i>très bien compte.</i>” Vol. i. p. 355.</p> <p>“ Pline en parle comme étant “ <i>bonne à manger et à bruler.</i>” Vol. iii. p. 256.</p> <p>“ S'il faut en croire <i>la critique.</i>” Vol. iii. p. 16.</p>	<p>“ These birds were brought to “ the markets of Rossétta, and were “ sold to a <i>very good account.</i>” Vol. i. p. 206^u.</p> <p>“ Pliny mentions it (oil of sesamum) “ as being equally <i>unfit</i> to eat or to “ burn.” Vol. iii. p. 225^x.</p> <p>“ If we must believe a certain <i>cri-</i> “ <i>tic.</i>” Vol. iii. p. 15^y.</p>
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“ that their authors do not thoroughly understand the language from which they trans-
 late. They even confound the common and proper nouns. Thus, among an infinite
 “ number of instances which could be brought of their ignorance, the translator of
 “ the Age of Louis XIV. speaks of those famous lines made upon a child killed by
 “ procuring abortion, called in French *un avorton*, as if *M. l'Avorton* was the name of
 “ the author. He writes that St. Anthony's gate, one of the gates of Paris, was de-
 “ corated like a *bearse*, instead of *fortified with a portcullis*. But the highest of all is
 “ in Voltaire's Epistle to some Men of Letters, translated in one of the Magazines, that
 “ Descartes was banished from Batavia. Batavia! ay, Batavia, in the sense of our
 “ translator, is English for *une ville Batave*, an't please you. Aaron Hill, however,
 “ translated some years ago this verse of Voltaire with the same expression, justly.

‘ *La grandeur d'un Batave est de vivre sans maître.*

‘ A Belgian's glory is to have no king.’

“ The difference between the two translators is very plain. The one was a gentleman,
 “ who endeavoured to deserve the esteem of the public; the other a bookseller's
 “ drudge, who wrote for bread; and from the latter no good production can be ex-
 “ pected. How can it be otherwise? A man who translates for so much a sheet is
 “ obliged to do a certain quantity of his task every day. If he meets with any diffi-
 “ culty, any thing hard to be understood in his author, he cannot afford time to
 “ meditate upon the matter, still less to consult either books or men. He is in
 “ haste; hunger pleads dispatch; he cannot stop, he must go on, and write what
 “ comes uppermost.”

^u P. 206 of this edition.

^x P. 638 of this edition.

^y P. 500 of this edition.

“ Des grains de <i>pluie</i> .” Vol. iii. p. 44.	“ A shower of <i>hail</i> .” Vol. iii. p. 40 ^z .
“ La rudeſſe aride et brûlante du “ <i>ſol</i> .” Vol. iii. p. 91.	“ The oppreſſive ſcorching heat of “ the <i>ſun</i> .” Vol. iii. p. 81 ^a .
“ Le prix du <i>roulage</i> .” Vol. iii. p. 214.	“ The expenſe of <i>grinding</i> .” Vol. iii. “ p. 193 ^b .
“ Les couleurs dont ils faiſoient “ uſage le <i>mordant</i> ſervant à les in- “ corporer dans des corps durs et “ ſolides comme la pierre.” Vol. iii. p. 186.	“ The colours of which they made “ uſe, the <i>two-edged tool</i> ſerving to “ incorporate them with bodies as “ hard and as ſolid as ſtone.” Vol. iii. p. 165 ^c .

But it is not as a tranſlator only that the Doctor excels; the learned and invaluable notes in which he has illuſtrated and corrected the errors of his author, exhibit him in the light of a profound critic and acute obſerver. *His* preface, though ſhort, is altogether a *chef-d'œuvre*, and will rank him in the republic of letters, even above the claſſical author of the Preface to Bellendenus. As a ſpecimen of the brilliancy of its ſtyle, I ſelect the following out of a variety of paſſages equally beautiful and ſublime. “ How it has ſped the
“ world by this time knows. Cæſar’s laconic boaſt is now cur-
“ tailed of its third limb. The republican general can go no farther
“ than the *veni, vidi*; but the *vici* lies buried without the walls of
“ St. Jean d’Acre. Our author is a very good obſerver of what is,
“ but he knows nothing of what will be: he is an excellent natural-
“ iſt, but a moſt wretched prophet: he has miſtaken the fond dreams

^z P. 517 of this edition.

^b P. 617 of this edition.

^a P. 544 of this edition.

^c P. 597 of this edition.

“ of a patriotic imagination for a revelation from Heaven; and,
 “ like the baseless fabric of a vision, leaves not a wreck behind ^d.”

Let me not, however, omit *devoutly* to bend my knee to the Doctor, and pay him my *pious* homage for having given me the clue to the translation of the pronoun indeterminate *on*, which, as every one knows, is not always easily anglicised. I have generally rendered it impersonally, unless I could find an apposite nominative. I now perceive my error, for the learned divine has untied the Gordian knot “ familiar as his garter,” and in order to shew the versatility of his genius, translated *on* by the pronouns personal in all the three different persons.

“ Les voitures n'étant point en
 “ usage, l'on se servoit de mules, que
 “ l'on trouvoit à louer, &c. ^e.”

“ Carriages not being used, *they* em-
 “ ploy mules, which *you* find ready
 “ for hire, &c. ^e.”

“ Si l'on compare l'accueil que je
 “ reçus de ces prétendus missionnaires,
 “ l'on aura bientôt la mesure de
 “ l'hospitalité, &c. ^f.”

“ If *we* compare the reception *I*
 “ met with from these pretended
 “ missionaries, *we* shall very soon
 “ have the estimate, &c. ^f.”

“ L'on foule aux pieds des coquil-
 “ lages de toute espèce, parmi les-
 “ quels j'ai reconnu des moules, des
 “ pholades, &c. ^g.”

“ *You* trample under foot shells of
 “ every species, among which *I* could
 “ distinguish muscles, limpets, and
 “ trumpets, &c. ^g.”

These examples will, I presume, be fully sufficient to shew that Dr. Hunter is much better acquainted than myself with the genius

^d Translator's Preface, p. vi.

^e Vol. i. p. 201—Vol. i. p. 222 of the original—P. 132 of this edition.

^f Vol. iii. p. 120—Vol. iii. p. 136 of the original—P. 569 of this edition.

^g Vol. i. p. 205—Vol. i. p. 227 of the original—P. 134 of this edition.

and idiom of the French language ; and that after he had gratified “ the general impatience ” of the public to see Sonnini's Travels in English, I ought to hide my diminished head.

Thus when the Oxford bell baptiz'd *Great Tom*
 Shakes all the city with his iron tongue,
 The little tinklers might as well be dumb
 As ask attention to their puny song ;
 So much the Lilliputians are o'ercome
 By the deep thunder of the *mighty Tom*.

I have already extended this part of my preface to too great a length ; yet as the specimens the reader has already before him of the reverend translator's *gay* production may induce him to wish for a farther enjoyment of intellectual delight, I have subjoined to this version, by way of appendix, some more details equally entertaining, under the title of *HILARIA HUNTERIANA*. For myself, before I for the present take my leave of the Doctor, I beg to proclaim my gratitude for the amusement I have derived from the perusal of his performance, which is certainly *nec pluribus impar*. If the Doctor, who, I understand, is the pastor of a Presbyterian congregation at London Wall, displays in the pulpit half the vivacity and humour he has done in his “ fair and faithful transcript ” of Sonnini's Travels, I declare I would rather hear him deliver a sermon than see Quick in King Richard, or Mrs. Abington in Scrub. But it is time to say a few words of the author of the original.

The fame of Sonnini as a naturalist was, as I have already observed, my chief inducement for translating his work ; and I will venture to predict that the English reader will not, upon a perusal of

it, think his reputation in that respect undeserved. His Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt will be found in no degree inferior in point of interest or entertainment to those of Shaw, Pococke, Bruce, Volney, Savary, Browne, or any other travellers in those countries whose publications have preceded his. In regard to his political opinions, I leave it to the Reviewers, assisted as they doubtless will be by the learned notes of the able Dr. Hunter, to criticize and refute them. It would be an insult to the good sense of the reader to imagine that he would expect a French republican to write like a royalist. Sonnini's principles are republican; and in the course of his work he has exhibited them in the most glaring colours. But his envenomed shafts may be said to possess the property of the celebrated spear with which Achilles pierced Telephus, and the rust of which cured the wounds that its point inflicted. In arraigning the parsimony of the old government of France towards travellers, Sonnini speaks with all the rancour of a man who felt himself sorely aggrieved^b. Yet, admitting his complaints, as far as they relate to himself, to be well founded, it would have been but candid in him, while charging that government with never having promoted or encouraged useful expeditions, to have stated two exceptions; namely, the voyage of the brave and humane, but unfortunate LA PÉROUSE, and the mission of M. DE CHOISEUL GOUFFIERⁱ. In the former, no expence was spared; and La Pérouse's comprehensive and perspicuous instructions, which, from the spirit of benevolence and

^b See Chapter XXXVIII.

ⁱ To these might be added *Dombey's Travels in Peru*, *Desfontaines' Travels to Mount Atlas*, and *Danse de Villoison's Travels to Mount Athos*, in search of manuscripts.

philanthropy they breathe, would do honour to any government on earth, are alone sufficient to prove the fact. The French revolution put an end to the mission of M. de Choiseul; but the numbers that have already appeared of his classical labours, are an incontrovertible testimony of the splendour of the undertaking, as well as of the liberality with which it was supported.

Having apprized the reader that my simple version of Sonnini's Travels will be totally eclipsed by the "fair and faithful transcript" of that veteran translator Dr. Hunter, it will not, I hope, be deemed an incongruity to state, that, however transcendent may be the merits of his performance, I can, without the smallest fear of contradiction, assert that infinitely more pains and skill have been bestowed upon my plates. They will even be found to surpass those of the original, and cannot but reflect credit upon the artists entrusted with their execution*. Having been favoured by a friend, who resided a long time in Egypt, with a view¹ of *Abou-mandour*, drawn from a point of sight opposite to that given by Sonnini, in Plate VI. I have also had it engraved for the satisfaction of my readers.

* Landseer, Milton, Anker Smith, Watts, and J. Cooke.

† The drawing from which Plate XXVIII. is engraved exhibits the front of the mosque of *Abou-Mandour*. Behind it is a large bank of sand, and the scene is terminated on that side by the town of Rosetta. In the centre flows the fertilizing Nile, crowded by *kanjas*, the singular and picturesque appearance of which is particularly represented by the one just leaving the mosque. The fore-ground, where the figures are going to land, is formed by an island opposite to that building. Beyond this is a continuation of the bank of the river, a branch of which, winding to the right, discovers in the distance a part of the rich plains of the Delta.

It may not be improper to add, that this work contains every plate given by Sonnini, as well as this additional one.

I with pleasure embrace this opportunity of expressing my grateful acknowledgments to those gentlemen who, by their obliging communications in the various branches of science which they have made their particular study, and which are comprehended in Sonnini's work, occasionally removed my doubts.

I cannot conclude this introduction without making this simple remark. It is very immaterial who first publishes a translation of a foreign work; but it is of importance that, at a time when the British press is gorged with productions of that description, the public should not, under the specious mask of clerical erudition, have works foisted upon them in so extremely incorrect a state as to be unworthy of the name of translations. To the title of Doctor of Divinity, a literary man naturally attaches some idea of education and talents; and in a translation furnished by such a character, he has a right to expect at least correctness. How far this observation applies to the case in question, the public will decide.

THE
AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

EGYPT, degraded in our days, and over-run by barbarians and robbers, may at length hope to regain the lustre with which she formerly shone. In the possession of a nation no less celebrated than that of which antiquity may be proud, this famous country, entirely disfigured by ages of devastation, will recover her ancient renown. The men as well as the soil, the inhabitants as well as the territory, are about to assume a new aspect; and the time approaches when Egypt will no longer be what she recently appeared.

It could not therefore be uninteresting to exhibit Egypt in the state in which it was found by the French; to delineate the manners of the different people by whom it was inhabited, and whose gross ignorance and ferociousness will be succeeded by polity and civilization; it could not be unimportant to describe the vestiges of the noble monuments scattered over a soil rendered proud by their prodigious size and the boldness of their execution; to represent the various beauties of the rich garb which bountiful Nature has not ceased to display to the eyes of ungrateful men, who, in their turn, were incessantly treating her with outrage; in a word, to trace a sketch of that part of Africa, before its appearance is entirely changed. This picture will enable

the reader to pursue with advantage the progress of an unexpected regeneration, and to take an interest in the labours which our countrymen will deposit in the bosom of immortality.

But for these considerations, the work now presented to the public would probably never have seen the light. The author would have left the materials of it in his port-folio ; but he thought it a duty to impart to his country the knowledge he had acquired ; and after having served her with zeal, he should have considered himself still in her debt, had he not likewise consecrated to her the result of an undertaking, in which he embarked solely with the view of converting it to her benefit.

In this work the style of a narrative has been adopted, as most suitable to a book of travels. There is a satisfaction in taking the traveller by the hand, in accompanying him in his excursions, and sharing his fatigues and dangers, as well as in enjoying with him the success he obtains in his researches. But this narrative has not the dryness of a journal, or of an itinerary ; the tiresome monotony of either is dispelled by remarks, elucidations, and reflections of a general nature.

It was the author's intention to have given a new map of Egypt, more accurate than any that has hitherto appeared ; but not having time to digest the materials for its execution, he has subjoined Danville's map, as the most correct substitute he could furnish, although it is undoubtedly susceptible of considerable improvements. Correct drawings taken on the spot represent various sorts of objects, most of them little known ; among these the singular figures discovered in the temple of Isis, at Dendera, deserve particular notice. The

author

author congratulates himself on having followed the advice of Caylus, the learned antiquary, *who exhorts those that collect monuments of antiquity, to communicate descriptions of them to the public, because such collections, though ever so little extensive, may contain singular curiosities not to be found in the largest cabinets.* The collection of drawings in this work certainly contains some singular curiosities. In short, every degree of pains has been taken that these Travels should not be beneath their subject, or unworthy of the interest generally excited by the new destinies of a country abounding in wonders.

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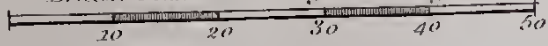
BY J. B. DANVILLE,

*of the Royal Academy of Belles Lettres, and
of the Academy of Sciences of Petersburg.*

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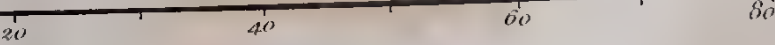
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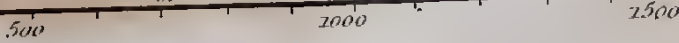
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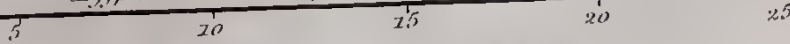
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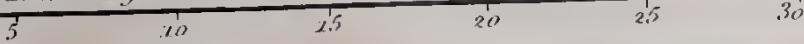
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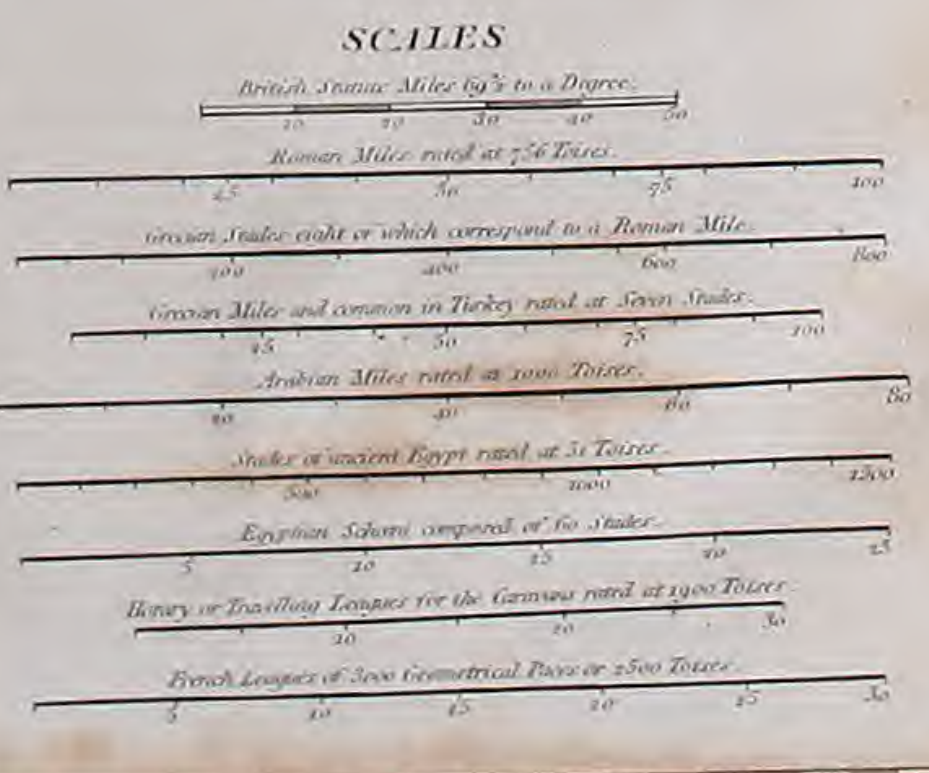


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EGYPT
 called in the Country
MISSIR,
 By J.B. DANVILLE,
 of the Royal Academy of Belles Lettres, and
 of the Academy of Sciences of Petersburg.



THE DESERT that extends to the East of the Nile as far as the Red Sea is subdivided by two different Tribes of ARABS

TRAVELS

IN

UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT.

CHAPTER I.

SERVING AS AN INTRODUCTION.

MOTIVES OF THE EAGERNESS OF TRAVELLERS TO PUBLISH THEIR DISCOVERIES.—CAUSES OF THE AUTHOR'S DELAY.—EMBARRASMENTS TO WHICH A TRAVELLER, WHO IS IN HASTE TO WRITE, IS LIABLE.—TRAVELLERS.—HASSELQUITZ.—SAVARY.—PRODIGIOUS CHANGES OPERATING BY THE FRENCH IN EGYPT.

THIS is entering somewhat tardily into a career which ought to have been completed long ago. The publication of travels, which ended with the year 1780, will appear strangely deferred to the seventh year of the French republic. No traveller was ever so backward in submitting his observations to the public eye. Almost all, on the contrary, have been eager to make known their labours and their discoveries. This zeal, no doubt highly praiseworthy, is also very natural. When a man, indeed, has had the courage to abandon himself, if it may so be said, in distant and desert countries; or, what is worse, in countries inhabited by nations, whose imperfect civilization is infinitely more dangerous than even the savage state of

man ; when he has been endowed with a vigour capable of removing obstacles ; with a perseverance necessary to overcome the difficulties that arise at every step ; and with that firmness which sets at defiance the physical and moral evils inseparable from enterprises of the kind ; when, in a word, talents, experience, and good fortune, have enabled him to surmount numerous inconveniences, and to escape from dangers not less numerous, it is, it must be confessed, a satisfaction, a real enjoyment, to recount the various events which have impressed themselves on his mind in the course of his travels, as well as the crosses, the fatigue, and the perils by which his existence has been alternately tormented and threatened ; for, if it be agreeable to recollect past evils, it is still more so to relate them.

If to these motives merely personal, but which, nevertheless, seldom fail to excite a general interest, the man who has exposed himself to the hazards attendant upon long journies, joins more elevated views, and more powerful considerations ; if, transported by the love of fame, or, what is synonymous, by a love of the public good, he has been fortunate enough to enlarge the circle of knowledge, and to add to the domains of science, the publication of his travels is then a sacred duty ; and all delay and negligence become equally reprehensible. In saying this, I appear to have pronounced my own condemnation ; for, considering the great number of men and things that I have seen in the course of twelve years of wandering and observation, it is impossible but that my collection must contain a great number of interesting matters, and some that are entirely new. Encouragement was not wanting. Friends, to whom the sciences and literature have given celebrity, pressed me to publish my travels ; while Buffon, who thought me worthy to be associated for some time to his immortal labours ; Buffon, that colossus of eloquence and philosophy, wrote to me, in 1781, in the following terms : “ I make no doubt but that you have collected a number

“ of excellent observations, the publication of which will do you
“ great honour.”

But I was not at liberty to apply myself to a work which requires peace and serenity of mind. How far was I, alas ! from enjoying those fruits of tranquillity ! Nature had, in a manner, marked out my destination. With an ardent imagination, a love of the sciences, a passion for discoveries, the *sang-froid* of courage, and a constitution proof against every thing, I appeared to be intended for the most perilous enterprises, and for the execution of no common projects ; and when, after long-repeated trials of my strength in this way, I returned while yet young to my country, that same Nature which has distributed to each of us his particular disposition, seemed to punish me for my inaction ; and to accuse, at the same time, a government, which scarcely ever knew how to put a man in the place that suited him, nor to honour itself by a choice unpolluted by venality and intrigue. That robust constitution, which had resisted the heat of the burning climate of Africa, and the sultry humidity of the equator in South America ; that constitution, which neither fatigue nor privations were able to impair, could not withstand the languor of repose. Violent fits of sickness succeeded each other ; a gloomy melancholy took place of activity of mind ; and a painful agitation of the soul closely followed the salutary agitation of the body. An absence of several years had emboldened the cupidity of some of my relations. To recover what they had deprived me of, it was necessary to repair to what was then called a sanctuary of justice, but was, in truth, nothing but the labyrinth of chicane, the walls of which, stuck full of sharp-pointed hooks, were loaded with the spoils of those who had the temerity to enter it. At the same time, men who have often made me regret the dishonesty of most of the Asiatics, and the plundering disposition of the Arabs ; men among whom was seen a woman born for the opprobrium of her sex, and the disgrace of mankind ; men, dangerous and malevolent
B 2 beings,

beings, of whom society offers but too many examples; and whom, for its sake, it would be well to unmask; the M——s, the N——s, the Lef——s, and other subaltern knaves, availing themselves of my inexperience in business, of my indifference about pecuniary concerns, of the frankness, the confidence, and carelessness of a generous, but too easy nature, involved me in a thousand difficulties; overwhelmed me with disputes and contestations; and, like barefaced plunderers, found means to divide among themselves considerable portions of my fortune, which they pulled to pieces, with circumstances that added to the bitterness of days already devoted to sufferings and chagrin*.

In the midst of so many disappointments; in the midst of shocks too violent for a sensibility, that might have constituted the happiness of my life, instead of being its torment; in the midst of those serious and disagreeable avocations, how could I occupy myself about a work which required all my attention? How could I find means to overcome other difficulties, to which the very nature of that work gave birth? Twelve years, employed in wandering about distant regions, may indeed add to a man's stock of information, and furnish him with experience; but such pursuits have nothing in common with the talent of composition; nor are the habits acquired in these expeditions at all calculated to give him a turn for literary labours. Familiarized with the image of his destruction, which daily perils hold out to him incessantly, assailed by fatigue, and hard pressed by almost continual wants, the man who has devoted himself to travelling, ought to enclose his breast with a triple rampart, which may secure him from the attacks of fear and apprehension. Often surrounded by ferocious and unruly barbarians, he is

* "We but too often see, that if an honest man happens to have a dispute with
 " a knave, the knave finds powerful protectors, because the honest man is content
 " to be honest; whereas the knave is supple, servile, and complaisant. The meanest
 " actions cost him no effort; he does whatever he pleases. The honest man does
 " only what he ought to do." *Essais Historiques sur Paris, par Sainte-Foix, vol. vi.*

compelled,

compelled, at times, to make them his escort ; it is necessary that he should communicate to them his own intrepidity ; and, as it is not always easy to make an impression upon men of coarse manners, and of an unfeeling disposition, he finds himself obliged, in order to move them, to speak to them in their own rough and energetic language. All these circumstances stamp upon the individual a character of firmness, which, to delicate eyes, appears to border too closely upon harshness, and which has an irresistible influence over his style. Besides, while endeavouring to understand and to speak foreign tongues, he at last forgets his own ; he has no resources for the study of literature, nor leisure even to think of it. Such are the embarrassments which I should probably have met with, and which it would have been necessary for me to have overcome, had I written my travels as soon as they were at an end. The traveller is not only the historian of the men he meets with, but also of nature ; and, to speak worthily of her, he should know how to paint her in full dress, as well as in her most simple garb.

I do not know whether I am mistaken ; but I think, that, in this last respect, my work will have gained a great deal by its tardy publication ; and that I shall have reason to congratulate myself upon having followed the precept of Montaigne, when he says, in speaking of authors: *Qu'ils y pensent bien, avant de se produire ; qui les hâte* ?* Essais, liv. iii. chap. ix.

Egypt, that ancient cradle of the sciences, where the wonders of art and those of nature vie for admiration, has been the object of the philosophical excursions of the ancients, as well as of the moderns. From Herodotus down to Volney, two writers equally celebrated, the numerous accounts of a country, of which the like is not to be found on the whole surface of the globe, attest the general

* Let them think well of what they are about, before they give their works to the public ; who hurries them ?

curiosity it has excited. But this multiplicity of travellers cannot prevent my finding a place; nor shall the fear of speaking of Egypt after so many others, induce me to abandon my design. Barbarism and ruins have succeeded the institutions and monuments of antiquity; while the difficulty of making researches and observations has not permitted modern travellers to observe every thing. There remained after them, as there will probably remain after me, many things, if not to be seen, at least to be well seen. Neither do objects present themselves to every observer in the same point of view. As every painter has his particular touch and mode of colouring, which give the graces of novelty to the tritest subjects; so has the traveller, whose manner of observing accompanies him wherever he goes, his peculiar style. It is from this assemblage of pictures only, that we can hope to gain a complete idea of so interesting a country; and the more so, as the traveller, finding it impossible to investigate every thing, gives a preference to those objects towards which his studies have been chiefly directed. Guided by his taste, and sometimes by his enthusiasm, he constantly reverts to his favourite occupations, and neglects every thing else. Thus it is that the botanist often sees nothing but plants; the zoologist nothing but animals; the antiquary nothing but ruins; the natural philosopher nothing but the phenomena of nature; the merchant nothing but the means of increasing his fortune; and the politician nothing but the relations between different states. One man disdains all details, and only gives the result *en masse*; while another dwells tediously upon the most minute particulars; a third sometimes sacrifices exactness to elegance of description, or force of expression; while another, scrupulous in his observations, but dull and destitute of genius, starves his subject by the aridity of his style.

A striking example, among thousands of others, of this predilection, against which we cannot be too much upon our guard, is to be found in the travels of Frederick Hasselquitz. That pupil of
 Linnæus,

Linnæus, a zealous and exclusive amateur of natural history, being at Cairo, resolved to pay a visit to the pyramids of Memphis; but scarcely was he arrived at the foot of those monuments, equally remarkable for their magnitude and duration, than he turned his eyes another way, in order to fix them on the lion-ants which abound in the sand of that district, and no longer attended to any thing but insects. One of the most astonishing works of antiquity ceased to interest him: "However magnificent," says he, "the pyramids
" may be, they make less impression upon a lover of natural history
" than the industry of these little animals*."

People in general will not be of the opinion of the Swedish naturalist, to whom it may be observed (to say nothing of the whimsicality of the comparison), that it was hardly worth while to go as far as the ruins of Memphis to fall into raptures at the sight of lion-ants, which are equally common in other countries, and even in Europe; and that a traveller exposes himself to ridicule, when, being determined to see nothing but the objects to which he is particularly attached, he too strictly adheres to the proverb, *ne sutor ultrà crepidam*.

It is also worthy of remark, that few French travellers have penetrated into Upper Egypt. Not one of those, who in these latter times have acquired celebrity, has carried his researches beyond the plain of Saccara, that is to say, beyond the environs of Cairo. Savary himself, who published two volumes concerning Upper Egypt, never set his foot in it; and the tone of assurance in which he speaks of it, and the details he gives of his journey, as if it had been really performed, are a stain upon the reputation of that elegant writer. I was well acquainted with Savary; I saw him at Alexandria, in the isle of Candia, and afterwards in France. The well-deserved success of the first volume of his Letters concerning Egypt,

* Travels in the Levant by Frederick Haffelquitz, published by Linnæus.

to which it was his original intention to confine himself, since it comprised the only part of the country in which he had travelled, had intoxicated him. He resolved to add to it an account of travels he had never performed, and was reduced to the necessity of copying and making extracts from Herodotus, Strabo, Diodorus, &c. More fortunate than Savary, and many others, I found means to travel over the *Said* (for that is the name given by the Arabs to Upper Egypt), from Old Cairo as far as Affouan; and in that point of view, my work will not, perhaps, appear destitute of interest.

But what can more powerfully attract the public attention towards Egypt, than to think that it is no longer in the hands of the Mamelûks, who oppressed it; and that the French, by breaking the iron yoke under which the descendants of the most celebrated people of antiquity lived in a state of brutal abasement, have presented them at once with liberty, and with the means of recovering the knowledge and the sciences which were the most valuable possession of their ancestors! Egypt will soon cease to be the country I am going to describe. An immense space of time is about to elapse in a few days; and shortly I shall be no better, even though still alive, than an ancient traveller, as those of antiquity are in regard to us. So many prodigies were reserved for the first people of the universe! Cities will rise from their ashes; monuments to which the approach was prohibited by insolent usurpers, will at length be known; those which ignorance and ferocity had endeavoured to annihilate will recover their ancient lustre; while others will reappear which now lie buried under the sand. Every where the image of splendour will take place of the picture of destruction. Human knowledge will diffuse itself with a giant's stride. Canals, a fruitful source of prosperity, will be dug or repaired. The commerce of the world will naturally revert into its ancient channel; and what the Pharaohs, in all their power, were afraid to undertake—the reunion of the two seas, the French, guided by a new Alexander, whom victory and the sciences

are emulous to crown, will offer to the admiration and astonishment of future ages. The mind loses and confounds itself in contemplating this immensity of glory which environs the French nation. Proud of belonging to it, I exult at having it in my power to devote to my countrymen the fruit of my labours.

CHAPTER II.

BUFFON.—DEPARTURE FROM MONTBARD.—CORAL.—TROGLODYTES.—LANGUEDOC.—PHALANGIST.—PRESERVATION OF FISH.—A WHIMSICAL ANECDOTE.—GULF OF LYONS.

ON my return from my second voyage to America, I repaired to Montbard, where Buffon was desirous of seeing me. I spent near six months with him; and that time, which fled too rapidly, is certainly the period of my life that has left behind it the most grateful recollection. It is to my stay in that retreat, the temple of the sciences and of taste, that I am indebted for the little I am worth. It was winter, and the severity of the season kept away troublesome visitors. Day succeeded day in delightful succession, while I was aiding the great man in his labours, and enjoying his society—a society highly agreeable, which was never disturbed by the smallest inequality of temper, and which I have never met with any where else. Buffon was not one of those men of letters whom Erasmus whimsically compared to the tapestry of Flanders with great figures, which, in order to produce their effect, must only be seen at a distance; his conversation was equally agreeable and interesting; and he blended with it an unaffected gaiety and a good-natured manner, which put every one at his ease. To these social qualities he joined a finely-formed person; like Plato, he was of the tallest stature and most robust make; his broad shoulders announced his strength; his forehead was high and majestic; and he distinguished himself by the grace of his demeanour and the dignity of his gestures*.

* *Erat et speciosissimo et robustissimo corporis habitu. Undè et a latis humeris, amplà fronte et egregio totius corporis habitu, orationis vi et ubertate, Plato nuncupatus est. Platonis Vita, auct. Marfilio Ficino.*

The government had appointed M. Tott inspector of the ports of the Levant and Barbary; and had ordered a ship to be fitted out at Toulon to carry him thither. I received orders to embark on board that ship of war, and to follow its destination; but mine was afterwards changed; and I quitted the expedition at Alexandria, in order to travel in Egypt. I set off from Montbard, after having received from Buffon good wishes and embraces, which I considered as the benedictions of genius. Post-horses conveyed me rapidly to Marseilles, where I remained only a few hours.

An individual had conceived the idea of cutting through a hill in the vicinity of La Ciotat as far as the sea, the water of which penetrates under the land, by means of great cavities in several parts of the coast. He pretended that those subterraneous cavities contained an immense quantity of coral, the easy extraction of which was to add considerably to that branch of commerce, and enrich the projector. Memorials had been addressed to Versailles, with a view of obtaining encouragement and assistance; and the minister had consulted Buffon, who put the papers into my hands, in order that I might investigate the matter upon the spot. On my arrival at La Ciotat the enterprise was no longer in question; the works that had been begun were abandoned, and the idea itself entirely relinquished.

While I was at La Ciotat, the particulars of a singular ceremony were related to me, which takes place every year at the beginning of *Nivose* *. A numerous body of men, armed with swords and pistols, set off in search of a very small bird, which the ancients call *troglodytes*, a denomination retained by Guenau de Montbeillard in his Natural History of Birds †. When they have found it, a thing not difficult, because they always take care to have one ready, it

* The latter end of December.

† *Motacilla troglodytes*. L. *Syst. Nat. edit.* 13.—*Ang.* The common wren.

is suspended on the middle of a pole, which two men carry on their shoulders, as if it were a heavy burden. This whimsical procession parades round the town; the bird is weighed in a great pair of scales, and the company then sits down to table and makes merry. The name they give to the *troglydites* is not less curious than the kind of festival to which it gives occasion. They call it, at La Ciotat, the *pole-cat*, or *père de la bécasse* *, on account of the resemblance of its plumage to that of the woodcock, supposed by them to be engendered by the pole-cat, which is a great destroyer of birds, but which certainly produces none.

On my return to Marseilles I stopped at Cassis, where there are two manufactories for the working and polishing of coral, the greater part of which goes to the coast of Africa to be exchanged for men. The vineyards that surround this little town produce a kind of white wine, which is in considerable repute.

It was understood at Marseilles, that the frigate which was equipping at Toulon would not be completely ready for some time; I therefore determined to make an excursion in Languedoc: and, in company with the secretary of M. Tott, went by land to Cette, of which Vernet has painted a very fine view. In my walks about the environs I collected a variety of volcanic matter, and, along the coast, a number of shells and other marine productions. I was astonished at finding, among the sea-weeds upon the beach, a singular kind of *scarabæus*, very uncommon towards the north of France, and honoured with the name of *phalangist* †, because it has been thought that the long points of its corselet have some resemblance to the pikes that were carried by the foldiers of the Macedonian phalanx. This is what the partisans of methods in natural history call vulgar names; but what kind of a vulgar name is that which, to

* Father of the woodcock.

† Geoffroi, Hist. abrégée des Insectes des Environs de Paris, tom. i. pag. 72, et pl. v. fig. 3.

be understood, requires the most exact knowledge of antiquity? Linnæus has designated the same insect by the name of the giant Typhæus*, a name which is likewise very far from vulgar, but which seems little suitable to a *scarabæus* of a few lines in length, whose nature it is to conceal itself under the dung of cattle.

Those who employ themselves in making collections of natural history well know the difficulty of preserving the colours of fish. Taken out of the fluid in which they live, and deprived of the humidity so necessary to them, they soon lose, with their existence, the gloss and glittering of their scales; their discoloured skin assuming a livid and tawny hue; so that, in our cabinets, they have not that appearance of life which still seems to animate the other classes of animals. Every thing that I could conceive possible to be done in that way I found at the house of M. Boriès, doctor of physic at Cette. He had studied the history and preparation of fish; and the specimens which he had assembled, had still, if not the lustre, at least a part of the colours, of living nature. He made a secret of his mode of operation; but promised to communicate it to Buffon on certain conditions. I know not what was the result of the correspondence which I hastened to establish between them.

We visited also, on one side, the baths of Balaruc, and on the other, the vineyards of Frontignan, affording that strong and fragrant liquor, the excess of which has sent more than one person to the hot springs.

Wishing also to be acquainted with Montpellier, we made an excursion thither along the finest road I ever saw in France.

It was now high time to revisit the coast of Provence, and we determined to return thither by sea; we therefore bargained for our passage with the master of one of the tartans which were then in the port of Cette. We were waiting at the inn for the hour

* *Scarabæus Typhæus*. L. *Syst. Nat.*—Fabricius, *Spec. Insect.* pag. 10.

fixed for our departure, when he came quite out of breath to inform us, that the commandant of the town wished us to go to his house, where several other persons, who were also to take their passage in the same tartan, were already assembled. He told me, that *Monfieur le commandant* was very much incensed against me in particular, because, notwithstanding I was an officer, I was leaving Cette without his consent. Although I might well have declined yielding to so singular a pretension, we waited upon the commandant. He was an officer of invalids, and his name was *Quérelle*. He immediately addressed himself to me: *I am astonished, Sir, said he, that you did not pay me a visit. I should have invited you to partake of my soup.*—*Sir, answered I, you will readily forgive a stranger, a traveller, and an officer, who does not belong to the land-service, for having been ignorant of your existence, however important it may be. As to your soup, it is by no means the object of my researches.*—*That is quite sufficient, Sir, replied M. Quérelle, a little disconcerted; you may set off whenever you please: as to all these people,* added he, turning round with an air of dignity towards my fellow-travellers, *they may go about their business, I have nothing to do with them.* We walked away, laughing very heartily at this little adventure, which had so striking an analogy with the name of the commandant.

The wind had risen, the sea was rough, and the sky overcast; every thing, in short, announced the approach of bad weather. Our captain did not wish to leave the harbour: he yielded, however, to my entreaties, and we got under way, leaving the other tartans behind us, although we had agreed to sail in company. The night was stormy, and our little vessel laboured exceedingly from the heaviness of the swell. It is well known how much danger attends the navigation of that part of the Mediterranean into which the Rhone discharges itself: thence it is that it has derived the appellation of *gulf of Lions* (*mare Leonis*), as being cruel and terrible on account

of the tempests that frequently occur there, and of the shipwrecks, that are by no means uncommon; and not from the name of the city of Lyons, which is at a great distance from these seas. After suffering nothing but a little uneasiness we got into the harbour of Marseilles, whence I set off immediately for Toulon.

CHAPTER III.

DEPARTURE FROM TOULON.—COME TO AN ANCHOR.—COAST OF CORSICA.—GENOA.—OPERA.—ISLE OF ELBA, AND ADJACENT ISLANDS.—A GALE OF WIND.—ARRIVAL AT PALERMO.

IT was on the 26th of April 1777, at ten o'clock in the evening, that the *Atalante* frigate, one of the finest in the French navy, got under way from the road of Toulon. She was commanded by M. Durfort, and carried thirty-two guns, and a crew of near three hundred men. Several persons of Versailles, among whom were M. and Mad. Teflé, M. d'Ayen, and M. Meung, had obtained permission to embark in her; and were to be conveyed to Palermo, Malta, and Syracuse. They were what was formerly called *great folks*; but they had laid aside the pride of courts, and were become very agreeable people. Madame Teflé, one of the wittiest women of the age, gave the law to this little colony of courtiers; while the politeness, and free and easy manners of the commander, added to a well-chosen set of officers, made of the party on board the *Atalante* one of the most pleasant societies possible, and such as it was not easy to suppose could have been found at sea. There were besides in the suite of M. Tott, an officer of cavalry, and a counsellor of the *Chatelet*; a whimsical association, and worthy of its author. Citizen Venturi, a learned interpreter of the oriental languages, who is now with the army of Egypt, was also a passenger. As it was difficult to find accommodations for so many persons, the four after-guns were removed, in order that berths might be constructed in the great cabin; the gun-room being so encumbered with beds, that there was scarcely room to move.

We had failed with favourable weather; but it was not of long duration. The wind soon became contrary, shifting round to the eastward, and blowing hard; while the sky, which was loaded with heavy clouds, poured down a continual torrent of rain. On the following morning a number of birds were flying about the ship; among which I distinguished turtle-doves, ring plovers*, and a little bittern. Several of these birds settled upon the rigging, and were so fatigued and stupified by the storm, that some of the plovers were taken by hand, as well as a species of crab-catchers, known by the name of *blongios*†.

After having in vain endeavoured to gain an offing by working to windward, it became necessary to seek shelter; and at two o'clock in the afternoon of the day after our departure, we cast anchor in the road *des Vignettes* in the bay of Toulon. The coast near which the frigate was anchored is high: its various culture, the *bastides*‡ scattered here and there, and the pleasant prospect it affords, form an agreeable contrast with the bare sides of the gray mountains behind it, which compose the back-ground of the picture. It is, nevertheless, upon the declivity of some of these mountains, that the excellent sheep of the environs of Toulon find a substantial and odoriferous food. The strawberries, which we met with there in great abundance, were the most fragrant that I ever tasted in my life.

Our sport, which was confined to a small distance from the vessel, produced only a few quails, already returned from their emigration:

* *Pluvier à collier*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et *petit pluvier à collier* des Pl. enlum. No. 921. *Charadrius hiaticula*, L.

† *Blongios*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et *blongios de Suisse*, Pl. enlum. No. 328. *Ardea minuta*, L.

‡ This is the appellation given in the southern departments to little country-houses, which individuals in easy circumstances build in the vicinity of the towns.

We also saw some lapwings; and I killed a yellow bergeronette*, and a little bird of a species first described by Buffon, and by him denominated *gavoüé*, from the name of *chic-gavotte*, which it bears in Provence, where it is also called *chic-moustache*, on account of the black stripes round its beak†. These last-mentioned birds were flying in pairs among the bushes, in the cultivated country which surrounds the *basides*: they are not very wild; and their flight is short, low, and much resembling that of the sparrow.

The violence of the east wind increasing, and the weather growing stormy, we let go a second anchor. We continued riding in this manner till the 2d of May, when a breeze from the north-west permitted us to get under way.

At the break of day on the 3d we were about six or seven leagues from the island of Corsica, and while we were standing on, had an opportunity of observing its coasts. That part lying between Cape Calvi and Cape Corso, the northernmost point of the island, consists of lofty mountains, which appear to be barren, and composed of rocks, with great chasms between them. The mountains of Cape Calvi, under shelter of which is a large and safe harbour, are the highest on that part of the coast: their summits were still entirely covered with snow. We also descried *Isola Rossa*, in the gulf formed by Capes Corso and Calvi. It is a small and low island, which shelters a deep and important haven from the westerly winds.

We also saw several porpoises‡, swimming at the top of the water, an almost certain presage of bad weather; in fact, it became impossible for us either to approach Corsica, or to continue our

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 28. fig. 1. *Metacilla boarula*, L.

† See Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. art. Gavoué, et Pl. enlum. No. 626. fig. 1. *Gavoué de Provence*.—*Mustachoe bunting*, Latham, Syn. 2. p. 175. *Emperiza Provincialis*, L.

‡ *Delphinus phocæna*, L.

course, the wind heading us and blowing a storm. We therefore determined to put into Genoa, where we arrived on the 4th, at ten o'clock in the morning.

It certainly will not be expected that I should give a description of the city of Genoa. It is sufficiently well known, and especially in these latter times, for me to pass it over in silence. I will only relate a little event in which we were the principal actors: although very trifling in appearance, it furnishes a trait of national character, and on that account alone deserves a place in the narrative of a traveller.

At the opera of Genoa, two female dancers performed the principal parts in the ballets. Both had youth and beauty for their portion; and the agility of both was equal: but the Graces directed all the movements and attitudes of one; while the steps and springs of the other, though more surprising in point of exertion, were, in fact, no better than feats of activity. All the applause was reserved for the latter; while the former was beheld with perfect indifference. It is the particular province of Frenchmen to give lessons of taste; it is incumbent upon them to avenge the neglected Graces. We agreed upon our measures, and both officers and passengers took different posts. At the first representation, as soon as the actresses of whom we had declared ourselves the champions appeared upon the stage, we received her with a thunder of applause. A few of the Genoese joined us; but shouts, clapping of hands, and rattling of canes, ensured, in spite of our murmurs, the triumph of the other dancer. We were not disconcerted. The following day we went in greater force, and neglected no means of making a violent noise. Our adversaries were a match for us; but as we were dispersed over every part of the house, we constantly succeeded in increasing the number of our partisans. This struggle exciting the solicitude of the senate, they passed a decree which prohibited the giving of any disturbance to the performance. We did not disturb it; but the moment the ballet began there was a most terrible uproar. Sentries were then stationed

in the house, but to very little purpose. In short, after five or six representations, during which the resistance gradually diminished, we had the satisfaction of seeing our principles generally adopted. The actresses who, before our arrival, had constantly engrossed all the applause, was no longer attended to; the public admiration being entirely transferred to our *protégée*. Satisfied with this triumph, which was that of good taste, we gave an entertainment to the two dancers on board of the frigate. She, whose success we had deranged, accepted our invitation with a good grace; and we endeavoured to make her forget the little mortification of which we had been the cause.

It was at this same theatre that I saw for the first time those degraded beings who have only the appearance of men. Sacrificed to the interest of the most agreeable art, they acquire at the expense of their own existence, a sonorous and melodious, but at the same time unnatural voice, since it is neither that of a man nor of a woman. France has not disgraced herself by such a crime. Unknown also to the greater part of the nations of Europe, it was reserved for Italian priests: they, in whose hands excommunication was so light a weapon, that they launched it upon every frivolous occasion, were not ashamed to compose choirs destined to sing the praise of the Divinity, and to make the roof of his temples re-echo with the harmonious accents of unfortunate victims, whom, by a refinement of barbarity, they had expunged from the list of mankind. But what is scarcely credible, is, that the idea of this mutilation originated in the head of a woman. Semiramis, a queen of great celebrity in ancient annals, who by her riches, her power, her victories, and the splendour of her reign, was placed above all other mortals, was the first who set the example of a species of cruelty so disgraceful to her history.

Pachierotti, whom Brydone had seen some time before at the theatre of Palermo, and whose talents he extols*, was then at Genoa.

* See Brydone's Travels in Sicily and Malta.

Whatever praise the English traveller may have lavished upon that singer, to me he appeared to fall far short of his reputation. His voice was, indeed, highly agreeable; but his action was spiritless, and his delivery cold: he should have been heard and not seen. Though he was young and well made, there was something constrained and tame in his actions and demeanour, which took off from the effect of his singing. In all other respects he did as much as could be expected from him; but energy of action, and force of expression, which can proceed only from strong feelings of the heart, were incompatible with his state of degradation.

After having been detained ten whole days in the harbour of Genoa by contrary winds, we sailed again on the 13th of May at six o'clock in the morning, with a fresh gale from the north-east, and rapidly increased our distance from the lofty and fertile coast of that beautiful part of Italy. Behind us the maritime Alps appeared like an immense amphitheatre, white with eternal snow. The high mountains that skirt the gulf of *Spezzia*, which the French sailors pronounce *l'Espezie*, presented themselves to view. Their summits were also covered with snow; and they appeared sterile, and composed of perpendicular rocks. These are the quarries, which principally afford the beautiful marbles of all kinds that are exported from Italy. On our left we passed by the island of *Gorgona*, subject to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. It is of little extent. Its form is circular, and its mountains, which are to be seen at a great distance, seem to be of the same nature as those of the continent. We afterwards passed between Cape Corso and *Capraria*, a small island, vulgarly called *la Cabraire*, belonging to the republic of Genoa. It is little better than a barren rock; but it contains, nevertheless, a few habitations which furnish excellent sailors.

On the 14th, the wind being no longer fair, we plied to windward between Cape Corso and the island of Elba, one of the possessions of the king of Naples. It has two good harbours, and quarries

of marble; but it is particularly celebrated on account of its iron mines, and of its forges, in which that metal is worked according to a method that has been described by Tronçon du Coudrai, captain of artillery. This method is more economical, more expeditious, and, at the same time, more advantageous than that of the high furnaces pretty generally in use in the rest of Europe; and it produces iron equal to the best Swedish in toughness and malleability, and in greater quantities than the common forges, without any additional expense. The mines of iron and magnets, which the island of Elba contains, render its approach perceptible to navigators from the great variations to which the compass is there subject.

That part of the coast of Corsica comprised between Cape Corso and Bastia, is of the same nature as the opposite one that I have already spoken of; that is to say, it is composed of steep mountains, some of the most lofty of which were still covered with snow. The city of Bastia, situated upon the declivity of a hill, made a very agreeable appearance; its harbour is unfit for the reception of ships of war; but it affords a very convenient anchorage for small vessels.

Towards noon we had a fair wind, and passed near *Monte Christo*, a bare and desert rock, situated at a small distance to the southward of the island of Elba, from which it appears to have been detached by one of those great convulsions of nature, which are by no means unfrequent in these seas. The line of land that united the two islands is still to be traced by the *Planosa* (or Flat Island), a rock lying between them, and almost even with the water's edge. I was told that this latter rock was the retreat of a great number of seals and gulls.

We saw astern of the ship a flock of petrels known to French navigators by the name of *oiseaux de tempête**. When they came near

* *Oiseau de tempête*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 993. *Procellaria pelagica*, L.—Ang. The stormy petrel.

us, it was three o'clock in the afternoon. The weather was fine, and there was a very light air from the south-east; but at seven o'clock the wind got round to the south-west, and blew strong. The sky was overcast, and threatened still worse weather; the night was very dark, and derived additional horror from frequent flashes of lightning; the sea rose to a prodigious height, and we were at length obliged to pass the whole night under our courses*. This gale of wind lasted till the 15th at noon: we were then abreast of *le Bocche di Bonifaccio*, or of the strait which separates the island of Corsica from that of Sardinia, and at ten or twelve leagues from the land. Few ships navigate in these latitudes without meeting with bad weather. The sea, repelled the contrary way by a great extent of coast, and by numberless shoals, and agitated by the wind, of which a variety of straits often changes the direction, is, in general, high and turbulent. During the bad weather in the morning, several quails and turtle-doves settled upon the ship, hoping to find it an asylum against the storm. But that inhospitable shelter did not protect the unfortunate wanderers from death; they were so fatigued or frightened by the confusion of the elements about them, that they all suffered themselves to be taken by hand. I observed that the turtle-doves came on board in pairs. A numerous shoal of porpoises ploughed through the water at some distance from the frigate; while, on the other side, a turtle lay sluggishly upon its surface.

On the 16th we encountered another gale of wind from the west-south-west, less violent than the former; and on the 17th we discovered the island of *Ustica*, a dependency of Sicily. It is only four leagues in circumference, and appears well cultivated. It was the

* All that is between this note and the bottom of the last paragraph, is given in the history of the *oiseau-tempête*, by Buffon (Hist. Nat. des Ois.), as an extract from the journal of a navigator. It is from my journal that this note was extracted.

retreat of the picaroons and pirates who infested these seas; and yet it is only four years since the king of Naples resolved to erect a fort upon it, in order to keep them away. We had also ahead of us the lofty coast of Cape *San Vitto*, a promontory of Sicily; and at twelve o'clock we cast anchor at the entrance of the harbour of Palermo.

CHAPTER IV.

MARITIME HONOURS.—ENGLISH TRAVELLERS.—PALERMO AND ITS ENVIRONS.

IT was by no means an affair of trifling importance to arrange the manner in which ships of war were to salute and be saluted in the ports of foreign nations. Every commander of a ship had particular instructions in that respect; and, at the same time that they were directed to support the honour of their flag in battle, they were not less expressly enjoined to maintain it in the form of the honours that they paid, or that they had a right to require. This vain ceremonial often became a source of serious contestation calculated to disturb the peace of nations. Punctilious commanders made of these details their most serious occupation. At Smyrna, the port of the Levant the most frequented by European vessels, several of them have been seen anxious to attribute to themselves exclusively the salute of artillery, with which merchant-vessels are accustomed to compliment ships of war, whatever they may be, on their coming into port, and in haste to return such salute, even before it was over, lest the ships of other powers should think it was intended for them: as if the glory of arms could consist in things of so little consequence, which are only fit to occupy narrow minds, and which are altogether unworthy the attention of officers, to whose talents and courage were entrusted the floating castles destined to carry across the ocean terror to the enemies of the state, and protection to commerce; as if a mere want of respect, which should always be distinguished from an insult, does not rather debase him, who is guilty of it, than him to whom the civility is due. The phlegm with which a Dutch officer answered Bougainville in the Indian seas is still in the

recollection of many. The French captain sent to ask him, in case of his saluting the Dutch fort, what salute he might expect in return. *When I take off my hat to any one,* said the Dutchman, *it is on my part a compliment which I think due to him; and I do not inquire beforehand whether he will pull off his.*

Be this as it may, it was incumbent upon us to abide by the established custom: as soon, therefore, as the *Atalante* had anchored in the port of Palermo, an officer was dispatched to compliment the viceroy of Sicily, and to negotiate with him the important point of *salutes*. It was agreed upon, that the frigate should fire fifteen guns, and that the citadel should return the same number. In consequence of this arrangement we saluted the fortrefs; but two hours elapsed before it was prepared to answer us. We could not, however, take offence at this extraordinary delay, for we had a full view of the gunners busily employed in raising some pieces of cannon from the earth, in which they lay half buried, in placing them upon blocks of wood by way of carriages; and, in short, in putting them into a condition to fire. Such was then the state of the Sicilian artillery. The Barbary corsairs knew it well, and knew also how to avail themselves of it, by coming and cutting vessels out of the very harbour.

The viceroy sent an officer to congratulate us on our arrival, and to invite us to his *conversazione*; for that is the appellation given to the parties and societies which assemble in the opulent houses of Italy.

We staid only three days at Palermo. I employed them in rapidly visiting every thing worthy of notice in the city and its environs, which are already known by the accounts of different travellers, and by the beautiful views that have been taken of them.

The harbour, one of the safest in these seas, and defended by a fortrefs, the artillery of which, as I have just now said, is by no means formidable, is semicircular. The city, the suburbs, and the

walks round it, present to the eye an amphitheatre equally agreeable and diversified. A chain of lofty mountains raise their naked and uncultivated heads behind the city, and render its position highly picturesque. At its extremities are four handsome gates, with two streets leading to them. The latter cross each other near their centre, and form a square of small extent, called the *Ottangolo*, whence there is a view of all the four gates. The streets are straight, wide, well-built, and paved with large stones. The largest and handsomest of them recalls to mind, in the evening, the show and bustle of that of St. Honoré at Paris, by the multitude of its shops and coffee-houses splendidly illuminated, by the number of equipages that roll along it with flambeaus behind them, and by the crowds of people that pass to and fro. The Sicilians, who are not of a laborious class, never go out but in a coach. It would be highly indecent for a man in easy circumstances to make use of his legs; the number of carriages is consequently very great, and a foreigner may procure one of tolerable appearance at the rate of seven or eight livres a day. At Palermo every body wears a sword; the cobbler with his leather apron and greasy jacket; the hair-dresser with his powder-bag and powdered coat; every artisan, in short, coming out of his house in the dress of his profession, has a long toledo by his side, an old full-bottomed periwig upon his head, and most frequently a pair of spectacles hanging upon his nose.

Those who have read Brydone's Travels in Sicily and Malta, must recollect that he makes himself merry at the expense of a Frenchwoman, who keeps the only inn that foreigners find at Palermo. He employs half a chapter of his work in describing, or rather caricaturing, her loquaciousness and vanity; and thence takes occasion to extend his satire to French women in general, which certainly is neither just nor polite. But their graces and their amability, which in general procure them the homage they so well deserve, can suffer no injury from the ill-humour of an Englishman. Brydone is not

the only traveller of his nation who has taken a pleasure in speaking ill of ours. To the eyes, however, of an impartial man, this spirit of jealousy and pride does not appear less ridiculous, than the little traits of presumption of Madame Montagne (for that is the landlady's name). I invited her to dine with me, by way of having an opportunity of speaking to her of Brydone, whose visit to Palermo preceded ours only by a few years. She knew that he had written a long story about her, and that both she and her husband were very ill-treated in his work; but she was ignorant of the particulars. I read to her the passage concerning her; and she then proved to me that Brydone had not deviated from the truth, when he represented her as a great talker. Her tongue was never tired while relating to me some little anecdotes which had induced her to request the Englishman to seek another lodging. She entertained me with a chapter upon the subject, at least as long as that of the traveller.

The churches of Palermo, like almost all those of Italy, are magnificently decorated; some of them, that of the Jesuits, for instance, are so overloaded with ornaments and riches, as to give offence to good taste. Besides the excellent paintings which adorn the interior of most of these edifices, the principal objects of admiration are the superb altar of St. Catharine's, constructed of the most beautiful marble, which, by a singular chance, forms a broad festoon border round it; the twenty-four columns of oriental granite which support the cathedral, several tombs of porphyry, and an immense tabernacle of lapis-lazuli, in the cathedral also. A priest, after having drawn back four or five curtains in succession, with a great air of mystery shewed me a large wooden crucifix, which, he seriously assured me, was begun by St. Nicodemus, who fell asleep in the middle of his task, and was very much surprised to find it finished when he awoke: in truth, it was hardly worth while to fall asleep for the completion of so miserable a piece of workmanship.

Though the churches at Palermo are kept in such high order, the
temple

temple which has been erected there to Nature and to the Sciences is in a most ruinous condition; which proves that the inhabitants have more devotion than curiosity, and more piety than desire of information. The museum is a confused assemblage of things but little interesting; the collection of animals is most wretched, consisting only of a few monsters preserved in spirits of wine, and of worm-eaten skins that are falling to pieces. The abbé who shewed us the rarities of this cabinet, told me, that the Jesuits had carried away or sold the most valuable articles at the moment of their expulsion from the dominions of the king of Naples. There remain, however, some curious petrifications and some valuable antiques, of which, according to the account of the abbé, drawings and descriptions had been taken by the learned Hamilton, English ambassador at Naples. We also noticed an anatomical injection of a man and another of a woman; remarkably well executed by a Sicilian physician, who was still alive. Fazello, who has written a history of Sicily *, and several other authors, have spoken of the giants who, in former times, inhabited that island, and whose skeletons have been discovered in the excavations that have been made in certain parts of it. There is nothing in the museum of Palermo that has the smallest relation to men of extraordinary stature. I was desirous of entering into conversation on this subject with the abbé; but we found it impossible to understand one another, on account of the great difference in our manner of pronouncing the Latin tongue, in which I was obliged to speak, owing to my want of a sufficient acquaintance with the Italian. Among a great number of well-informed persons, whom I had an opportunity of consulting, I did not meet with one who had the least idea of ever having seen any remains of giants, or who had heard of their having existed in any part of Sicily.

The adjacent country is pleasant; *La Bagaria*, a canton at three

* *Thomæ Fazelli Decades, de Rebus Siculis, Cataniae, 1749.*

leagues distance from the city, is particularly remarkable for the beauty of its plains, for the variety of its culture, for the fertility of its soil, and for the numerous villas with which it is adorned. The road which leads to it is lined with aloes and Indian figs. There it was that we saw a shameful monument erected to bad taste by prince Palagoni; it is so shocking, that it does not even deserve the appellation of folly. Let any one figure to himself the exterior and the avenues of a palace crowded with a prodigious number of statues clumsily cut in stone, thrown together without order, and representing monsters of a composition so disgusting, that they cease to be ridiculous. The interior is in the same style: the walls of the apartments are plated with glass painted in imitation of marble; and the ceiling is composed of fragments of looking-glasses which reflect objects in a thousand different ways. Here are also to be seen huge crucifixes and pyramids, made of cups, saucers, coffee-pots, and another kind of vessel, which no one would have supposed likely to be ever employed in architecture*. All these things are arranged in such a manner as to form the most inconsistent assemblage. In the chapel, for instance, there is a group of handsome angels, entirely naked, and of the most beautiful flesh colour, with a great wooden figure in the midst of them, representing a dead man half-eaten by the worms. Unfortunately it is sufficiently well executed to appear natural at the first glance. I was told, that out of a number of women who had had the curiosity to visit this abode of the most grotesque whimsicality, some had fainted; and others, who were pregnant, had experienced the most disastrous consequences from casting their eyes upon this truly horrible figure, after having fixed them with pleasure upon the beautiful forms and brilliant colouring of the angels. The fortune of the proprietor of this palace has been put into the hands of trustees, because he was ruining himself by the

* Pots-de-chambre.

execution of his absurd ideas ; for his town-house, it is said, is furnished in the same manner as his mansion in the country.

The palace of prince *Valguaraera* stands close to that of prince Palagoni, but does not resemble it. Considerable taste is displayed both in its construction and in its furniture ; and its situation and prospect are charming. An elegant theatre for private representations, a noble garden, a fine piece of water, and, what is better than all the rest, the great politeness of the owner, all concur to render it a most delightful abode.

I made an excursion also to *Montreale*, a small town built at the top of a steep mountain ; a new and most excellent road leads to it ; on its gentle declivity are a number of beautiful fountains, whose cool and limpid water refreshes the traveller, while walls built up breast-high on each side protect him from all danger ; at the same time the air which he breathes is agreeably perfumed by a forest of orange and lemon trees growing in the valley. In proportion as he advances along this noble road the prospect extends, and becomes boundless at the summit. Here and there he meets with inscriptions, for the most part, indeed, only a play upon words, or *concetti* ; the one at the entrance of the road is as follows : *Ut facilius—Et quò facilius, èd citius*. An immense church, built by William the Good, is the greatest merit of *Montreale* ; it is entirely incrusted with mosaic, and the principal altar is of massy silver, and of excellent workmanship.

Among the remarkable things in the environs of Palermo, a convent of Capuchin friars, which is situated at a small distance from the town, and of which the gardens serve for a public promenade, is sure to be pointed out to the curiosity of strangers. Under the monastery a cave is shewn divided into four great galleries, which are lighted by means of apertures made at each extremity. In this cave are preserved, not in the flesh, but in skin and bones, all the friars who have died since the foundation of the convent, as well as the

the bodies of several individuals of the town. There are particular tombs for opulent families, which, even after their annihilation, are afraid of being confounded with the rest of mankind. It is said, that the preservation of these bodies is ensured by drying them before a slow fire, in such a way as to consume the flesh without injuring the skin. When they are perfectly dry they are clad in the monastic habit, and set upright upon shelves placed one above another along the sides of the cave. The head, arms, and feet, are naked. This mode of preservation is not an agreeable one; the skin, dry, discoloured, in a manner tanned; and even torn in some places, adheres immediately to the bones. It is easy to conceive, that the different grimaces of so great a number of shrivelled faces, rendered still more ugly by long beards, must compose a very hideous spectacle. Whoever, indeed, has seen living Capuchin friars, may form some idea of this singular collection of dead ones.

But let us quit this dismal abode, in which man makes vain efforts to escape from destruction, and turn our eyes upon the agreeable and animated picture of the productions of Sicily's privileged soil. Warmed by the genial heat of the solar rays, and by subterraneous fire, the earth rejects scarcely any kind of culture*; whether bedecked with a carpet of beautiful green, enriched with the golden harvests, whose abundance formerly procured this island the name of the *granary of Rome*, or covered with trees of every kind, bearing odoriferous fruits and flowers, she always presents herself in the rich dress of fecundity. What would be the case were she better seconded by men rendered less careless by her fertility, and more active and eager in augmenting the treasures which nature offers them with so much grace and munificence?

The women I saw in the part of Sicily that I visited were in general handsome: they have the reputation of being very suscep-

* In the garden of the archbishop of Palermo there were several banana trees (*Musa paradisiaca*, L.), bearing flowers and fruit.

tible of the tender passions, a happy disposition which they doubtless owe to the genial influence of the atmosphere. A rigorous climate blunts the edge of sensibility, and but too often hardens the heart.

Rich meadows feed numerous herds of fine oxen, of the same kind as those of France. “ They constantly differ from them, however, “ in the make of their horns, which are very remarkable for their “ length and the regularity of their shape. They have very little “ curvature; and their common length, measured in a right line, is “ three feet, and sometimes three feet and a half. They are all very “ regularly turned, and exactly resembling each other in form*.” Game of every kind is common; and the francolin, a bird which is preferred to the pheasant for its exquisite flavour, is by no means scarce †.

The sea seems to join in the generous struggle, in order to augment the resources, already so diversified, which the earth affords for the nourishment and gratification of mankind. Fish is very abundant; the tunny is caught here in that spread of net which is also in use along the coast of Provence. So great a quantity was taken during my stay at Palermo, that the fishermen who carried them about the streets, preceded by a drum, sold them for so little as two *sous* and a half a pound. A short time before, when we put into Vignettes, the same fish cost six *sous* a pound at Toulon. Another valuable production of the sea near the coast of Sicily, is the coral

* I have distinguished this observation concerning the oxen of Sicily by inverted commas, because Buffon, to whom I communicated it, has made use of it in his *Supplément à l'Histoire des Animaux Quadrupèdes, second art. des Bœufs*.

† The *francolin* is not peculiar to Sicily, as has been asserted in the *Description abrégée de la Sicile*, printed as a sequel to Brydone's Travels. *Il y diverses espèces d'oiseaux qui ne se trouvent qu'en Sicile, tel que le framolin (doubtless francolin)*: but it is well known that this bird is also an inhabitant of other hot countries.

which reddens all the shoals, and the fishery of which employs a great number of boats. That nothing, in short, may appear destitute of life and movement, gulls cut the air in their rapid and defultory flight over the masts of the ships at anchor in the port, and oppose the beautiful white of their plumage to the brilliant azure of an atmosphere which is almost always pure.

CHAPTER V.

PASSAGE FROM PALERMO TO MALTA.—SOUNDINGS BETWEEN SICILY AND THE ISLAND OF MALTA, AND BETWEEN THE LATTER AND AFRICA.—COASTS OF SICILY.—PANTELERIA.—ISLAND OF MALTA; ITS NATURE, TOWNS, AND PRODUCTIONS.

WE quitted the fine harbour of Palermo on the 22d of May, a little after midnight. The frigate carried all her guns; those which had been sacrificed to the convenience of the passengers, and of which the absence deranged her external symmetry, having been restored to their places. Our courtiers had left us: frightened at the bad weather we had encountered at sea, and particularly at the tempest which had overtaken us abreast of the *Bocche di Bonifaccio*, they would no longer consent to expose themselves to the fury of so inconstant an element; but resolved to travel across Sicily to Naples, and return to France overland. They had been assured at Versailles, and I have heard the same thing asserted at Paris, that a ship of war was immoveable in the midst of the waves, and that the persons on board were as quiet as in their own houses. What was their astonishment when they perceived that so great and heavy a machine was no more than the sport of the winds and of the foaming billows! We lost agreeable companions, and I exceedingly regretted, that our separation deprived me of an opportunity of landing at Syracuse and approaching Mount Ætna, which Nature seems to have seated in Sicily, to serve at once as an example of her power, as well in the distribution of her gifts as in the expression of her anger.

We remained becalmed at some distance from the port till the following day at noon. We had round the ship a great number of

small boats employed in the coral fishery, and perceived in the water large turtle, which the seamen of the Mediterranean call *monks**, and which are a kind of sea-dogs. Four soldiers of the garrison of Palermo took refuge on board with a boat with which they had run away; they were received, and the boat sent back by a fisherman. Two of them had before deserted from the French service. At ten o'clock in the evening a Sicilian officer came to claim them in the name of the viceroy; but as they were already under the protection of the French flag, the captain refused to give them up; and the officer returned very much dissatisfied with the bad success of his mission. We had also lost two sailors, who had deserted at Palermo, and whom it was impossible for us to recover.

According to the learned Buffon, the Mediterranean sea, originally a lake of little extent, had received, in remote ages, a sudden and prodigious increase, at the time when the Black Sea had opened itself a passage through the Bosphorus; and at that period when the sinking of the land which united Europe to Africa in the part that is now the Straits of Gibraltar, permitted the water of the ocean to rush in †. It was also his opinion, that most of the islands of the Mediterranean made a part of the continents before the great convulsions that have taken place in this quarter of the world. In order to fix his opinion concerning these epochs of Nature upon a surer foundation, he had begged me to ascertain the depth of the sea between Sicily and Malta. I could not have a more favourable opportunity of complying with his request; we had on board a coasting pilot, a very experienced old man, and estimable in every point of view, who, in his numerous voyages, had sounded its depth in a variety of places. I availed myself of the calm to converse with him at my ease, and the result of the interesting details which he gave me was

* They are also called *angel-fish*, or simply *angel*. *Squalus squatina*, L. Syst. Nat.—*Squalus pinna ani carens, ore in apice capitis*. Artedi, Gen. Pisc. p. 507.

† Théorie de la Terre. et Epoques de la Nature.

perfectly conformable to the ideas of Buffon. In fact, between the islands of Sicily and Malta, the soundings are from five and twenty to thirty fathoms; and in the middle of the channel, where there is the greatest depth of water, never exceed a hundred. On the other hand, between the island of Malta and Cape Bon, in Africa, there is still less water, the lead indicating no more than from five and twenty to thirty fathoms, throughout the whole breadth of the channel which separates the two lands.

A breeze from the eastward carried us towards San Vitto, a lofty and perpendicular promontory. The coast from Palermo to that cape is steep, and intersected by vallies, which are arrayed in all the beauties of cultivation, and form an agreeable contrast with the barrenness of the neighbouring rocks. There is deep water along the coast, and vessels may approach it very close without the smallest danger. Soon after we passed between *Maretimo* and *Favoyanna*, two small islands belonging to the king of Naples, to which he banishes his state prisoners. While standing towards Malta, we perceived a long extent of the low coast of Sicily, between Cape *Marfalla* and Cape *Paffaro*, at the extremity of which a fort has been erected. In the distance we discovered a chain of high mountains parallel to the coast. The weather was fine, the heavens were serene; the vessel advanced slowly over a surface which was scarcely ruffled by a gentle breeze; and we were never tired of admiring vast plains embellished by all the charms of Nature, and by the diversified labours of the husbandman.

On the morning of the 25th we found ourselves off *Panteleria*, an island of much greater length than breadth, lofty in the middle, and terminating in a low point at each of its extremities. It is inhabited, and tolerably fertile. An officer of the ship, who in a former voyage had landed there, told me that there was only one spring in the whole island; but that upon the summit of the highest mountain, that is to say, nearly in the middle of the island, there

was

was a lake of considerable size : that lake is, no doubt, the crater of an extinguished volcano ; for the same officer had observed there all the marks of one, such as lava, pumice-stone, &c. &c. The approach to *Panteleria* is dreaded by seamen, especially in winter, because experience has taught them that ships seldom pass it without encountering a gale of wind.

In the evening we saw several swallows. We were at four leagues from *Panteleria*, and the wind was easterly. On the 26th, at three o'clock in the evening, we entered the harbour of Malta, one of the most capacious and finest in the universe. The entrance is very narrow, and defended on each side by a formidable castle. Vessels are obliged to stand in for it under as much sail as possible, in order to have *way* or velocity sufficient to clear the passage, in the midst of which they find themselves suddenly becalmed, owing to the height of the fortresses exceeding that of the masts. The custom of French ships of war was to salute the place with thirteen guns, which were answered by eleven ; and when the vessels of the order entered the ports of France, they observed the same *etiquette*. If the admiral's galley was in the harbour, she was entitled to a salute of fifteen guns more ; and when the admiral came to return the visit, which the French commanding officer was bound to pay him in the first instance, he was complimented with a salute of thirteen. Every *bailli* of the order, who thought proper to come on board, was received with a discharge of five guns ; so that it frequently happened that a French ship of war, which made some stay in the harbour of Malta, expended more powder there than in all the rest of her cruise.

The fortifications which defend the port and the city are the best in the world, and are kept in the most perfect repair. It is well known, that the united forces of the Ottoman empire failed in an attack upon this impregnable fortress. It was a conquest, or rather a new prodigy, reserved for French valour.

The roofs of the houses, as well as in Italy, and all over the East, are terraced. The city of Valette, or the new city, is well built; the stones, which serve for the construction of the edifices, and for the pavement of the principal streets, are very soft when extracted from the quarry, but they harden in the air; they are, at the same time, so uncommonly white that they dazzle the eyes, especially when they reflect the rays of a burning sun. The palace of the Grand Master was spacious, and elegantly simple both without and within.

The order of Malta had a public library, which was increasing with considerable rapidity; the private libraries of the commanders being deposited there after their death. Duplicates were sold, and the produce served for the acquisition of such books as were wanting. This library contained several specimens of natural history, one of the most remarkable of which was a petrified bone of considerable size; it passed at Malta for a piece of petrified wood, but the bony tissue was easily distinguishable, as I proved to several well-informed persons: it is a fragment of the *femur* of a large quadruped; I sent a drawing of it to Buffon.

Another, but a richer, cabinet of curiosities was in the possession of M. Barbaroux. Though not very considerable, it contained some valuable articles; and the proprietor, who blended civility with science, shewed it to strangers with a great deal of complaisance. This little museum contained several beautiful shells and curious petrifications; and a great number of medals were arranged in a cabinet of very ingenious contrivance. In the midst of the productions of art I beheld with pleasure a very large figured pearl, a beautiful enamelled head in *chiaro-oscuro*, and a large crystal medallion engraved by Michael Angelo. I cannot conclude this enumeration of curiosities without making mention of one of those phenomena which are commonly called errors of Nature, as if Nature could be erroneous; but which are rather proofs of her power, and of the prodigious variety of
means

means that she employs. This was a portrait, which I saw at the house of the Chevalier Despennes, French *chargé d'affaires*, of a little girl, in whose forehead was a third eye much larger than the other two, and which alone was worth them both, since it had a double iris and a double pupil. There was nothing extraordinary in the rest of the face. Under the drawing were some Italian words, importing, that this child was born at the village of Monte Alegra di Mercia, on the 21st of January 1775; but the inscription did not say, nor could any one tell me, whether the being distinguished by such an excess in the organ of sight had long survived its birth.

We had just left a city in which an immense number of carriages kept up an eternal din. Here walking is not a degradation; nor do horses and equipages rolling rapidly along carry terror into streets which are solely devoted to citizens on foot. The Grand Master alone was possessor of a coach and six horses, but seldom made use of it, unless to go to his country-house. Officers of the order, and other inhabitants, kept for the same purpose chaises drawn by a single mule, which was led along by a man; a wise precaution, and worthy of imitation in all places where the safety of individuals is preferred to the thoughtless gratifications of luxury, the bustle of which, in populous towns, is a continual subject of fear, and sometimes an instrument of death, to the humble and useful citizen. It were to be wished, that as good a protection could be found there against the dangers attendant upon sacrifices to Venus, whose priestesses flock thither from all quarters. They belong to all nations; and their abundance, which is in such whimsical opposition to one of the vows of the knights, was singularly pernicious to the crews of the vessels that frequented these seductive, but perfidious seas.

Brydone has amused himself with telling stories about the knights of Malta, not unlike that of poor Madame Montagne of Palermo. At the time of my arrival the minds of the knights were furiously exasperated against him, and not altogether without reason. He describes

scribes their mode of life, without having frequented the society of any one of them during the whole time that he remained upon the island; his account of them (and this is not the only occasion on which he is liable to the same reproach) is not correct; and when he speaks of their laws of duelling, of the crosses painted upon the wall opposite the place where any one of them has been killed, and of the penalties incurred by those who refuse a challenge*, his book is merely the vehicle of errors, into which he has, no doubt, been led by the too hasty adoption of idle tales. For my part, I met with nothing but great amenity of manners in the society of the members of the order with whom I had any connexion; and I remember with gratitude the kind welcome and the civilities that I received from many of them, particularly from Citizen Dolomieux, whom the sciences number among their most illustrious and dearest partisans.

At a league from the new city is the old one, or *Citta Vecchia*; it was the residence of the bishop of the island. The cathedral is a very handsome edifice, and is ornamented with the most valuable marbles, such as those which are known by the name of *green* and *yellow antique*. Although very spacious, the inside is hung, from one end to the other, with crimson damask, trimmed with a broad lace of fine gold. These religious monuments, more simple at Malta than at Genoa and Palermo, are also, in my opinion, grander and in a better style. The extraordinary quantity of ornaments, indeed, with which the churches at Genoa are overloaded, presents to the dazzled eye nothing but tinsel, which, joined to their too confined, and, in a manner, mean dimensions, deprives them of that grandeur and majesty which we expect to find in the temples of the Divinity. From the top of the spire of the cathedral, mount *Ætna* and its

* See a Tour through Sicily and Malta, vol. i. p. 362.

thick smoke are easily discernible, although distant nearly sixty-seven leagues.

At no great distance from this church is a grotto of little extent, in the midst of which stands a very good statue of St. Paul. The apostle, as is well known, is held in great veneration by the Maltese, because they pretend that he landed in their island, and delivered them for ever from the serpents with which it was infested. The grotto is hollowed out of a soft, white, and calcareous earth, commonly called *Maltese bole**; an improper appellation, since bole is an argillaceous earth, more or less pure, consequently vitrifiable, and not acted upon by acids; whereas the *Maltese earth* is of a calcareous nature, and effervesces with acids of a powerful kind. Buffon followed, in this respect, the opinion of the greater part of the mineralogists who preceded him, and who, in consequence of their copying one another, had universally considered the Maltese earth as a bole, or argillaceous earth. Accordingly, in his History of Minerals, he makes a bole of it; but what is still more difficult to conceive, is, that he has taken the Maltese earth for a red bole, although it is as white as chalk, which it resembles indeed in a variety of respects †. It is known at Malta by no other appellation than that of *terra di San Paolo*. Cakes, impressed with the image of the saint, holding a serpent in his hand, are made of it, and exported to the different countries of Europe, particularly to Spain and Italy. It is this mode of preparation which has obtained it in commerce the name of *terra sigillata*, in common with the other earths and boles which bear different impressions. It passes at Malta for

* *Bolus Melitenfis*.

† “The red bole takes its colour from the rust of iron. It is with this bole that *terra sigillata* is prepared. It also bears the name of *terra Lemnia*, *terra benedicta* “*Sancti Pauli*, *terra Melitenfis*, *terra Constantinopolitana*.” Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Minéraux.

a wonderful remedy in several diseases, and for a certain specific in fevers; but all its properties are confined to the production of a slight sudorific effect.

The common people were not contented with attributing qualities almost supernatural to the earth of St. Paul's grotto; they pretended also that its mass suffered no diminution, whatever might be the quantity extracted from the cave. This, in the eyes of the inhabitants of Malta, is a continual miracle performed by the saint; and the earth which bears his name is consequently considered in the island as a sacred substance. It is certain, that it does not appear to decrease perceptibly. This easy reproduction is attributable to the humidity of the grotto, and to the softness of the earth. To convince those of their error who maintain that it loses nothing of its bulk, it would be sufficient to point out the very evident cavities made by the tools recently used in cutting it away. But it is difficult to undeceive that class of people who explain natural facts by miracles.

A lichen, perfectly white, grows upon the inner surface of the roof of St. Paul's grotto.

At some distance from the old city are vast caverns, easily hollowed out and extended through a species of earth capable of very little resistance. They are divided into such numerous ramifications, that they form a labyrinth, in which a man might lose himself and perish, had not care been taken to block up the entrance of some of these subterraneous galleries. They were formerly a place of interment, or catacombs, as they are still called. Stone tombs stand on each side, one above another, and of all dimensions. A convex lid covers some of them; and there is every reason to believe that the whole of them were formerly closed in the same manner. The part of these tombs, on which the head of the dead was laid, is raised about two inches above the bottom, with an excavation in it adapted to the shape of the head and neck, so that those parts were incased in this sort of funereal pillow. Several of these tombs, which

were larger than the others, were formed for the reception of two heads, and were, no doubt, reserved by affection, for lovers or married pairs.

These catacombs appear also to have served, in less remote times, as a retreat to the inhabitants of Malta, when their island was a prey to the wars by which it has been frequently laid waste. In them are to be seen two old mills, as also that image which is the safeguard of a credulous nation, the statue of St. Paul.

The island of Malta is situated nearly in the midst of the Mediterranean sea, between Sicily and Africa; its extreme length is seven leagues, and its breadth four. Properly speaking, it is nothing but a rock almost entirely bare; but it is not one of those rocks on which the sharp tooth of time can hardly make an impression, and which give the idea of complete sterility. It is a calcareous stone, exceedingly white, of a loose texture, little solidity, and not repugnant to vegetation. Although the greater part of the numerous islands of these seas have been the focus, or the result, of terrible explosions of nature, that of Malta has not experienced their violence; and is of a very different origin. No traces of a volcano are perceptible upon it; and if lavas are met with, they are those of Vesuvius, which are brought thither in order to serve as millstones, or for the pavement of the city. Nor are there even any vitrifiable substances to be found in Malta. Every thing is calcareous, except talc, gypsum, and argillaceous earth; and of that latter substance the quantity is small, and always mixed with calcareous matter. It is purer and more abundant in the island of Gozzo, a dependency of Malta, and separated from it only by a small interval of sea.

Neither are there any mountains in the island of Malta, nor in that of Gozzo: they are nothing but a plain intersected by a few hillocks of little elevation.

The traveller cannot help admiring the industry of the Maltese cultivators,

cultivators, who have found means to fertilize a rock for the most part bare, and at best only covered by a few inches of earth. In order to prepare for cultivation a soil apparently so ungrateful, this laborious race of men excavate the rock, and break it into pieces. The fragments which are nearest the surface, and which have been hardened by the contact of the air, serve to enclose the field with a dry wall. By these means the stones which are too solid to be decomposed by the atmosphere, are got rid of, and the rain-water is prevented from carrying away the vegetative earth. A portion of the rock is reduced, by dint of labour, into minute parts, and mixed with a thin layer of mould, for which the Maltese sometimes go as far as Sicily. This mixture is very fertile. It grows corn, millet, and annual cotton*; fig and other fruit trees thrive very well upon it; and it produces those fine oranges, with a red pulp and of a delightful flavour, which are so much esteemed in Europe.

But it must be confessed, notwithstanding the care and labour of the Maltese, that their country is far from pleasant; its aspect even is disagreeable; the walls with which their very limited properties are enclosed, white stones, and a yellow and dry soil, almost destitute of trees and verdure, compose a very uncouth picture, which fatigues the eye. Cultivation assumes a pleasant aspect only when seconded by nature.

A large garden which was laying out at Sant Antonio, a country-house belonging to the Grand Master at half a league from the town, may be considered as one of the most powerful efforts of Maltese industry. It was indeed a wonder in a country where it was so difficult to clothe the ground; any where else it would have been a very indifferent garden, though it abounds with flowers, among others a fine double poppy †, and a beautiful kind of scabious ‡.

* *Gossypium herbaceum.*

† *Papaver rhæas, L.*

‡ *Scabiosa atro purpurea, L.*

The walks, covered with fragments of white stone, were unpleasant to the feet, and fatiguing to the sight. Rohan, the Grand Master, gave us an entertainment at this country-house. In town, nobody was allowed to eat with this petty prince; and even at Sant Antonio, every body had not the right of being seated at his table. Mess. Dürfort and Tott, as having the rank of colonels, were alone admitted to that honour; and they even were separated from the Grand Master by the whole length of a great table. The other officers were at another, the honours of which were done by the gentlemen of the palace; and certainly we had no reason to regret the tiresome and cold *étiquette* of the first. After dinner, the Grand Master laid aside all ceremony, mixed with us, and made one of all our parties.

The territory of Malta is far from being sufficient for the support of its inhabitants; the greater part of the corn, the cattle, and, in short, all the necessaries of life, and even the very earth, as I have just now said, are brought hither from Sicily, which was literally the granary and the market of the Maltese. The vessels that are employed for the conveyance of provisions, which are called *sparonari*, are the fastest sailers in the world, and are navigated by the most intrepid seamen.

The stones, which are extracted from the quarries in Malta, are highly valued for the construction of houses. Their softness, before they are exposed to the air, renders them fit for a variety of purposes. They are sent ready hewn into our southern departments, to Italy, and even up the Levant. A few years ago a sparry and calcareous substance was discovered, to which the name of *Maltese stone* was given. It was worked up into a number of curious articles, and Pinto, the Grand Master, was so jealous of the possession of it, that he prohibited its exportation, and even kept the manufactory of it to himself. His successor, Rohan Poldux, was not susceptible of such despicable jealousy; and I had no difficulty in
procuring

procuring several pieces, some rough and some polished, which I transmitted to the national cabinet. But the real nature of this calcareous matter was not yet known; it was generally considered as a marble, although its grain, its consistence, and its composition, differ much from the grain, the hardness, and composition of marble. One of my fellow-travellers, who had a great deal of wit and chat, though but a very slender stock of information, did not hesitate sometimes to advance the most erroneous opinions with an air of much self-conceit. I mean M. Tott, who affirmed that the supposed marble of Malta was talc. This idea gained ground; and the Grand Master appeared persuaded of its truth. In support of it, M. Tott shewed a fragment of this stone, of which a part, according to him, was evidently talc; and he concluded, that no argument was capable of doing away a fact, which was in reality nothing more than the most unfounded supposition. Upon the examination of the fragment, which was produced as a proof of an absurd assertion, it was remarked, that the *congeries* of *spiculæ* of which it was composed, had been cut diagonally in particular parts; and that these sections exhibited shining and transparent surfaces, giving it a false appearance of talc, by which my half-informed fellow-traveller had been deceived. I was forced, in a manner, to enter into an argument upon this subject, in the midst of a numerous company. I frankly declared that I could not subscribe to M. Tott's opinion, assigning a reason so simple as to be easily understood by every one: this was, that talc is not acted upon by acids, whereas they produce the greatest effect upon the calcareous matter, the nature of which we were endeavouring to determine. No attention was any longer paid to the opinion of M. Tott; an affront which that presumptuous man never forgave me.

It was by no means difficult, after all, to ascertain the place which this supposed marble of Malta ought to occupy among stony substances. For upon examining the figure and disposition of the

congeries

congeries of *spiculæ*, of which it is composed; upon observing the concentric circles it exhibits when sawed transversely; upon attending to its want of consistency, which prevents its being cut into large *laminæ* without splitting; and particularly upon examining its position in the rocks; it is easily recognised as one of those calcareous stalactites, or concrete masses, produced by the filtering of water through calcareous earth; in other words, the alabaster of naturalists. This alabaster must not be confounded with the harder kind, which takes so fine a polish, and the brilliant whiteness of which is so much extolled.

It is generally found in irregular blocks, the surface of which is full of little lumps of the same nature. The only kind found in strata is that of Gozzo; but those strata are irregular and of little extent. The calcareous rock, which covers both blocks and strata, is generally of a duller white and closer grain than that of which the rest of the islands of Malta and Gozzo are composed. This proceeds from the distillation of the water, which, in passing through the rock, carries along with it the lightest particles. The colour of the Maltese alabaster varies according to the district in which it is procured; but it is always a mixture of yellow, and light and dark gray. It bears a high polish. I saw very handsome tables and slabs of it in the palace of the Grand Master.

The kind of lichen, which produces the dye known by the name of warty sea-wrack, grows commonly upon the rocks washed by the sea*. The Grand Master proposed to encourage this branch of commerce, for which the Maltese are indebted to the care and researches of Citizen Dolomieu. The sea upon the coast of Malta abounds with different kinds of fish. That kind which the natives call *accola*, and the French *white tunny*, is held in high esteem. I was not able precisely to determine its species, never having seen it

* *Fucus verrucosus tinctorius*, Tournef. Inst. Rei Herb.—*Lichen roccella*, L.

till after it was dressed. It does not grow to so large a size as the common tunny, but its flesh is whiter and also more delicate. It is very probable that it is the *alalunga*, which was first mentioned by Cetti, in his *Histoire des Poissons de la Sardaigne*, p. 191*. There is also a fishery of coral and of different kinds of shell-fish. Those which are most commonly met with are the *datoli* †, the young fry of which find no difficulty in lodging themselves in the soft stone of the coast; the noble *pinnae* ‡, many of which are very large, some of them being more than two feet long; the spiny oyster §, which is taken in the very harbour; the tethys ||; several kinds of *tellinæ*, whelks, &c. &c.; and the paper nautilus ¶ is sometimes met with, though but very seldom.

The strata of calcareous matter of the islands of Malta and Gozzo abound also very much in petrifications and fossils. It would be easy to make a very large collection. I there saw petrified *echini*, very large *serpulæ*, *oolites*, *pisolites*, *vertebræ* of fish of an astonishing size, enormous *glossopetræ*, and some very beautiful *bufonites*. These two last fossils pass among the people for tongues and eyes of serpents, though certainly there is very little resemblance between them. In their opinion, they are authentic and incontrovertible proofs of the miraculous service which St. Paul did the island by destroying all the serpents it contained. This is not the first time that the history of nature has become, in the hands of ignorance, that of superstition.

* *Scomber alalunga*, *pinnis pectoralibus longissimis*, Arted. Gen. Pisc. p. 222.—*Scomber pinnis pectoralibus longissimis pinnulis caudæ utrinque septem*.—*Scomber alalunga*, Lin. Syst. Nat.—See also l'Encyclop. Méthod. Hist. des Poissons, art. *Alalunga*.

† *Pholas dactylus*, L.

‡ *Pinna nobilis*, L.

§ *Ostrea varia*, L.

|| *Arca Noæ*, L.

¶ *Argonauta argo*, L.

CHAPTER VI.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS.—MALTESE GALLIES.—POLITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW OF THE ORDER OF MALTA.—ANTIQUITIES AND LANGUAGE OF THE ISLAND OF MALTA.—MALTESE DOGS.—PASSAGE FROM MALTA TO THE ISLAND OF CANDIA.—BIRDS THAT CAME ON BOARD.—ARRIVAL IN EGYPT.

DURING the stay that we made at Malta, that is to say, during twelve days, the wind varied from north to north-east, and hindered vessels from putting to sea. It blew a strong gale; the sea was very rough; and, what appeared more extraordinary to the inhabitants, it rained without intermission. In general, no rain falls at Malta at that season of the year. Persons worthy of credit assured me, that in the course of forty years residence there, they had never seen rain in the beginning of the month of June. Another subject of astonishment was the thunder, which accompanied the rain, and which, though very frequent and tremendous in the winter, is a thing unheard of in the summer months.

This bad weather, which in the present season of the year passed for a phenomenon, brought back the galleys of the order. On their entrance the *Atalante* saluted them with fifteen guns, which were answered by four from the admiral's galley. They were manned, or rather encumbered, with an incredible number of people, the admiral's galley alone carrying eight hundred men. They were superbly ornamented; the bas-reliefs, as well as a profusion of other carved work upon the stern, were richly gilt; their enormous sails were striped blue and white, with a large red cross of Malta painted in the centre; their elegant flags waved majestically in the air; every thing, in short, concurred, when they were under sail, to make them
a mag-

a magnificent spectacle. But their construction rendered them equally unfit for action, or to encounter stormy weather. The order preserved them rather as a mark of its ancient splendour, than on account of their utility. This was one of those old institutions which had formerly served to render it celebrated, and now attested their weakness and decline.

It is well known that the *hospitalers of St. John of Jerusalem*, when they exchanged their humble title for that of *knights*, became rather a military corps than a religious association. The successive wars which they had to maintain had given them a habit of intrepidity. Their history is a series of noble achievements; whether yielding to an immense force and to immense efforts, they abandoned Rhodes, covered with the glory of a defence which bordered upon a prodigy; or whether, braving at Malta the rage and valour of Soliman, they set bounds to the ambitious attempts of the Ottomans; they were seen on every occasion to display those skilful tactics, and that heroic courage, which transform a handful of men into a formidable army.

In order to keep up that warlike ardour and that military genius, it was requisite that they should preserve those strict rules, those forms of discipline, and that austerity of manners, which constitute the strength and duration of every assemblage of combatants. But the sluggishness, or rather the discouragement, of the Muffulmans, was the epoch of the relaxation that took place in the institutions of the order. The knights successively abandoned practices unimportant in appearance; but by the observance of which a nursery of heroes had been formed; luxury took place of the noble simplicity of warriors; sloth and its enervating attendants succeeded to activity, and almost a rudeness of manners; and the pride of camps gave way to the effeminacy of cities. The struggle between the knights and the Turks was no longer any thing more than a phantom, the appearance of which was kept up by a few petty piratical expeditions;

the caravans, and cruises of the galleys, were become mere parties of pleasure to the delightful ports of Sicily; the defence of those superb ramparts, the monuments of the glory of the order, and of the shame of its enemies, was entrusted to foreign mercenaries; and that social energy which had struck terror into one of the greatest empires in the universe, no longer shewed itself but in a few sparks of individual courage.

A horde of priests surrounded the order of Malta. Every where ambitious and intriguing, they were more than commonly enterprising in a climate which raises the temperature of heads as well as of the atmosphere, and supported with impatience the yoke of the knights. They had more than once endeavoured to throw it off, by making use of their favourite arms, perfidy, superstition, and falsehood. Depending upon the relaxation of discipline, and the improvidence of the order, they had dared, a short time before our arrival, to seize one of the forts which defend the city. This unexpected blow roused for a moment that ancient valour which seemed to be totally lost. Fifty knights, with the commander d'Anonville at their head, took the fort by escalade, and with it the greater part of the sedition. This revolt, in which the bishop of the island was implicated, was still the subject of conversation at Malta.

The sovereignty, however, which the order of Malta exercised in the two small islands belonging to it, was by no means oppressive. If the haughtiness of some of its members formed a striking contrast with their state of insignificance and degeneracy, it could only affect the intolerant pride of the priests. The most useful class, that of cultivators, was protected. It is not forgotten with what efforts they succeeded in clothing with the riches of fertility, a soil which nature seemed to condemn to barrenness: their labours were respected, and they reaped in peace, without division as well as without imposts, the fruits of their industry. Prosperity is the natural consequence of this moderation, so seldom found combined with authority.

A perpetual declaration of war, of which the apparent motive was a difference of religious opinions, was doubtless a singular kind of policy; but, in fact, they were only the pretence. Charles the Fifth, on permitting the establishment of the knights of St. John of Jerusalem in the islands of Malta and Gozzo, required from them this constant state of hostility. But the propagation of the Christian religion was by no means his object. The Turks had at that time rendered themselves formidable; they had extended their conquests in a manner alarming to the powers of Europe; and the monarch found, in a body of warriors, accustomed to fight the Mussulmans, a rampart capable of protecting his own possessions against their enterprises.

Other nations also found means to turn to account the obligations which the order of Malta had contracted. France, in particular, thence derived the greatest advantages. Although, for a long time, the ancient glory of the order was upon the decline, although its war against the Turks was no longer any more than a bugbear; although, in a word, its hostilities were, as I have before said, confined to the cruises of some miserable corsairs; the Maltese name was so dreaded in the Turkish seas, that the appearance of the smallest felucca bearing the flag of the order, sufficed to spread terror, and to prevent the vessels of the country from venturing to put to sea. The conveyance of merchandize, in those parts where trade is very brisk, was entirely performed in foreign bottoms. Marseilles, and the small adjacent ports, sent thither annually near five hundred sail. These vessels returned at the end of three years, during which their crews had subsisted at the expense of the eastern nations, enriching our ports with the piastres of the Levant, and with about five thousand sailors made by this sort of coasting trade, which accustomed them to a sea difficult to navigate, and encumbered with a labyrinth of islands and shoals. France owed these commercial and maritime riches to the
institution

instituition of the knights of Malta, and in that political point of view was interested in its preservation.

But if politics be the philosophy of governments, philosophy is in its turn the politics of mankind at large ; and how could it help being gratified at seeing the germs of concord spring out of this same institution, which was composed of such various elements ? In fact, an assemblage of men of almost all the nations of Europe, chosen from among those whom a careful education rendered susceptible of noble sentiments, and capable of just reasoning ; forced to live in an island which afforded them no society but that of their companions, no other pleasures than those which they enjoyed in common ; accustomed to the same exercises, and subject to the same laws and regulations ; such an assemblage, I say, was well calculated to diminish the disparity between nations, and to blend the different shades of their characters. And when we consider that the greater part of these men, on their return home, were destined to fill important posts, and sometimes to play great parts in the political world ; and when we recollect that they were all members of families called *distinguished and puissant*, it is impossible to doubt their having often by themselves, or by means of their influence, tempered the hatred and resentment of cabinets against the countrymen of their relations and their friends. These distant causes have, perhaps, more than once stopped the effusion of human blood, with which the earth has been but too often moistened and profaned. Perhaps they have also retained the crimson current when it was about to flow. It is thus that the Maltese association, by its slow but certain effects, would probably have realized that favourite dream of philanthropy, an universal peace.

It is unnecessary to observe to the reader, that these reflections, presented to him as they occurred to me at Malta, could be of weight only in the old order of things, that is to say, at the time of my
voyage.

voyage. They have since become much less interesting. The French republic, which, in the space of a few years, has passed through whole centuries of glory, has just rendered the existence of the knights useless. It has disdained the advantages which they afforded to France, and the hopes of concord which they held out to the people of Europe. Such speculations were too confined for the immensity of her power. Mistress of the Mediterranean, by means of the conquest of the islands of Gozzo and Malta, she has extended her departments as far as the seas of the Levant, and has thus made the trade of it her own; while by her close alliances, which can no longer have any interests but hers, she has accomplished the great work of social order, the fraternity of mankind.

Before the island of Malta became the domain of the hospitalers of St. John of Jerusalem, it had passed successively through the hands of several nations. From the Carthaginians to the Arabs, it changed its masters several times. Remains of antiquity are consequently common. In 1794, an Italian work was printed at Malta, concerning several of these ancient relics, the produce of an excavation made in 1788*.

Persons are not wanting to assert, that the Maltese language is still more ancient than the greater part of the ruins discovered there, although it has long passed for a base mixture of Arabic and Italian. Antonio Vassali, a learned Maltese, has lately vindicated his nation from the charge of having no tongue of its own, having demonstrated that the Maltese may vie with the most copious of the living languages †.

* *Degli Apanzi di alcuni antichissimi Edifici, scoperti in Maltha; Dissertazione storica-critica del March. Barbaro Archit. con copiose Annotazione del medesimo Autore, 1794, in 4to. fig.*

† *Vocabulaire de la Langue Maltoise, par Antoine Vassali, imprimé à Rome en 1796. See Le Magasin Encyclopédique, a valuable and interesting collection, vol. iv. of the second year, page 139.*

The pretty kind of spaniel with long hair, called the *Maltese dog*, which is a distinct species from the *bichon*, or lap-dog, that has been confounded with it in works of natural history, is no longer seen at Malta. It is even so scarce, that the race seems in danger of becoming extinct in that island; but it was easy to procure there individuals of a handsome kind of pointer. This reminds me that I have never seen any where so many very pretty terriers as in the streets of Genoa.

The weather being no longer stormy, nor the wind contrary, we left the harbour of Malta on the 7th of January 1777, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and stood towards the island of Candia. We had then with us a felucca which M. Tott had purchased with the intention of visiting the coasts that the frigate could not approach. The crew was composed of Maltese. This idea was one of those that were frequently engendered by the somewhat whimsical imagination of M. Tott. It was a great impediment to the navigation of the frigate, the felucca not being able to keep way with her, nor even to follow her at all in bad weather. The captain was soon tired of such a consort; and I have heard that, shortly after he quitted Alexandria, he took out the men, and ordered her to be sunk.

In the morning of the 8th, the weather being very fine, with a light breeze from the north-west, a bird of prey*, which seemed to be a male sparrow-hawk, came and settled upon the yards of the frigate. The sailors called it a corfair, because it cruises to intercept the quails, and other birds of passage, which cross these seas; a journey always attended with a multitude of dangers. Sometimes precipitated in the waves by the impetuosity of the wind, and sometimes torn to pieces by the cruel claws of winged cruisers, these interesting and defenceless beings, on reaching the shores which seem to offer them repose, after so many dangers and fatigues, seldom

* Epervier, Hist. Nat. des Ois.—*Falco nisus*, L.

escape the death prepared for them by man, the most gluttonous and the most unmerciful of their enemies.

We were steering to the eastward, and shortly after the wind blew from that quarter. It not only continued contrary during two days; but also became extremely violent, and raised a sea which occasioned the ship to labour very much. The bird that is the harbinger of storms * had appeared hovering in our wake, and prepared us for that with which we were contending.

On the 12th the weather cleared up; and our sails, filled by a favourable breeze, brought us in sight of the island of *Cerigo*, the ancient *Cythera*, on which *Venus* landed when she was first made out of the foam of the sea, situated at the entrance of the archipelago of the *Levant*. This island at present makes a part of the French republic, under the name of the *department of the Egæan sea*. It was proper that the most amiable people of the universe should possess a country dedicated by antiquity to the most amiable of the goddesses. We discovered also, at a small distance from the department of the *Egæan sea*, four steep, barren, and uninhabited rocks: *Ovo*, of which the form is, in fact, not unlike that of an egg; the two *Couffi*, which represent pretty well the kind of basket so called in the *Levant* trade; and lastly, *Cerigotto*, or little *Cerigo*. On the 13th we cast anchor in the deep bay of *La Suda*, in the island of *Candiâ*.

The day after our departure from *Malta*, the same on which the sparrow-hawk perched upon the yards of the frigate, two other birds, one a little gray fauvette †, the other a yellow bergeronnette ‡, came also and settled upon the rigging; but being less able to support the fatigue of so long a flight, they suffered themselves to be taken by hand. As their diminutive bodies would have afforded but a scanty dish, I had

* L'oiseau de tempête—*Procellaria pelagica*, L.—*Ang.* The stormy petrel.

† Passerinette, ou petite fauvette, Buffon, *Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum.* No. 579. fig. 2.—*Motacilla passerina*, L.

‡ *Motacilla boarula*, L.

no great difficulty in obtaining possession of them. I carried them to the great cabin, and there, after having lavished upon them caresses to which they were rendered insensible by their state of uneasiness, I restored them to liberty. Whether they foresaw the storm which we encountered the following day, or whether, as no land was in sight, they were afraid to trust themselves to the open sea, I know not; but after a few moments of uncertain flight, they returned by the same window whence I had let them fly. From that time they never quitted the great cabin; and if, when frightened by any noise, they went out of one of the stern windows, or by a port, they were sure to come back by another. Although of different species, they lived in the greatest harmony; they played upon those terrible machines which deal death and destruction at a distance, and it was upon a cannon even that was placed their little provision of fresh water and crumbs of bread. It served them also as a resting-place. Their confidence was unbounded; they fluttered over a table at which twenty persons, somewhat noisy, were daily seated; and with their chirping, and quick and graceful motion, enlivened our monotonous abode. On our approach to the coast of the island of Candia, our pretty and interesting navigators hastened to fly away, and took leave of us by uttering a few shrill notes, the sweet accent of their joy, and, perhaps, of their gratitude. Charming birds! you were quitting a dull and dreary place to which you gave an air of life, and were going to animate delightful groves, already embellished by all the favours of nature. May you long continue there a testimony of your fortunate navigation, and a proof, that in the midst of the horrors of tempests, and of raging seas, and among men who seem to be rendered unsusceptible of the tender affections of the heart, by the necessity of braving continual danger, you met with feeling and compassionate beings!

I have had two opportunities of returning to the ancient Crete: the observations that I made there will naturally find a place in my

Travels through Greece, which will immediately follow these. On the other hand, those pages of my itinerary, on which was written my passage from Suda to Alexandria, are lost; but I well recollect that they contained no important details. We put into Paleo-Castro, close to Cape Solomon, at the most easterly point of the island of Candia. It is an open beach, without any other habitations than shepherds huts. The sight of a ship of war, accompanied by a felucca, suggesting to the imagination of these peaceful shepherds the idea of a Maltese armament, they fled with their numerous flocks into the interior of the island, and abandoned to us a coast which our appearance had in one moment converted into a desert. Our passage to Alexandria was a short one, a few days sufficing to bring us to the low and sandy coast of Egypt,

CHAPTER VII.

DESERTS OF LIBYA. — EGYPTIAN COAST. — TOWERS OF THE ARABS. — WE GET SIGHT OF ALEXANDRIA. — ITS HARBOUR. — ITS COMMERCE. — A HASTY VIEW OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA.

WHEN a ship steering to the eastward, within sight of the African shore, has passed *Derne**, where the vessels loaded by the Turks sometimes put in, there remains, as far as Alexandria, a long extent of coast entirely unknown. It is in the midst of these burning plains of Libya, the unalienable domain of sterility, that the western boundary of Egypt must be fought; a boundary which was uncertain even in times the most remote. Disputes had arisen between two tribes settled upon the banks of lake Mareotis, which is now dried up, concerning the confines of Egypt and Libya. They consulted the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, which, according to the report of Herodotus, decided that all the country covered by the Nile in its inundations, ought to be considered as belonging to the former of those two countries; a very uncertain line of demarcation, since it depended upon the greater or lesser degree of industry and labour, by which the waters of the river were conveyed to different distances. After all, what signifies the exact division of those sandy wastes, of those immense chasms in the habitable globe, which no people can have any interest in claiming, since it is impossible for any man there to establish his abode?

But if these shores hold out no attraction to trade, or to curiosity, they are at least pregnant with great dangers to navigation. Scarcely

* Probably *Derrhis extrema*, according to Strabo and Ptolemy.

rising above the level of the sea, they are indiscernible at a distance. A ship caught by the wind blowing dead upon the land, and embayed in that great bight which our charts indicate by the name of the *Arabian Gulf*, has no shelter to hope for; no harbour, no roadstead opens to her a friendly asylum; and, if it be impossible for her to brave the impetuosity of the wind and waves, which are driving her upon the coast, she must necessarily perish. No reliance is to be placed on the assertion of a few Arabs, who have pointed out to me, in the gulf that bears their name, three harbours, one of which they call *Port Soliman*, and which they described to me as an excellent anchorage. It would be temerity in navigators to depend upon information so extremely suspicious; and, even supposing that they should succeed, on some desperate occasion, in finding shelter there, they would run great risk, unless their vessels were much better equipped than most of those with which the seas of the Levant are covered, of being inevitably wrecked upon a coast infested by a banditti of Africans.

The making of Alexandria is also attended with danger, this part of Egypt being so low that it cannot be approached without great caution. On coming from the side of Libya, the first landmark on the coast of Egypt is *Aboufir*, called by the Europeans, *Towers of the Arabs*. These are two heights, on each of which stands a tower. They may be discovered four leagues off at sea. One of these towers is round, the other is square. At least this is the appearance under which they presented themselves to me, when I saw them from the offing. It should seem, however, that their forms differ from those which I attribute to them; for Granger, who appears to have visited these buildings, describes them in a different manner*.

The

* " At the western extremity of this lake (the lake Mareotis) stands the Tower of the Arabs, which the people of the country call the Castle of Aboufir; it is in reality

The coast of Egypt situated to the eastward of Alexandria, is easily distinguishable from that to the westward. It is not so low, is more irregular, and does not wear the same appearance of barrenness; some traces of cultivation, a few palm-trees and habitations, being there to be seen. At length the navigator is assured that he is in the direction of Alexandria, by getting sight of Pompey's Pillar; but two hillocks, which are behind the present city, and within the enclosure of the old one, first make their appearance. Yet from whatever quarter he may steer for this dangerous coast, he cannot be too cautious, because none of these marks are perceptible at any great distance; and because currents, the rapidity of which it is more easy to foresee than to calculate, lay hold of vessels, and drift them towards the coast of Africa.

Two harbours, equally spacious, present themselves to ships that intend to anchor near Alexandria. The one which is to the westward of the city, is called the *Old Port*. Its entrance is a little difficult, on account of two sand-banks, which leave only a narrow channel between them; but the inside is a deep basin, kept in good order, and completely sheltered from bad weather. The other, which is to the eastward, and which is separated from it by a peninsula of little breadth, has received the name of the *New Port*. It is shallow, encumbered by a great number of rocks and shoals, and is entirely open to northerly winds. If, after this, any one were to suppose that the latter port is little frequented, he would be deceived. Fanaticism here prevailed over the real interest of the inha-

“ reality a square castle eighty feet high, each front of which is two hundred and
 “ fifty feet in breadth. It is built of very fine hewn stone; and the walls are four-
 “ teen feet thick. At a quarter of a league from this castle is a tower, square at
 “ the bottom, and round at the top; and to the westward, at the distance of six leagues
 “ from thence, is another, on the walls of which the remains of an Arabian in-
 “ scription are to be seen. All these buildings are in a ruinous state.” *Granger,*
Relation d'un Voyage fait en Egypte en 1730, p. 221.

bitants.

bitants. While the Alexandrians willingly mixed with the Europeans in commercial transactions, they denied to European ships the means of carrying on, without risk, a trade from which they derived so much advantage. The vessels of the followers of Mahomet alone had a right to enter the old harbour; and those of other nations might have perished for want of a safe retreat, before they could obtain permission to penetrate into a place subject to such foolish and impolitic restrictions.

At the entrance of the new harbour is a rock, called the *Diamond*. Ships should keep close to it, in order to avoid the shoals which are on the other side, and which, being only covered with a few feet of water, are still more dangerous. The *Diamond*, as well as the rocks near it, that are on a level with the water, is very probably a part of the ruins of the ancient Pharos; so that vessels may now be lost upon the remains of the finest building that was ever erected for their preservation.

The sandy bottom of the new harbour is thickly sown with rocks and rubbish; and this watery field of destruction often becomes that of the most horrible desolation. The cables are chafed and cut by continual friction against the stones. Vessels, crowded in tiers alongside of the jetty, find it difficult to withstand the violence of the northerly wind, and the fury of the sea it raises, especially during the winter, that is, during the months of November, December, and January, a period in which the temperature of the air is somewhat lowered by rains and storms. On the approach of these tempests, the crews abandon their vessels, for fear of being crushed to pieces along with them upon the beach. The first ship whose cables part, falls aboard of the next; they drift together against a third, and in an instant the whole tier is thrown into confusion, bulged, and swallowed up by the waves. A year seldom passes in which Alexandria is not witness to similar disasters, that would suf-

fice

fice to convert its harbour into a desert, if it were possible for covetousness to be discouraged by danger.

Ships of war, which require deep water, are obliged to anchor as soon as they have doubled the *Diamond*, and the two *dry sand-banks*, in other words, quite at the entrance of the port. The *Atalante* passed more than a month in this manner, labouring in a constant swell; an uneasy position, which I rather chose to participate with my friends, than to take up my quarters on shore, as I was at liberty to do, since I was to remain in Egypt. This infamous port is still fuller of rocks on the eastern side. As ships cannot approach it, all debarcation is there impracticable. We endeavoured in vain to land with a boat, intending to visit the obelisks which are on that side; and had well nigh been lost, in consequence of the agitation of the water, which dashed the boat repeatedly, and with great violence, against the stones.

This detestable port is nevertheless almost always full of vessels. A constant bustle indicates the activity of commerce. The riches of Asia and Africa are shipped; while the produce of the arts and manufactures of Europe is landed. A geographical position of so high importance, could not escape the genius of Alexander. Being sensible, in the midst of his conquests, that this was the place for the establishment of a central point of communication between the different quarters of the globe, he suddenly presented Alexandria to the admiration and to the commerce of all the nations of the universe. Dinocrates drew a plan under Alexander's own inspection, and directed the works in person. He was one of those men of bold and vast conceptions, who hardly appear once in a century. History has preserved a trait which is equally remarkable, and characteristic of his genius. With the intention of perpetuating the name and glory of the greatest of conquerors by a monument of eternal duration, he proposed to dedicate to him a portion of the globe; to cut the enormous mass of mount Athos into an immoveable statue, which would
have

have had no other base than the earth, and would have eclipsed the most wonderful productions of Egypt. A sublime idea, which renders the artist worthy of standing in the same rank with the conqueror.

It may easily be conceived, that a city, the plan of which was drawn at the command of an Alexander, and executed by a Dinocrates, must have been equally grand and magnificent. Kings of Egypt embellished it still farther by admirable establishments, the loss of which excites our regret. In the reign of one of the Ptolemies, Socrates, also an architect of Cnidus, erected a Pharos, which the ancients reckoned among the seven wonders of the world. Another king formed an immense library. Alexandria, in short, was the centre of wealth and science. Of all the places on the face of the earth, it was that where commerce was the most flourishing. Josephus affirms, that it brought more into the Roman treasury in a month, than all the rest of Egypt in a year. The useful and liberal arts were cultivated there with equal success. Luxury was introduced, and was soon carried to the highest pitch: gay and elegant amusements degenerated into licentiousness; the enjoyments it afforded became proverbial; public morals were corrupted; and Alexandria fell. A terrible example, but an example that has ever been lost upon mankind.

I will not undertake to give a description of this famous city of Alexandria. Authors enough, without me, have fulfilled that task. Besides, such details belong to history, and I have not forgotten that a traveller is bound only to give an account of what he has seen, and not of what he has read. Monuments, that appeared to brave the attacks of time, have fallen into ruins with the city of which they were the ornament. Flames, directed by ignorance and ferocity, have consumed the library of the Ptolemies. The Pharos lies buried in the sea; and the tower that now serves as a light-house, does not even indicate the site on which it stood. The present

Alexandria occupies only a small part of the space enclosed within the walls of that built by Alexander. It is a city, or rather a town, entirely modern, and can boast of nothing ancient, but the ruins scattered about it. The genius of the inhabitants, the sciences, the arts, commerce itself, every thing, in short, is shrunk and diminished; and if a writer were not supported by the ruins of a city formerly so magnificent, he never would have the courage to speak of the one which now exists.

CHAPTER VIII.

MODERN ALEXANDRIA.—ITS INHABITANTS.—JEWS.—SPIRIT OF REVENGE.—ASSASSINATION OF THE CONSUL OF ALEXANDRIA, AND OF A DUTCHMAN.—LANGUAGE.—RUINS.

I MUST here observe, that having resided more than once at Alexandria, I shall give all my observations together, although made at different times. I shall therefore lay aside, for a few moments, the narrative style, and describe all at once what I have seen at different periods; and without confining myself in my remarks to any order of dates. I shall pursue the same course, which appears to me the most natural, and the most convenient to my readers, whenever I shall have occasion to speak of a place that I may have visited at different points of time.

Writing of the city of Alexandria in detail, after so many great personages, says an excellent observer, who travelled in Egypt in the reign of Francis I. would be no more than a repetition.* Since the time in which Bellon wrote, a great many authors, among whom we may reckon more than one *great personage*, have given a description of the remains of this celebrated city, so that it is now impossible to avoid *repetitions*. But without taking into the account some new observations that the remains of ancient Alexandria have afforded me, the curiosity of those who may read my work would be ill satisfied, and their expectation disappointed, if, in order to make them acquainted with what still exists in these celebrated regions, I referred them to any book but my own. At the same time I

* D'écrire de la ville d'Alexandrie, par le menu, après tant de grands personnages, ce ne seroit que redite. *Bellon, Observ.* liv. ii. chap. 19.

shall speak of such things only as I have been able to examine in person.

The latitude of Alexandria has been given by ancient astronomers with sufficient precision. Ptolemy, who was himself an Egyptian, laid it down in his Geography, in 31° of north latitude, and $30^{\circ} 58'$ in his Almagestes. The more correct Eratosthenes found this same latitude to be $31^{\circ} 12'$, which is exceedingly near the observations of the moderns, to whom the improvement of astronomy and of mathematical instruments has given a great advantage. It has been determined by Chazelle, of the Academy of Sciences of Paris, at $31^{\circ} 11' 20''$. Its longitude is $47^{\circ} 56' 33''$.

The new city, or rather the town of Alexandria, is principally built upon the sea-shore. The houses, like all those of the Levant, have terraced roofs: the holes that serve as windows, are almost entirely blocked up by a wooden lattice, projecting in different forms, and so close, that it is hardly possible for the light to enter. In this country, above all others, such inventions, which transform habitations into prisons, are real *jalousies* *. It is through this symmetrical, and sometimes not inelegant, arrangement of bars, that the fair sex can see what is passing out of doors, without being seen. It is in this kind of everlasting cloister, that beauty, far from being paid that homage which nature intended it should receive from every heart of sensibility, experiences nothing but contempt and outrage; it is there, in short, that one portion of mankind, taking advantage of the odious right of the strongest, keeps in a humiliating state of slavery the other portion, whose charms would alone be capable of softening both the rugged nature of the foil, and the ferocity of its possessors.

The narrow and irregular streets of Alexandria are equally desti-

* *Jalousie*, i. e. Jealousy, is the French word for a lattice-window, or Venetian-blind. T.

tute of pavement and police : no public edifice, no private building, arrests the eye of the passenger ; and were not the ruins of the ancient city in existence, he would meet with nothing to attract his attention. Turks, Arabs, Moors, Copts, Christians of Syria, and Jews, compose a population, which may amount to five thousand souls, as far at least as it was possible to judge, in a country where no register of any kind is kept. Besides, commerce brings thither, from all the countries of the East, foreigners, who make only a momentary stay. This confused assemblage of men of different nations, jealous, and almost always enemies of one another, would afford to an observer a singular mixture of dresses and manners, provided a den of thieves could be worthy of his observation.

They are seen crowding in the streets, and running rather than walking ; they bawl also rather than speak. I often stopped near persons who appeared to me incensed with rage : they gave their voice all the force it could derive from a strong and ample chest ; their countenance bore all the marks of passion ; their eyes sparkled ; and violent gestures accompanied words which seemed still more violent. I approached, expecting to see them cut one another's throats in a moment ; and was perfectly astonished to find, that nothing was in question but a bargain of small importance ; that not one of their expressions was of a threatening tenour ; and that all this uproar was nothing more than their usual manner of cheapening any thing they meant to buy.

This custom of giving the voice the greatest possible force in speaking, is common to almost all the oriental nations, excepting the Turks, whose demeanour is more grave and sedate *. There are few

* " The Hindoos speak in a very loud tone of voice ; this appeared very disagreeable to me, till habit, which reconciles us to every thing, rendered it familiar." Letter of a Person who passed several Years in the military Service of the English East India Company at Bombay, inserted in Mackintosh's Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa, vol. i.

people, perhaps, who have not remarked, that the Jews, a nation which has contrived to preserve its character and customs in all the countries through which it is dispersed; there are few who have not remarked, that they also speak very loud, particularly to one another. Excepting a few individuals, whose constraint in the imitation of our manners plainly shews that they are assumed, we also see them, when they walk our streets, going with their bodies leaning forward, and their knees straight, taking quick and short steps, which rather resemble a run than a walk. In Egypt, where they live in greater subjection than elsewhere, they are exactly the same as we are accustomed to see them, avaricious, artful, and paltry knaves. Their schemes of plunder are not, like those of the Bedouins, and other robbers of Egypt, put in practice openly and by main force. It is, as with us, by cheating with address, and by thieving in the way of business, that they fill their own purse, and quietly empty that of their neighbour. It is thus that the Jews have appeared to me, wherever I have met with them. In every part of the world they are distinguished by their peculiar vices, which will be indelible as long as they shall obstinately persist in not passing the line which they have drawn between themselves and other nations. In every part of the world they are also seen to employ the same low means, the same deceit, and the same knavery, which makes them real pests in society; in short, they every where display the same insensibility and the same ingratitude with which they have, in these latter times, repaid the generosity and magnanimous conduct of France.

During my stay at Alexandria there were several Jewesses who had opened their houses to Europeans. They were neither destitute of beauty nor of wit; nor was their society without its charms; and if there was any room to reproach them with an excessive thirst of gain, the constant characteristic of the men of their nation, it might

might at least be said, that their mode of cheating was more gentle, and their deceit more amiable and more easily forgiven.

It may readily be conceived what excesses men are capable of, who, upon the most common occasions, wear the appearance of furies. When their soul is really agitated, when it participates in the sudden movements of the body, they become perfectly ungovernable: like an impetuous torrent, which alarms as much by its noise as by its ravages, they give way to all the violence of their passions. It is then that they truly resemble the savage animals that come to contend with them for the sands which they are equally ready to stain with blood. Hence those riots and tumultuous crowds by which the safety of Europeans is so often endangered. It is worthy of remark, that this turbulent and seditious disposition was also, though in a less degree, that of the ancient Alexandrians.

If vengeance has altars, it is doubtless in Egypt: she is there the goddess, or rather the tyrant, of every heart, and is not to be appeased. Not only the majority of the motley crew which composes the mass of the inhabitants never forgives; but, however public and ample may be the satisfaction given them, they are never contented till they have embued their hands in the blood of him whom they have declared their enemy. Although they treasure up their hatred for a long while, and conceal it till they have an opportunity for its gratification, its effects are not the less terrible, nor the less irrational. If an European, or, in their language, a *Frank*, has provoked their animosity, they direct it indiscriminately against every European, without caring whether he be the friend, relation, or even the countryman of him from whom they have received the offence. They thus deprive their resentment of its only excuse, and their revenge becomes no better than an act of atrocity.

A crime committed a few years before, upon the person of the representative of the French nation, in this part of the Levant, was still a common topic of conversation upon my arrival there. A

French hair-dresser, who was shooting in the environs of the city, got into a quarrel with an Arab, and was imprudent enough to put an end to it, by firing his piece at his adversary, which killed him on the spot. The news of this murder was soon spread abroad. The common people rose, and in their rage wanted to kill indiscriminately all the Europeans who happened to be in the place. It was with great difficulty that means could be found to appease them, by giving up the murderer, who was hanged in the public square. But an Arab, brother of the dead man, although an eye-witness to the execution, did not think himself sufficiently revenged, and swore to sacrifice to his brother's *manes* the first *Frank* that he might chance to meet.

All the Europeans kept themselves shut up for three whole months, in hopes that this man's fury would subside. At the end of that time, and after receiving information of a nature calculated to tranquillize them, they thought that they might safely venture out of their retreat. For eight days they shewed themselves in the town and country, and not one of them met with any disagreeable accident. The consul had not yet ventured abroad. At length he imagined that he also might take the air, without running any risk. He was walking with a janizary belonging to his guard, upon the banks of the canal, when, by an unfortunate chance, the Arab, who, with a desire of revenge carefully treasured up in his heart, constantly carried about him weapons to satisfy it, came to the same spot. He approached the Frenchman, who was free from all distrust, and with equal cowardice and cruelty brought him to the ground with a musket-shot which he fired at his back. The janizary, instead of avenging, or even assisting him whom it was his duty to protect, ran off as fast as his legs could carry him; and the unfortunate consul died of his wounds a few hours after. The French merchants having dispatched a swift-sailing vessel to Constantinople to demand justice, officers were sent by the Ottoman Porte,

Porte, with strict and severe orders; but these orders were at first eluded, and remained unexecuted to the last. The assassin did not even quit the city, where he shewed himself with impunity. The French merchants were forced to dissemble, out of regard to their own safety; and besides the affront offered to the French nation, by the unpunished assassination of its representative, the national commerce had also to regret considerable sums expended in a vain attempt to obtain redress.

Unfortunately, such events were not so uncommon as might have been wished, for the tranquillity of those who were obliged to live in Egypt, and in some parts of Syria, where the populace were not only the neighbours of the Egyptians, but resembled them in more respects than one. Towards the end of October 1731, the Dutch drogueman, or interpreter, at Aleppo, was taking a walk with the consul, when some peasants of a village hard by, thought proper to charge him with the death of a young man who had drowned himself, and whose body they were employed in dragging out of the river. The whole village joined in this absurd accusation, and were unanimous in calling out for vengeance. A deputation was sent to the pasha at Aleppo to demand the Dutchman; the governor disregarding their request, the villagers found means to instigate the people of Aleppo to insurrection; and a formidable mob threatened to set fire to the city, and to massacre all the *Franks*, unless the drogueman, who had taken refuge at the pasha's, was delivered up to them. The latter, though well convinced of the innocence of the European, was compelled, in order to prevent greater misfortunes, to have the unfortunate Dutchman strangled, and to give up his body to the rioters, who hung it upon a tree.

The picture which I have just drawn of the manners of the modern Alexandrians, however gloomy it may appear, does not go beyond the truth. I have painted them such as I have seen them.

IN support of what I have asserted I might adduce the testimony of the most respectable travellers, and especially that of such Europeans as have been induced by their employments, commercial speculations, or by curiosity, to make some stay at Alexandria; and who have been the witnesses, and perhaps the victims, of this ferocious disposition. It is by no means matter of astonishment, if, upon the entrance of a victorious army into their country, they contrived to assume the appearance of quiet people. The man who is the most cruel is generally the most cowardly. He never exhibits courage but when he is sure that he is the strongest, and crouches as soon as he finds himself weak; he still retains his perfidy and treachery, and employs those arms of weak minds, as often as he thinks he shall not be discovered.

The Arabian tongue is generally spoken in Alexandria, as well as all over Egypt. But the greater part of the Alexandrians, particularly those who are in the habits of commercial intercourse with the European merchants, speak also the Italian, which has considerable currency in the ports of the Levant. The *Moresco*, or *lingua Franca*, is also spoken there. This is a mixture of bad Italian, Spanish, and Arabic. There is no place at which a foreigner can so easily procure servants, who, if not of approved fidelity, have, at least, a facility of making themselves understood by those who are unacquainted with the Arabic. A *ferdar*, an officer of little consequence, was commandant of the town; but his power was not always sufficient to keep an unbridled populace in awe.

A waste of sand and dust, and a heap of rubbish, constituted an abode worthy of the tribe of Alexandria, who laboured every day to augment its horrors. Columns thrown down and dispersed; others still standing, but insulated; mutilated statues, capitals, entablatures, and fragments of every kind, are strewed upon the ground that surrounds the city. There is no taking a single step without, in a

manner,

manner, stumbling over some of the ruins. In short, it is the hideous theatre of the most horrible destruction. The traveller is afflicted at the sight of these sad remains of grandeur and magnificence, and indignant against the barbarians who have dared to lay sacrilegious hands upon monuments which even Time, the most unmerciful of destroyers, would have spared.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EXTENT OF ALEXANDRIA AS CONTRACTED BY THE ARABS.—CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLES.
—CLEOPATRA.—PALACE OF THE KINGS OF EGYPT.—POMPEY'S PILLAR.

THE walls of Alexander's vast city, which was once several leagues in circumference, and contained near a million of inhabitants, were contracted by the Arabs who invaded it. It is this new enclosure, consisting of a hundred vaulted towers and solid walls, that still serves as the boundary of the Alexandria of our days, the state of which, as has been seen in the preceding chapter, was so deplorable. But too small for so extensive a zone, the present city is far from occupying the whole of the interior. Between it and the walls are large spaces, which present to the eye nothing but destruction, heaps of rubbish, and the scattered ruins of ancient edifices. Some authors have been of opinion, that these are the very walls built by Alexander. This opinion, long since abandoned, has been lately revived by M. Tott*; but their architecture has no resemblance to that of the Greeks or Romans. It is evidently in the manner of the Arabs, and of the same kind as that of the walls of Cairo, which were incontestably constructed by that nation. Columns, and other fragments of monuments really antique, were employed in building them, an unanswerable proof of their more modern construction; and the inscriptions in Arabic and *Kufic* characters, with which the towers are covered in a variety of places, leave no doubt as to their origin. Neither has it appeared doubtful to the greater number of travellers, among whom I shall content myself with quoting the

* Memoires du Baron de Tott, tom. ii. p. 180.

learned Poccoke, the man whose researches into antiquity have been the most profound. “ It was,” says he, “ in the year 600 of the
“ hegira, 1212 of the Christian era, that one of the successors of
“ Saladin, who had just wrested Egypt from the hands of the ca-
“ liph of the family of the Fatimites, caused the walls of modern
“ Alexandria to be built. In the erection of these fortifications,
“ which are two French leagues in circumference, the ruins of the
“ ancient city were employed. The walls and the hundred towers
“ with which they are flanked, are composed of pieces of marble and
“ broken columns, confounded with common stones *.”

The thick walls, and the hundred towers which flank them, are, as has just been seen, only about two leagues round; whereas the ancient city of Alexandria, according to the best authorities, was seven or eight leagues in circumference. The materials employed in the construction of some of these towers, in addition to the fragments of more ancient monuments, are of a singular kind, and such as no traveller that I am acquainted with has mentioned. Common stones are only seen in the parts that have been repaired, or constructed more recently. The original masonry consists of stony masses, formed of a prodigious quantity of little fossil and sparry shells, mixed up without any order with a kind of cement which binds them all together; so that this substance, which is of the hardest nature, appears to be a composition, or an aggregation, of art, rather than a natural stone.

The solidity of the walls, and the vast capacity of the towers, which may be considered as so many forts, rendered the enclosure of the Arabs a rampart capable of a long defence. In spite of the disposition and resistance of the Mamalûks, and of their troops, a handful of Frenchmen without cannon, and almost without ammunition, took it by escalade in a few minutes. Alexander laid the

* Poccoke's Travels.

foundation of a city, the memory of which, commerce, the sciences, and prodigies of art, have perpetuated : Buonaparte has wrested the remains of that very city out of the hands of barbarians, whose presence polluted its ruins ; and restored it to the general commerce, which its position insures it, and which will call back all its ancient splendour. It is hard to say, which of the two heroes, the founder or the restorer, will most attract the admiration of posterity.

Towards the eastern extremity of the crescent formed by the new port, and near the coast, stand two obelisks. By general consent they are denominated *Cleopatra's needles*, though it does not appear that they are the work of that queen of Egypt. Some excavations which are called her baths, and the construction of the canal that conveys the waters of the Nile into the cisterns of Alexandria, are also attributed to her without any historical proof ; an homage paid to the great qualities of the last queen of the Ptolemean race. It is thus, while the names of the men who have erected most of the astonishing edifices of ancient Egypt are absolutely lost in oblivion, posterity carefully preserves the remembrance of a woman, rendered illustrious by her magnificence, her genius, her heroic disposition, and her incomparable beauty ; of her whose charms triumphed over the greatest of the Romans ; of her, in short, who can only be reproached with the excess of a passion which it is difficult to overcome in an ardent mind, and in a burning climate, on which the graces do not refuse to smile, and which Nature does not disavow.

One of Cleopatra's needles is still upright upon its base ; the other is thrown down, and almost entirely buried in the sand. The first shews what the hand of man can do against time ; the second what time can effect in opposition to the efforts of man. I was not able to take their dimensions ; but an old French traveller, who appears to have measured them with the greatest exactness, asserts that they

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are fifty-eight feet * six inches high, and seven feet square at the base †. They are hewn out of a single block of granite, and are covered on every side with hieroglyphics. The first figure of Plate I. represents that one of the two needles which is now standing, seen from the north side. The impression of the hieroglyphics is still very clear upon the sides of this needle, and they are yet easily distinguishable, except those towards the east, which are entirely effaced.

Near these obelisks stood the palace of the kings of Egypt; and superb vestiges of its grandeur and magnificence still remain. They are an inexhaustible quarry of pieces of granite and marble, which the present Alexandrians dishonour, by employing them with common materials in the construction of their houses, and of their edifices. Excavations of little depth made in this spot afforded medals and engraved stones more abundantly than any other place; but they were become scarce: hardly any indeed were to be found there when I was at Alexandria. It was also from among these ruins that came the fossil tooth, represented of the natural size in Plate II. It passed for the tooth of a man, and consequently for that of a giant; but this opinion cannot be admitted by any one who has the smallest knowledge of anatomy. Upon comparing this tooth with those of known animals, it is evident that it once belonged to an elephant.

Without the fourth gate of the wall of the Arabs, stands one of the most astonishing monuments that antiquity has bequeathed to us. The largest column that ever existed lifts its head majestically aloft, proud of not having yielded to the tooth of time, nor to the more terrible and more sudden attacks of superstitious ignorance. (*See Fig. 2. Plate I.*) It is of the finest and hardest granite, and is composed of three pieces, out of which the capital, the shaft, and

* In this, as in every other part of the work, the French measures are adhered to. The French foot is to the English nearly as 16 to 15. T.

† Voyages de M. de Monconys, 1695, tome i. p. 307.

the pedestal are hewn. I had not the means of measuring its height; and the travellers who went before me are not agreed upon that point. Savary represents it as a hundred and fourteen feet high*; while Paul Lucas, who asserts that he measured it carefully, found it to be only ninety-four †. The latter opinion was universally adopted by the Europeans at Alexandria. The height of the column was estimated there at from ninety-four to ninety-five French feet. The pedestal is fifteen feet high; the shaft with the socle, seventy feet, and the capital ten; making in all ninety-five feet. The mean diameter is seven feet and three quarters. According to these proportions, the solid contents of the column may be estimated at six thousand cubic feet. It is well known, that a cubic foot of red granite weighs a hundred and eighty-five pounds. The weight of the column is consequently one million one hundred and ten thousand pounds avoirdupois.

Hard as is the substance of which the column consists, it has not escaped the corroding tooth of time. The lower part of the shaft is very much damaged on the eastern side; and pieces may be easily scaled off from the same side of the pedestal. It has already been seen, that the hieroglyphics upon Cleopatra's needle were obliterated upon the side which looks towards the same point of the compass. This is probably the effect of the wind from the sea. It is said, that a Greek inscription is distinguishable upon the opposite side, that is to say, to the westward, when the sun shines upon it; but, though I examined it with the greatest attention, I was unable to discover any thing of the kind.

The ground upon which the column stands having sunk, a part of the plinth which supports, it is left exposed to view. It is a block of only six feet square, on the centre of which rests a pedestal of much

* *Lettres sur l'Égypte*, tome i. p. 36.

† *Voyage de Paul Lucas*, fait en 1714, tome ii. p. 22.

larger dimensions than itself: this proves the exact perpendicularity of the whole erection. It is also of granite, but of a different kind from that of the column. The people of the country had built round the plinth, with the intention of supporting the pedestal. This masonry, which was perfectly useless, was composed of stones of different kinds, among which were pieces of marble detached from the ruins of an ancient edifice, and covered with beautiful hieroglyphics. While some were seeking to prevent the fall of the monument, others, who, as I was told, were Bedouins, were endeavouring to throw it down, in hopes of finding a treasure under the foundation. They employed the action of gunpowder; but fortunately they were very ignorant of the art of mining; and the explosion destroyed only a part of the masonry placed to no purpose under the pedestal.

Paul Lucas relates, that, in 1714, a mountebank having ascended to the capital with a facility that surpris'd every body, asserted that there was a hollow in its upper part*. Within these few years we have obtained more positive information. Some English sailors contrived to get upon the top of the pillar by means of a paper kite, which enabled them to affix to it a rope ladder. Like the man of whom Paul Lucas speaks, they found a large circular hollow upon the top of the capital, and also a hole at each corner. It is certain then, that the capital served as a base to some statue, the remains of which appear to be irrecoverably lost. Several friends of M. Roboli, who was once interpreter of the French nation at Alexandria, told me, that he had discovered near the column some pieces of a statue, which, to judge from its fragments, must have been of prodigious size; and that he had convey'd them to the house occupied by the French; but that not having been able, in spite of all his researches, to find the remainder, he had them thrown into the

* Travels to the city in question.

sea near the above-mentioned house. They were shewn to me; but I found it impossible to make out what they were, because they were almost entirely buried in the sand. I was further told, that the fragments of this statue were of the finest porphyry.

Nothing but conjectures, more or less vague, exist concerning the time and motives of the erection of the Alexandrian column. The name of *Pompey's pillar*, by which it is generally known, indicates the origin most commonly ascribed to it. It was Cæsar, say the vulgar, who erected it, in order to perpetuate the remembrance of the victory he obtained over Pompey in the famous battle of Pharfalia. Supported by the testimony of an Arabian writer, Savary asserts, that it was a monument of the gratitude of the Alexandrians towards Alexander Severus, the Roman emperor*; while others attribute the elevation of the column to Ptolemy Evergetes, a king of Egypt.

Mr. Montague, celebrated for his extensive knowledge and his adventures, had formed, during his long stay in the East, a new opinion upon the same subject. He maintained that the pillar was the work of Adrian, another Roman emperor, who travelled in Egypt; but of this he had no proof. Wishing, nevertheless, to accredit his opinion, he was obliged to make use of a little artifice, in order to persuade others of what he had already persuaded himself. I have the fact from a witness of undoubted credit. The learned Englishman made one of his servants insert a small medal of the emperor Adrian in a certain place, between the ground on which the column stands and its pedestal. He then repaired to the spot with a large party, and, after a pretended search, with the blade of a knife raked out the medal, which he shewed as an incontestable proof of the truth of his discovery. He made it public in his own country, where it did not meet with a great deal of credit, nor could it obtain much from those who were acquainted with the pillar. In

† *Lettres sur l'Egypte*, tome i. p. 37.

the time of Adrian, indeed, the Greeks had carried into Egypt the true principles of beautiful architecture, and elegance in all the arts. Of this a judgment may be formed by the remains of the city which the emperor built in the upper part of that country in honour of Antinous, a young man famous in ancient history on account of his exquisite beauty, and generous attachment towards a Roman, whose merit has been too highly extolled. The columns which still exist at Antinoë are hewn with a more careful hand, and are of a more elegant form, than that of Alexandria. I do not mean that the latter is not a fine one; but its principal merit consists in its being of prodigious dimensions, and truly astonishing on account of its enormous mass.

The same reason which makes it unlikely that the column should be of the time of Adrian, removes it still farther from that of the emperor Severus. Abulfeda, who is quoted by Savary, only says that *Alexandria possesses a famous Pharos, and the column of Severus* *. He adds nothing more, and does not even indicate the spot on which the column of Severus was erected. The city of Alexandria contains so great a number of pillars, that it is impossible to know to which the passage of the Arabian historian is applicable. Alexander Severus pretended that he descended from Alexander the Great, and must naturally feel a predilection for a city founded by his conquering ancestor. It is not therefore astonishing that he should seek to embellish it by works of every kind, which have been thrown down and destroyed with those that already rendered it so magnificent. On the other hand, if the column dedicated to Severus, and still existing in the ancient city of Antinous, be compared with that at Alexandria, it will be hardly possible to suppose that they were both of the same time. The hieroglyphics with which the plinth of granite, the immovable support of the column, is

* Description de l'Égypte, traduction de Savary.

covered, seem to be also a new proof of its erection being anterior to the reigns of Adrian and Severus, and indicate a work of greater antiquity. This consideration, added to the silence of historians upon the subject, appears to carry back the construction of the pillar which bears Pompey's name, to an era even more remote than that of his defeat. If in the midst of this uncertainty, which, notwithstanding the researches of the learned, often involves the past and the future in the same obscurity, I were to hazard my opinion, I should be inclined to ascribe the honour of erecting the column of Alexandria to those ancient times which produced so many prodigies in Egypt; to those times when thousands of men were employed whole years in the conveyance of masses of stone, the moving of which seemed to set human strength at defiance.

But be this as it may, it would be difficult to change the name which has been so long affixed to the column of Alexandria; and whatever may be the reasons alleged to the contrary, it is very probable that it will still continue to be called *Pompey's pillar*. However, it is equally probable, that posterity will recollect that this column was the head-quarters whence Buonaparte gave orders for the escalade of Alexandria; that the bodies of the heroes who perished victims of their bravery, are interred round the pedestal, and that their names are engraved upon it: it is also probable, that, more struck with the genius of victory and his sublime conceptions, than with him who rendered ancient Egypt illustrious by his astonishing works, future ages will at once ensure the immortality and glory of the French nation, by denominating *Pompey's pillar* the *pillar of the French*.

I was told at Alexandria, that a plan once existed for the conveyance of this much-admired column to France. The people of the Levant and the Provençal navigators considered the undertaking as impracticable. They forgot, or perhaps never knew, that this mass of granite was taken out of the quarries of Syene, that is to say, from
a distance

a distance of more than two hundred leagues; they did not know that Julius Cæsar conveyed from Egypt to Rome an obelisk a hundred cubits or twenty-five toises * high, and eight cubits or two toises diameter; they did not know that Augustus was desirous that Rome should also possess the two obelisks erected at Heliopolis by Sesostris, which are each a hundred and twenty cubits in height; that Constantine ordered the removal of another obelisk of equal bulk, in the construction of which Ramases, king of Egypt, employed two thousand men; nor, finally, do they know that, in our times, a rock weighing three millions of pounds has been brought from a considerable distance to Petersburg, and seated in the very heart of the city.

Great enterprizes are the true monuments of the glory of great nations. It would be worthy of that people, who, in a few years, have surpassed all the heroic achievements of the Romans, to appropriate to themselves the column of Alexandria. If extraordinary means were necessary for that purpose, the genius of science, inseparable from that of real glory, is there to point them out; and the arts, which also rise with the nation that cherishes them, will contrive to put them in practice. In the midst of one of the squares of Paris, in that of the *Revolution* for instance, the column could not fail to produce the most majestic effect. A colossal statue should surmount the capital; this should be the image of Liberty. She would overlook the palaces of the depositaries of power, and, by her proud and commanding attitude, would be the terror of every one who should dare to abuse his authority, in order to torment, or to betray, a people of whose power she would likewise be an everlasting emblem.

* A toise is six French feet.

CHAPTER X.

RUINS.—CANAL OF ALEXANDRIA.—CISTERNS.—STATE OF CULTURE IN THE ENVIRONS OF THE CANAL.—SODA.—BIRDS.—SPARROWS.—CATACOMBS.—CAMELEONS.—JACKALS.

IF, upon leaving Pompey's pillar, you continue to walk towards the south, you meet with an oblong and spacious valley of some depth. It contains the remains of a few ancient buildings, among which thick and solid walls are distinguishable, upon a level with the sand, and disposed in the form of a T. Towards the extremity of the longitudinal branch of the T are several fragments of granite pillars; and quite at the extremity is a cave into which it is no longer possible to enter. The natives call this place *Guirgé*. From thence you come to the canal or *kalish* of Alexandria.

In the time of Alexander, and of the kings of Egypt, Alexandria did not stand, as it does now, in the midst of sand; it was not surrounded with that barren waste which at present renders its environs so disagreeable. The lake Mareotis, which was but at a short distance, and two large canals, one of them descending from Upper Egypt, and the other coming from the branch of the Nile which was denominated the *Bolbitic*, kept up a salutary coolness, at the same time that they favoured culture and vegetation. These works, which attest the grandeur and power of ancient Egypt, and the existence of which was equally useful and agreeable, were still kept in repair under the government of the caliphs. Abulfeda, an Arabian historian, speaks of Alexandria as of an immense city, surrounded by delightful gardens*. The ruin of what had cost so much pains and labour was reserved for the Turks. Their rage for destruction

* Description de l'Egypte.

has dried up those reservoirs of water which diffused fertility along with the streams that flowed from them, in like manner as it has dried up the sources of knowledge and energy in the minds of those nations which are so unfortunate as to be subject to their dreadful despotism.

Nothing remains but the canal of Lower Egypt, and even that is in a ruinous state. During the inundation it receives the water of the Nile at *Latf*, opposite *Fouah*, and has three bridges over it of modern construction. Near the former, by the sea-side, is the entrance of the subterraneous aqueduct that carries the provision of water of the Alexandrians into the cisterns, the arches of which supported the whole extent of the ancient city, and which every one concurred in considering as one of the most beautiful monuments in the world*. The mouth of this aqueduct is blocked up; but when the water of the canal had attained a certain height, in consequence of the rise of the river, the principal magistrates of the town went in great ceremony to break down the dam. When the cisterns were full, it was again built up, and the water of the canal continued to fall into the sea at the old port. It was by means of so easy a communication that the conveyance of merchandize was formerly effected throughout Egypt. The dangerous passage of the mouth of the Nile was thus avoided, as well as the perils of the sea. When I was at Alexandria in 1778, not more than a century had elapsed since it had been navigable for boats; but this canal, the advantages of which are inestimable, was neglected by barbarians who were blind to their true interests. The walls which supported the banks were falling every day into ruins; the pavement at the bottom was covered with successive coats of mud, and no boat could any longer swim in it. A yellow and disgusting stream would soon

* I found it impossible to trace them out.

have ceased to reach the cisterns, which were themselves half-destroyed; the inhabitants would have soon experienced a total want of water; and modern Alexandria would have sunk into the sand, and have become the haunt of savage animals which seemed already to threaten it, while prowling round its walls.

The banks of the canal are animated by some of the richest productions of living nature; farther on she appears dead. On every side there is nothing but sands, rocks, and sterility. Trees and shrubs grow by the water-side, and some patches of verdure are scattered about the environs. A few wandering streams carry fertility to fields where barley is sown, and where different kinds of vegetables are cultivated, particularly a great number of artichokes. The cultivation of this district formerly extended much farther; and it would have been easy for the modern Alexandrians to have enlarged its limits; but they discovered no activity, unless in pillage; nor is it surprising that people who made no effort to preserve the only water that was drinkable, should have neglected the means of procuring themselves comfort and abundance.

These are vestiges of the culture which surrounded ancient Alexandria; these are the remains of those delightful gardens which added to its magnificence, and the beauty of which Abulfeda still extolled in the time of the Arabs. A few trees scattered here and there, and scarcely vegetating upon this sandy shore, are far from sufficient to conceal its aridity and nakedness: several species of soda, salt and acrid plants, of which the Arabian name, *kali*, has been given to alkaline substances, are almost the only ones that thrive upon this coast, and there they may rather be said to creep than grow. The Alexandrians burn them, and extract from their ashes a fixed salt, which is an article of commerce.

The verdure, the coolness, and the shade, had attracted a number of small birds to the banks of the canal. It was in the month of
October,

October, and I distinguished among them fig-peckers *, common larks †, and sparrows. Bird-catchers were employed in taking the two first species, and in thus destroying the only beings that could give some appearance of gaiety to their miserable habitations. But these birds, excepting the sparrows, were, at Alexandria, birds of passage. They were resting themselves near the water of the canal, after a long journey. In a short time that water could have afforded them nothing but a bed of mud. It was already stagnant and of a brackish taste; and the birds which had the good fortune to escape from the snares that were laid for them on their arrival, were preparing to seek in the direction of the Delta a more happy country, a more agreeable situation, and a more undisturbed retreat.

The sparrows, on the contrary, more accustomed to the society of man, because their less savoury flesh is not equally tempting to his appetite, never migrate: except when on an excursion in search of food, they never quit inhabited places, where they also take up their abode. They are domestic birds, forming around us an aviary of impudent parasites, who partake, whether we will or not, both of our provisions and of our dwellings. In Egypt, their habits are the same as with us—the same familiarity, the same effrontery, and the same voracity. They are also the intrusive guests of the Alexandrians; they are likewise seen in the inhabited parts of Egypt, and are equally common in Nubia, and even in Abyssinia. A great degree of heat cannot then be unfavourable to them, though it is true that none of them are met with on the west coast of Africa. From Cape Blanco, or thereabout, their place is occupied by the bengals ‡,

* Bec-figue, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 668. Fig. I.—*Motacilla ficedula*, L.—*Ang.* The Epicurean warbler.

† L'alouette, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 363. Fig. I.—*Alauda arvensis*, L.—*Ang.* The sky-lark.

‡ Le bengali, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 115. Fig. I.—*Fringilla bengalus*, L.

the senegals*, and by the little senegal sparrows †. As I cannot, after what I have just said, attribute the cause of this fact to excess of heat, I think it must depend upon the difference of the alimentary plants raised in those parts of Africa. Wheat and the kinds of grain analogous to it are cultivated in Egypt, Nubia, and in Abyssinia, as well as in Barbary; but that is not the case in the environs of Cape Blanco. Other nutritive plants furnish a substitute to the negroes who inhabit the country south of that promontory; and the seeds of those plants are not a proper food for sparrows; so that if they do not frequent all the wheat countries, it is at least certain that they never settle in those where that kind of corn and others of a similar nature are not cultivated.

The rapid glance that we have just taken of several productions of living nature, is a relief to the mind, fatigued with dwelling upon rubbish and desolation. Thanks to the mother of all beings! Eternal praise to her unalterable beneficence! It has been her wish to preserve upon a dry and burning soil, and in the midst of the horrors of destruction, a spot where she has found means, in spite of the barbarians on whom her charms are lost, to exhibit some specimens of her beauty. It is with regret that I direct my steps another way, and that I take my eyes from off a place which is comparatively so enchanting. My pen endeavours to make the reader participate in the agreeable sensations that I experienced; but we must hasten to reach a country where Nature has displayed all her treasure. The thought revives my courage, for we have still sandy wastes to pass, and have yet to plunge into the catacombs, the gloomy abode of the dead.

These catacombs, which are at no great distance from the canal,

* Le sénégali, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 157. Fig. I.; et le sénégali rayé, *ibidem*, et Pl. enlum. No. 157. Fig. II.—*Fringilla senegala*, L.

† Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 230. Fig. II.

are galleries extending a considerable way under ground, or rather into the rock. They were probably at first the quarries, whence the stones necessary for building the houses of Alexandria were extracted; and after having furnished the people of the country with materials for their habitation during their lives, they became their last abode after death. Though of immense extent, they did not require laborious efforts, the stratum of stone being calcareous and soft. It is as white as that of Malta, and in like manner grows harder upon exposure to the air. But the rock of Malta is bare, whereas that of Egypt is generally covered with sand. It was, no doubt, on account of the softness of the rock that the ancient Egyptians covered the inside of the galleries with a kind of mortar which has acquired a great degree of solidity, and is not easily broken. The greater part of these subterraneous passages have fallen in. In the small number of those in which it was still possible to penetrate, I perceived, on each side, three rows of tombs placed one above another: they are not, as at Malta, cut lengthwise, but transversely. Their longest sides form an inclined plane inwards, so that the bottom of the tomb is much narrower than the upper part. At the extremity of some of these galleries, there are separate chambers with their tombs, set apart, no doubt, for the interment of a family, or of a particular class of citizens.

If we may believe the Arabs, the catacombs have a subterraneous communication with the pyramids of Memphis. This opinion of their immense extent appears exaggerated. It does not, however, go beyond the other gigantic works of the Egyptians, and might be worth the trouble of verification. It is more certain that they extend as far as the sea, at the head of the old port: the three grottos, or cavities hollowed out of the rock by the sea-side, which the Egyptians have honoured, rather improperly, with the name of *Cleopatra's baths*, appear to be a continuation of them.

At the entrance of the catacombs I saw several cameleons *. It is now well ascertained, that the change in their colours does not proceed from the objects presented to them; that their different affections increase or diminish the intensity of the tints with which the fine skin that covers them is mottled; that they are not satisfied with so unsubstantial a nourishment as air; that they seek more solid food by swallowing flies and other insects; and, in short, that all the wonderful stories that have been related of this kind of lizard, are no more than a series of fables which have dishonoured the science of nature even to the present day. I kept several cameleons; not that I was tempted to repeat the experiments of Corneille le Bruyn, who, after having gravely affirmed that the cameleons he kept in his room at Smyrna lived upon air, added that they died one after another in a short time; but I wished to know how long they could go without nourishment. I took every precaution to deprive them of aliment, without their ceasing to be exposed to the open air. They lived thus for twenty days—but what a life! From being fat when I caught them, they soon became very lean: with their flesh they gradually lost their agility and colour; their skin became livid and wrinkled, and stuck to their bones; so that they appeared dried before they ceased to exist.

The catacombs serve also as a retreat for the jackals, which are very numerous in this part of Egypt. They go in large packs, and prowl round the habitations. Their howl is very disagreeable, particularly during the night; it is a kind of yelping that may be compared to the shrill cries of children of different ages. They greedily devour dead bodies and filth of every kind. In a word, they are equally cruel and voracious, and are a dangerous enemy, even to

* Caméléons, Lacépède, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes ovipares.—*Lacerta chamaeleon*, L.

man. Every thing that authors have said of the wolf, and even of the fox of Africa, must be understood of the jackal; for, granting that these animals have a considerable resemblance to each other, it is nevertheless true that there are neither wolves nor foxes in that part of the country. The name that the jackal bears in Egypt is *deib*; the *Fellabs*, or inhabitants of the country, call it also, no doubt according to the tenour of some popular tale, *abou Soliman*, *Soliman's father*.

These ferocious animals are not afraid to approach Alexandria; they used to roam round the town during the night; often passed through the breaches in the walls; entered the city in search of their prey, and made it re-echo with their howls; a kind of association worthy of the men by which it was inhabited.

But a more gentle, and at the same time a more extraordinary animal, which takes up its subterraneous abode in the environs of Alexandria, is the *gerboise*, or jerbo.

CHAPTER XI.

NATURAL HISTORY OF THE GERBOISE, OR JERBO, OF EGYPT; WITH REMARKS ON NATURAL HISTORY IN GENERAL, AND THE SKETCH OF A PLAN OF TRAVELS INTO THE INTERIOR OF AFRICA.

THE greater part of what is now to be presented to the reader, has been already published in the *Journal de Physique* of the month of November 1789. I determined at that time to give to the world my observations concerning the *gerboise*; because Buffon not having been able to procure an individual of that species of quadruped, nor any precise accounts of its habits, had spoken of it from very imperfect information. The work of Mr. Bruce, who preceded me in the publication of his travels, as he did in the date of his expedition, had not yet appeared at the time that I printed my memoir. That illustrious traveller has confirmed what I said concerning the *gerboise*, and has enabled me to rectify an error of nomenclature into which Dr. Shaw, one of his countrymen, had led me, and Buffon before me, by a false application of the name. But however interesting may be the notes concerning the *gerboise* inserted in the travels of Mr. Bruce, mine, besides the merit of priority, contain more facts, and afford a more complete history of that singular animal. Such, at least, was the idea entertained of it at the time by several learned men, among whom I shall only mention the authors of the *Journal Encyclopédique*. In the account which they give of Travels in Nubia and Abyssinia by Mr. James Bruce, and after having transcribed his chapter concerning the *gerboise*, they add, “The
“ ancients have described that animal. Herodotus, Theophrastus,
“ and the Arabs, make mention of the *gerboise*; but among the
“ moderns,

“ moderns, no naturalist has described it better than M. Sonnini, &c.
 “ who travelled several years with a view to the progress of natural
 “ history.” The same editors afterwards give an extract of my observations*.

The memoir which I printed in 1787, will therefore very properly find a place here, and with the greater reason, as it will appear accompanied with additions interesting to natural history.

Since the eloquent writings of Buffon have given so great an impulsion to the science of nature, which he has contrived to render so amiable and attractive, varieties have been discovered in the species of the *gerboise*. But the first result that I obtained from an attentive examination, and from careful descriptions of several of these animals, was the certainty that there only exists one variety in Egypt, where they are very numerous. In all those, indeed, which I observed in different places, and at different times, I could never perceive any dissimilarity either in form or colour.

For the facility of pronunciation I shall let this *gerboise* of Egypt retain the appellation of *jerbo*, under which it is designated in the works of Buffon †, although its real, its Arabian name is *jerboa*. It is an error in Haffelquitz which Bruce has also remarked ‡, to say, that the Arabs call it *garbuka* §.

That travellers, without any notion of natural history, and consequently without any taste for observations of the kind, should, at first

* See the *Journal Encyclopédique* of the month of September 1792.

† Hist. Nat. des Animaux Quadrupèdes, article des Gerboises.—*Lepus caudâ elongatâ*, Lin. Syst. Nat. 9th edition.—*Mus jaculus*, ibidem, 12th edition.—*Dipus jaculus*, ibidem, 13th edition.—*Mus jaculus pedibus posticis longissimis, caudâ extremi villosâ*, Haffelquitz' Travels in Palestine, vol. ii. p. 6. and Memoires de l'Academie d'Upsal, 1750, p. 17.—*Gerbo*, Corneille le Bruyn, Voyages, p. 406.—*Gerboises*, Voyages de Paul Lucas, tome ii. p. 73.—*Jerboa*, Shaw's Travels.—The two-legged mountain mouse, called by the Arabs *jerbo*, Michæelis, Question 92, &c. &c.

‡ Travels in Nubia and Abyssinia.

§ Haffelquitz in the place above-mentioned.

sight, and without further examination, have given false denominations to foreign animals, according to some resemblance to known animals, either in their shape or habits, is not astonishing. Their manner of observing was common and superficial; and the result had necessarily the same defects. But we have every reason to be surpris'd at seeing professional naturalists, Hasselquitz for instance, the pupil of a celebrated man, fall into the same error. He is the less excusable, as he did not determine to decide upon its appellation till after a long and minute inquiry; but, like Linnæus, his master, he had the rage of bringing beings, separate by nature, under the same *genus*. This union of objects very unlike each other in the true system of nature, was founded only upon some resemblance in the external form; a confined and vague resemblance taken by chance, and so unstable that it might be quitted, and in fact was quitted, to adopt others equally precarious, by means of which the same animal changed its place and *genus* according to the pleasure of the nomenclator*.

After having survey'd each form apart, to compare them with one another, and to take a general view of the whole; to study, above all, the manners and the habits of the animal; to be guided in his observations neither by prejudice nor the spirit of system; such is the character of a true naturalist, while that of a nomenclator is to confound every thing. The jerbo affords us an instance of this confusion in the science of nature. Several points of resemblance, each taken separately, have occasioned its being compared to the hare, the rabbit, the rat, the field-mouse, &c. although there is such an evident difference between them, that no man of good understanding, however destitute of a knowledge of natural history, will ever confound them. Yet these improper denominations of hare, rabbit, rat, field-mouse, &c. have been assigned to the jerbo, as well by na-

* See the proof of this in the nomenclature in the note at the bottom of page 95.

turalists as by travellers less acquainted with the subject. Here it is worthy of remark, that erudition without genius produces the same effects as ignorance.

It is principally in the burning climates of Africa, that Nature seems to have taken a pleasure in varying, in a singular manner, the forms of the beings she has placed there, and in departing from the rules and proportions which she seems to have adopted: if, however, that can be called a departure from rules and proportions, which is no more than a proof of her immense and boundless fecundity. It is upon that fiery soil that the giraffe*, or camelopard, so remarkable for the height of its anterior parts, is met with: a great disproportion in the legs is also found in the jerbo; but it is the hind legs which exceed in length, while the fore ones are scarcely perceptible. These long legs, or, more properly speaking, these long feet, for it is the tarsus which is so considerably elongated, are alone of use to the jerbo in its progressive movement. The fore feet, which may be considered as little hands, are of no service to it in going from one place to another. It hops like a bird; and this mode of going, which would be very tiresome to any other quadruped, is so appropriate to the one in question, that its pace, or rather its hopping motion, is very nimble and quick. Here then is an animal which, although it has four feet, departs a good deal from the class of quadrupeds, and, in some measure, approaches that of birds. Placed upon the first step of the passage from one to the other, it constitutes the first degradation of quadrupeds, and is the primary link between them and birds. The celebrated man who has carried the torch of philosophy into the sanctuary of nature, was the first to establish this sublime and important truth, that her works are not divided by great intervals, nor by sudden interruptions; that every thing is connected; that the transition from class to class, from *genus* to *genus*, and from species

* Giraffe, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Cameleopardis giraffe*, L.

to species, is marked by progressive shades; and that these classes, *genera*, and species, in the eyes of the philosopher, are nothing but indications proper to relieve the mind, and divisions calculated to aid the memory.

Although the transition from quadrupeds to birds has not yet been investigated, although all the points of it are not yet ascertained, we have, nevertheless, reason to consider the connexion as existing. We have the beginning of it in the jerbo, and the last link of it in the bat. There is every reason to believe that the series of gradations will develop itself in proportion as good observers shall carry their researches into countries, the natural history of which is still unexplored. I am convinced that the interior of Africa, as yet an almost virgin country in regard to discoveries, contains a multitude of new and interesting objects, a knowledge of which will throw the greatest light on every part of natural philosophy in general. Here I must beg leave to mention the plan that I had formed, a few years ago, of penetrating into those regions, which, till now, have been considered as inaccessible. My design was to travel through the heart of Africa, in its longest direction, from the almost unknown gulf of Sidra, as far as the Cape of Good Hope. I am proud of having conceived this project, which appals the imagination, and of having felt bold enough to execute it, provided government had deigned to second my intentions. I shall hereafter revert to the plan that I had laid down. Had it been followed, it would have secured to France the glory of an enterprise which remains as yet unattempted, but in which she appears likely to be anticipated by foreigners. I proceed to the description of the jerbo.

Its size is nearly equal to that of a big rat; its head is broad, large in proportion to the body, the upper part flat, and of a light fawn colour, striped with black. The upper jaw projects beyond the lower. They are both provided with only two incisors; the upper ones broad, square, flat, and divided lengthwise by a groove in the middle.

middle. Those of the lower jaw are longer, convex externally, pointed at their extremity, and bent inwards. Hence it appears, that these incisors are the same, or nearly the same, in disposition and form as those of the hare, the rat, and field-mouse; and this single point of resemblance has procured the jerbo all those names. It would have been just as rational to take it for a beaver or a porcupine, which are equally destitute of canine teeth, and have only four incisors. The muzzle is short, wide, and obtuse; a number of stiff hairs grow out on each side, and form long whiskers. The nose is bare, white, and cartilaginous; the iris of its large and projecting eyes is brown; the ears are long, large, and covered with hair, so short, that they appear naked, except upon very close inspection; externally they are white in the lower part, and gray upwards; the inside of them, as well as the sides of the head, is of a very light fawn colour, intermingled with gray and black; they entirely surround the *meatus auditorius* for about one third of their length, so that they exactly resemble the larger end of a cone. This conformation must increase the animal's faculty of hearing, and is particularly well calculated to defend the inner part of the organ from the extraneous substances that might lodge there.

The body is short, broader behind than before, and well provided with long, soft, and silky hair. That which covers the back and sides of the animal is of an ash colour, throughout almost the whole of its length, and of a light fawn colour when it approaches the points, which are black. But as the ash-coloured part is not visible, it may be said that the fur is of a fawn colour, with blackish zig-zag stripes. These tints, which are somewhat dusky, form an agreeable contrast with the fine shining white of the belly.

The fore legs are so short that they scarcely extend beyond the hair; they are white, and have five toes, the inner one of which is short, rounded at the end, and has no nail: the four other toes, the second outer one of which is the longest, are long, and armed with

great hooked nails. The heel is very high, and the inside or sole of the foot is naked, and of a flesh colour. I have already said that they may be taken for hands; and, in fact, they are of no use to the jerbo in walking, but serve him only to lay hold of his food, and carry it to his mouth, as also to dig his subterraneous habitation.

The hind legs are covered with long hair, fawn-coloured and white. Its long feet are almost entirely bare, especially on the outside, which must necessarily be the case, since the animal, whether in motion or at rest, constantly leans upon that part. These feet, so exceedingly long, have each three toes; the middle one is something larger than the other two; they are all provided with nails, which are short, but broad and obtuse. They have also at the heel a kind of spur, or rather a very small rudiment of a fourth toe, which gives the jerbo of Egypt some resemblance to the *alagtaga* of Tartary, described by Gmelin*, and which probably escaped Hasselquitz, as well as many others. The toes and the heel are furnished below with long hair of a gray tinged with yellow, except that at the origin of the toes, which is of a blackish cast. The nails both of the fore and hind feet are of a dirty white.

According to Hasselquitz †, the tail of the jerbo is three times as long as the body. I never found it, however, much more than half its length. It scarcely exceeds the circumference of a large goose-quill; but it is of a quadrangular, and not of a round shape: it is of a deeper gray above than below, and furnished with short hair as far as its extremity, which ends in a tuft of long silky hair, half black and half gray.

On comparing this description with that which Gmelin has given of the *alagtaga*, in the New Commentaries of the Academy of Petersburg ‡, it will be seen that the jerbo strongly resembles them.

* *Nov. Comment. Acad. Petropol.* vol. v. art. 7.

† In the places already quoted.

‡ Vol. v.

They have both the same number of toes on the fore feet, the spur on the hind feet, the same length of tail, &c. which proves two things: the first is, that the jerbo and alagtaga are one and the same animal; the second, that the descriptions given of the jerbo are not very accurate. What chiefly left Buffon in doubt concerning the identity of the jerbo and the alagtaga, is the disparity of the climates which they respectively inhabit, the former being found in Africa, and the alagtaga having been observed in Siberia; but this instance would not be the only one of the kind. Several species of animals are spread from the frozen countries of the north, to the torrid regions of the south. Bats delight in very hot climates, and yet they exist in the north of Sweden. The hare inhabits alike the burning sands of Africa, and the snow of Lapland, Siberia, &c.

It is also certain that the *gerboise* of the Cyrenaic, and of the desert of Barca, described by Mr. Bruce*, is only a variety of the race of the jerbo, the slight differences perceptible between them being far from sufficient to constitute two distinct species. It is also to the researches of Mr. Bruce, that we are indebted for a perfect knowledge of another animal, which has been improperly confounded with the jerbo, and to which the name of *daman-Israel*, or *lamb of Israel*, has been given. Far from having the singular and strongly marked characteristic of the *gerboise*, that is to say, the excessive length of the hind legs, the *daman* has them all four alike, or nearly so, and has no tail, while that of the *gerboise* is very long. Doctor Shaw † was the first who erroneously confounded two animals so dissimilar; and his mistake was successively copied down to Mr. Bruce, whose observations have thrown light upon a subject before exceedingly obscure. The jerbo having been taken for the

* Travels in Nubia and Abyssinia.

† Travels in Barbary.

lamb of Israel, the same animal which the Hebrews call *schafan* *, all that Arabian authors have said of the latter have been ascribed to it. Any one, indeed, who reads the philological dissertations that have been written upon this subject, and afterwards becomes acquainted with the jerbo, is at a loss to recognise in that quadruped the habits, the sagacity, and the wisdom of which the oriental writers have spoken so highly, and which Solomon has extolled in his Proverbs. We may, therefore, rest assured that all that has been written by the Hebrews and Arabs of the remarkable qualities of a species of animals which live in society, under ground, in certain parts of the East, must be understood of the *daman*, and not of the jerbo; keeping in mind, at the same time, that a naturalist might reasonably complain of some exaggerations of the oriental style.

The following is an account of the principal dimensions of the jerbo. It is the average of the measures taken of several individuals, and only applies to the females, because they were females which first came in my way. The difference of size between the two sexes is, however, of very little account.

Length of the body, from the tip of the nose to the origin of the tail, five inches six lines.

That of the head, measured in a straight line from the tip of the nose to the nape of the neck, one inch eight lines.

Breadth of the muzzle at its extremity, four lines.

That of the opening of the mouth, measured from one angle of the jaw to the other, three lines and a half.

The upper jaw projects beyond the under three lines and a quarter.

Length of the upper teeth, two lines.

That of the under teeth, three lines.

* *Quatuor sunt minima terræ et ipsa sunt sapientiora sapientibus—Lepusulus*; it is thus translated in the Latin version of the bible; but the *schafan* is the animal in question. *Plebs invalida, quæ collocat in petrâ cubile suum.* Proverbs, chap. xxx. ver. 24 and 26.

Distance between the two nostrils, one line.

That between the tip of the nose and the anterior angle of the eye, ten lines.

That between the posterior angle of the eye and the ear, two lines and a half.

That between the two angles of the eye, five lines.

Distance between the anterior angles of the eyes, measured in a straight line, one inch and half a line.

Length of the ears, one inch six lines.

Breadth of the ears at the bottom, five lines.

Distance between the ears, nine lines.

Length of the tail, eight inches six lines.

Thickness of the tail at its origin, two lines.

Total length of the fore legs, one inch seven lines.

That of the great toe, one line and a half.

That of the second toe, including the nail, three lines.

Total length of the hind legs, six inches two lines.

That of the middle toe, including the nail, ten lines.

That of the spur, one line.

The females have eight nipples, the position of which is remarkable: they are situated more externally than those of other quadrupeds. The first pair is beyond the bend of the shoulders, and the last is rather under the thigh than under the belly. The two other pairs, being upon the same line, are consequently placed rather under the flanks than under the body.

The males are modelled upon a smaller scale than the females; but this difference is trifling. The tints of their hair are also in general less deep. The testicles are not externally visible. The *penis* itself, in its ordinary state, is concealed in a very thick sheath: when it is extended, it is fifteen lines in length, and two and a half in circumference at its root. The opening of the gland is formed by two cartilaginous rings; the prepuce has upon its upper part two little
I
hooks,

hooks, also cartilaginous, white, and three inches long, which are bent forward, and terminate almost at the very end of the prepuce. These hooks, which are pretty large at their insertion, terminate in a point capitated by a small yellow head similar to the *antheræ* of certain flowers. The whole prepuce is furnished, besides, with very small cartilaginous points bent backwards towards the root of the *penis*. From this singular conformation, there is reason to believe that the copulation of the jerbo, like that of cats, is attended with pain; and even that the *glans*, when distended in the *vagina*, cannot be for some time withdrawn, as is the case with dogs.

From their having an apparatus for generation so great in proportion to their size, it may be presumed that the jerbos are very amorous. It appears that they are equally prolific; for they are exceedingly numerous in Arabia, Nubia, Egypt, and Barbary. It is probable that, in the north, these faculties are weaker. I should even conjecture that they lie torpid during the winter season; and that, for that reason, they must propagate much less than in the southern climates.

During my stay, or rather during my excursions, in Egypt, I opened several jerbos; but as in travels of this sort a man has seldom any time to spare, I contented myself with seeing that the inside of these animals, so singular in their external form, contained nothing extraordinary. My principal aim was more particularly to ascertain that they had only one stomach, and consequently could not possess the faculty of ruminating. This was an answer to one of the questions that Michaëlis, professor at Gottingen, had addressed to the travellers sent to the East by the king of Denmark, namely, *whether the jerbo was a ruminating animal**? a question arising from the same mistake which had occasioned the confounding of the jerbo with the daman-Israel, or schafan of the Hebrews. Se-

* Les Voyageurs savans et curieux, ou Tablettes instructives, tome ii. p. 321.

veral individuals preserved in spirits were destined to supply, at a future period, what I had not been able to describe. But the long time they had remained in the liquor, and their removal from place to place, had injured the viscera to such a degree, that they were almost equally livid, soft, and macerated. The subject that was the best preserved afforded me the following details:

On being taken out of the spirits the jerbo weighed four ounces six drachms; as he had imbibed a great quantity, his actual weight was four ounces at most.

Upon opening the belly, the cavity was found full of the spirits; and the injured viscera had lost their natural colour.

No stomach was perceptible.

The smaller intestines, at first sight, looked like a confused assemblage of fibres, so much were they shrunk up; the larger ones were a little more distinct: the colon made two spiral turns on the right side, which were apparent without; and the rectum descended almost in a straight line to the left.

The bladder was in a compressed state, and visible in the lower part of the abdomen.

The stomach was situated almost entirely on the left, was much contracted, and concealed by the liver.

I endeavoured in vain to discover the dimensions and form of the stomach, and of the intestinal canal; but no sooner did I lift up these parts, and separate them from each other, than they broke asunder, and presented nothing but a shapeless mass. It was the same with the mesentery, the vessels, &c. &c.

The liver was composed of three lobes and a lobule. Two lobes were external, one to the right, the other to the left, contiguous, and separated only by a deep scissure, in which appeared a little of the cellular membrane, a vestige of the suspensory ligament. The posterior lobe was seated entirely to the left; in these three lobes I could perceive neither indentures nor appendages; but under the right lobe

in the posterior part I found an irregular lobule, to which was hanging some of the cellular membrane that seemed to be the gall-bladder; I say *seemed*, for here, as elsewhere, the bad state of the membranous parts, which were verging upon dissolution, hindered me from distinguishing their original forms. The structure of the liver was more easily observable; its parenchyma, however, was separated from it by the slightest touch.

The right kidney was pretty well preserved; its shape was oval, convex above, and flat below. It was five lines and a half long, and three broad. Above, in the membranous mass, I distinguished an oval gland very small and tolerably hard.

The left kidney, which was not so well preserved as the right, appeared somewhat larger. The bladder was very muscular, of an oval form, and narrower below than above. It was in pretty good preservation, and was five lines long by two broad in the upper part.

The jerbos are common in Lower Egypt, particularly in *Babira*, or the western part. The appellation of *mountain-rats*, or *mice*, has been improperly applied to them, since all the lower part of Egypt is a plain. Hasselquitz asserts, that these names were given them by the French*. This is not the first time that traveller has been led into error by his disposition to speak ill of our nation. To the small number of French trading in Egypt, the *mountain-rat* is unknown; and it is from foreign naturalists that the jerbo has obtained that name†.

The sands and ruins that surround modern Alexandria are much frequented by jerbos. They live in society, and in burrows, which they dig with their teeth and nails. I have even been told that they sometimes make their way through the soft stone which is under the stratum of sand. Though not absolutely wild,

* In the places already quoted.

† See the nomenclature at the beginning of this chapter.

they are very shy; and upon the least noise, or the sight of any object, retire precipitately to their holes. They can only be killed by surprize. The Arabs contrive to take them alive by stopping up all the avenues of their burrows except one, by which they force them to come out. I never ate any: their flesh, indeed, is said not to be very palatable, though it is not despised by the Egyptians. Their skin, covered with soft and shining hair, is used as a common kind of fur.

In Egypt I kept six of these animals for some time in a large iron cage. The very first night they entirely gnawed through the upright and cross pieces of wood; and I was obliged to have the inside of the cage lined with tin. They ate wheat, rice, walnuts, and all kinds of fruit. They delighted in being in the sun; and when taken into the shade, huddled together, and seemed to suffer from the privation of heat. It has been said that the jerbos sleep by day, and never in the night; but, for my part, I have observed quite the contrary. In a state of liberty, they are found round their subterraneous habitations in open day; and those that I kept, were never more lively nor more awake than in the heat of the sun. Although they have a great deal of agility in their motions, they seem to be of a mild and tranquil disposition. Mine suffered themselves to be touched without difficulty; and there was neither noise nor quarrel among them, even when they were taking their food. At the same time they testified neither joy, fear, nor gratitude. Their gentleness was neither amiable nor interesting: it appeared to be the effect of cold and complete indifference, bordering upon stupidity. Three of these jerbos died successively before my departure from Alexandria. I lost two others during a somewhat stormy passage to the isle of Rhodes, when the last, owing to the negligence of the person who had the care of it, got out of its cage and disappeared. I had a strict search made after it, when the vessel was unloaded, but without success. It had, no doubt, been killed and eaten by the cats.

It appears difficult to keep these little animals alive in a state of confinement, and still more so to transport them to our climate. It may be well, however, to acquaint those who may attempt to bring them to Europe, with the precautions that it is necessary to observe in putting them on board a ship, which are the same as those that are taken with the *aguti*, or long-nosed cavy*, the *acuschy*, or olive cavy†, and the other American quadrupeds, with sawing teeth. They should be shut up in cages or casks, made secure against their escape; their nature leading them to devour any thing: they would otherwise occasion considerable damage in the course of a long voyage; and as they are capable of gnawing even the hardest wood, they might endanger the safety of the vessel.

I had scarcely published, in 1787, my observations upon the *gerboises* of Egypt, when a letter of M. Berthout-Van-Berchem concerning them appeared in the *Journal d'Histoire Naturelle*‡. That scientific man imputed two mistakes to me rather *mal-à-propos*, since in the two contested points I was perfectly in the right. I had prepared my answer; but Citizen Lamethrie, whom I requested to insert it in the *Journal de Physique*, as the sequel of my observations, remarked to me, that as he had refused to publish M. Berthout's *critique*, it would be indecorous in him to publish my answer. I give it a place here; and as I employ, in exculpating myself from my supposed mistakes, nothing but the words and quotations of M. Van-Berchem, I begin by transcribing his letter. This little discussion will not, perhaps, be altogether useless; it will throw a new light on the natural history of the *gerboise*, at the same time that it will shew the danger which criticism runs of going astray, when it dwells too much upon *minutiæ*.

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Animaux Quadrupèdes.—*Cavia aguti*, L.

† Buffon, Supplém. à l'Hist. des Animaux Quadrupèdes.—*Cavia acuschy*, L.

‡ Par MM. Berthelou et Boyer, Année 1788, No. 12.

A Letter concerning the true nomenclature of the Gerboise, by M. BERTHOUT-VAN-BERCHEM the younger, perpetual Secretary of the Society of Natural Philosophy of Lausanne.

“ IN a work upon quadrupeds, which I am about to publish, will be found a complete history of the *gerboise*. I shall content myself for the present with giving the true nomenclature of those animals, which proves that the *alagtaga* and the *gerboa* are two different species, in confounding which M. Sonnini has been much to blame (*Journal de Physique*, November 1787, by M. de Lame-thrie); though his memoir, in other respects, contains interesting particulars concerning those animals.

“ It is to M. Pallas that we are indebted for the best natural history of the *gerboise*. But as it would be too tedious to give an account of the inquiry he made into the nomenclature of these animals, I shall content myself with referring the reader to his work*; and I shall say as he does, that there are two species of the *gerboise*. The first, that M. de Buffon speaks of under the name of *alagtaga*, which should be written *alak-daaga*, has five toes to his hind feet; the second has only three, and it also differs from it in several other respects. In order to distinguish this first species, which M. Pallas names *mus jaculus*, I shall call it *jalma*, from the name which the Kalmucs give it, and to the second species I shall preserve the name of *gerbo*, or *gerboa*. M. Pallas has discovered three varieties in the *jalma*, which appear to differ principally in the size. The most common, which is of a middle size between the two others, is the *jalma* or *alak-daaga*. It is frequently found in eastern Tartary, in the deserts of Siberia, and the regions beyond the Baikal†. It is also found in Syria, and even in the

* *Nova Species Quadrupedum (Mus jaculus)*, p. 275.

† *Ibidem*, p. 285.

“ East Indies. Mr. Pennant says that it is found in Barbary * ;
 “ but M. Pallas positively assures us, that there is no certain proof
 “ of the *jalma* inhabiting Africa: he even remarks that it is fonder
 “ of cold countries than the *gerboa*, which is an inhabitant of warm
 “ climates †.

“ The second variety is the largest of all ; it is scarcer than the
 “ first. The name given to it is *marin jalma* ; and it is found on
 “ the grassy hills of the Tanais, of the Wolga, of the Rhyrnus, and
 “ of the Irtysh ‡. It is no doubt to this latter that belongs the ani-
 “ mal which Dr. Shaw has described under the misapplied name of
 “ *daman-Israel*, and which is of the size of a rabbit.

“ The third variety, like the largest, is found towards the southern
 “ salt marshes of the Caspian sea ; and, like the intermediate one,
 “ in the environs of the Wolga and of the Rhyrnus. It is called
 “ *choin-jalma* § ; it is the smallest of all. The great, or *marin-*
 “ *jalma*, is of the size of a squirrel ; the intermediate one, or *jalma*,
 “ of that of a rat ; and the smallest is scarcely as big as a field-
 “ mouse.

“ All these varieties have five toes upon their hind feet, and in the
 “ great number which M. Pallas examined, he never saw any dif-
 “ ference in that respect. But what led Messieurs de Buffon and
 “ Sonnini into an error, is the defective description of Gmelin, who
 “ had seen but a single individual, in all probability disfigured,
 “ which had only three toes and a spur, or four toes ||. He was
 “ also mistaken as to the habits of that animal, by attributing to it
 “ those of the *lepus-ogotana* ; an error which was afterwards copied
 “ by the younger Gmelin. Neither does Messer Schmidt, who has
 “ given us a good description of that animal, say that it has only
 “ four toes ¶. It must be confessed then, that this species is very

* Hist. of Quad. p. 249.

† Pallas, book quoted, p. 286.

‡ Idem, p. 284.

§ Idem, p. 291.

|| Idem, p. 282.

¶ Ibidem.

“ distinct

“ distinct from the following one, which has only three toes upon
“ the hind feet.

“ The gerbo of which M. de Buffon has given a very good de-
“ scription after M. Allamand *, and which M. Pallas † calls *mus*
“ *sagitta*, and Mr. Pennant *ægyptius gerboa* ‡, is found in Asia be-
“ tween the Tanais and the Wolga, where M. Pallas has frequently
“ seen it, and on the sandy hills south of the Irtyz, as well as in the
“ *schiisti* of the Altay mountains. In general, it inhabits the more
“ southern countries, in soft and sandy places, where the jalma is
“ never found. It is well known that this animal is also an inha-
“ bitant of Egypt, Barbary, Palestine, and the desert between Bas-
“ fora and Aleppo.

“ I shall make only one more remark, and that is on the passage
“ in which M. Sonnini says that the gerbos were never more lively nor
“ more awake than when they were in the heat of the sun. This is
“ a very singular fact; for M. Klokner, who has had some of these
“ animals in his possession, positively affirms that they sleep in the
“ day, and dread the light. (*Buffon*, Supp. tom. vi. p. 264.) I also
“ saw at Lausanne, at the house of M. Doyat, four or five *gerboises*
“ which he brought home with him from Arabia, and which
“ kept themselves concealed and quiet during the day. Lastly, M.
“ Pallas positively says of the *mus jaculus*: *Protracti in lucem diù,*
“ *vix pedibus insistent, quasi stupidi vel ebrii, mutique, nec aures fa-*
“ *cilè vitali vigore erigunt, vixque ad saltandum excitari possunt,*
“ *carcere calidiorè forsàn lentiores redditi* §. M. Pallas adds, that
“ these animals lie torpid during the winter. I shall conclude
“ this letter, by saying that not only M. Pallas, but also Messrs.
“ Pennant, Zimmerman, and all good zoologists are of the same
“ way of thinking. I have the honour to be, &c.”

Lanazle, June 1, 1788.

* Buffon, Supplém. tome vi. p. 292.

‡ Hist. of Quad. p. 427.

† Pallas, book quoted, p. 306.

§ Pallas, work quoted, p. 288.

SONNINI'S *Answer to M. BERTHOUD-VAN-BERCHEM, &c.*

YOU must not be offended, Sir, if I address to you this note relative to my memoir concerning the *gerboise* of Egypt, in the same journal in which it was published*. That memoir appears to have been the only motive of your letter; and this consideration, the attention you have paid to it, and the compliments you have made me, would be reasons sufficiently powerful to induce me to efface a few spots, which you think you perceive in it. The researches of naturalists ought to tend to the same centre, to one common focus, truth. Any deviation from that point, in any manner whatever, would be deserving of *blame*. In such a case, nothing is more just, and at the same time more noble, than to acknowledge and to disavow errors from which no man is exempt. This was constantly the practice of Buffon. He has set this great example to those who write upon natural history; and I should be anxious to imitate him, were I not convinced, that in considering the *alagtaga* and the gerbo as two animals of the same species, I not only have not incurred the blame which you impute to me, but I cannot, upon this occasion, be reproached even with the smallest mistake. In the first place, Sir, you will have the goodness to remark, that it was not at all my intention to give the nomenclature of the *gerboise*. I employ myself as little as possible in that dry, ungrateful, and very often useless study. I meant only to speak of the *gerboises* that I have seen in Egypt, and to represent them such as I found them. In describing the jerbo, the only animal of the kind which is to be found in that part of Africa, I was struck with its resemblance to another animal of the same genus, which is a native of the Northern countries, and which Gmelin has described under the name of *alag-*

* The reasons which prevented my answer from appearing in the *Journal de Physique* have just been given.

taga; and I said, *the jerbo and the alagtaga of Gmelin appear to me to be one and the same animal*; although I had some difficulty in reconciling myself to this opinion on account of the extreme disparity of the climates. I will even confess that, if reflection had not indicated to me other kinds of quadrupeds living likewise in cold regions as well as under a burning sky, I should have been backward in believing the identity of the two animals: their descriptions afforded me, nevertheless, numerous and unequivocal points of conformity.

Buffon, who never had an opportunity of observing the jerbo, and who, like me, had never seen the *alagtaga*, except in the work of Gmelin, presumed that these two quadrupeds were of the same species. I, who have examined the jerbo very minutely, have reason to express myself in a more positive manner. But neither Buffon nor I have asserted that the *gerboise* of Eastern Tartary, of the deserts of Siberia, and of the regions beyond the Baikal, were all similar to that of which Gmelin has spoken; nor even that the latter existed in those countries. We have only quoted the opinion of a man of some weight, whose remarks are recorded in the Transactions of the Imperial Academy of Petersburg, and that opinion, it must be confessed, is still far from being confuted.

I will confine myself, Sir, to your own quotations. It is certain that when M. Pallas, whose celebrity is justly acquired, communicates his own particular observations, not the shadow of a doubt can be thrown upon them. It may therefore be considered as incontestable, that in the northern countries which I have just mentioned, there are *gerboises*, called *alak-daaga*, which differ from the *alagtaga* of Gmelin, since they have five toes on the hind feet. M. Pallas adds, that, though common in the North, they are nevertheless found in Syria, and even in the East Indies, countries in which the jerbo likewise lives, that is to say, the *gerboise* with three toes, and with a spur, a rudiment of a fourth toe; in other words, the *alagtaga* of Gmelin. Mr. Pennant, the English Pliny, says that they

are also to be met with in Barbary; and I do not well understand why M. Pallas throws a doubt upon this fact, by remarking that *they are fonder of colder countries than the gerboa, which is an inhabitant of warm climates*; as if several districts of Syria were not as hot as Barbary, as those parts at least into which observers have penetrated.

Here then we have two races, very nearly related however, the *alak-daaga* and the *jerbo*, which live together in the South; although the latter is more numerous than the former. Is it not probable that they are both also to be found in the North, where the *jerbo* may, in its turn, be the most uncommon? This conjecture becomes more likely, or rather it ceases to be one, when we read in your letter, Sir, that the learned naturalist Pallas *has frequently seen the jerbo in Asia between the Tanais and the Wolga, and on the sandy hills south of the Irtis, as well as in the schifti of the Altay mountains*; in other words, in the north of Russia, in Tartary, and in Siberia.

Hence, it is certainly very possible, Sir, as you observe, that Gmelin may have met with only a single individual of the race of *gerbos*, always more uncommon in proportion as we approach the north; and that he has given it the name of *alagtaga*, or, if you please, *alak-daaga*, under which the people of those countries, who are at little pains to count the toes and to take the dimensions of animals, may have comprised all the races of *gerboises*. But it is impossible to suppose that a traveller of great information, and very correct in more important particulars, should have been unable to distinguish an animal mutilated to such a degree as to want part of its members; and be defective in its dimensions, as you suppose. It is still more difficult to believe, that he has taken a pleasure in describing an imaginary being, and that, by a chance still more inconceivable, that being, the mere creature of invention, should really exist in other climates, very distant and totally dissimilar.

Gmelin then has fallen into no error in describing what he has

seen, and what, according to more modern observations, which you, Sir, quote yourself, it was natural he should see in the countries through which he travelled. Besides, no blame can, with good reason, be imputed to him, since nothing but two or three negative proofs were alleged against him, which are insufficient to annul a positive proof. For some years past it has appeared to me that travellers and naturalists are a little too ready to contradict those who precede them. It is not here the place to inquire whether science has gained much by this general disposition to criticise; but it is this which has induced me to insist upon the justification of Gmelin, although it is in no wise concerned with my own. Supposing, indeed, that this observer could have carried deception so far as to describe a quadruped the forms of which were not those that he attributed to it, we should not have the less reason to affirm that the jerbo of Egypt very much resembles another *gerboise* described in the Commentaries of the Academy of Petersburg, under the name of *alagtaga*; and that is all I intended to say, without meaning to decide upon its reality, any more than upon the degree of credit which ought to be given to the traveller by whom it has been described.

The opinion which makes of the jerbo and *alagtaga* of Gmelin one and the same animal, was also that of the judicious M. Allamand, one of the foreign naturalists whom M. Buffon held in the highest esteem. In giving an account of a *gerboise* sent from Tunis to M. Klokner, and after having said that it was of the same race as the jerbo of Buffon, the Dutch professor adds: *It (the jerbo) forms a distinct and even very singular genus with the alagtaga, of which M. Gmelin has given a description and a drawing; but which approaches so nearly to our jerbo, that we cannot do otherwise than consider it, with M. de Buffon, as a variety of the same species**.

* Buffon, Supplém. à l'Hist. Nat. des Anim. Quad. Add. de l'Editeur Hollandois (M. Allamand), à l'article de la Gerboise ou Jerbo.

Besides, Buffon, who, in first describing the jerbo, after Edwards and Hasselquitz, made it one species with the *alagtaga* of Gmelin *, persisted (for that is his expression) in not separating them in his *Supplément à l'Histoire Naturelle des Animaux Quadrupèdes*; and nobody, Sir, is better able than you, to estimate the value of the French naturalist's opinion, that, when not disdainng to cast the eye of genius upon a discussion rather of words than of things, and after having weighed the more recent authorities which you yourself quote, he was confirmed in his first opinion.

As to your second remark, upon my having said that *the jerbos were never more lively nor awake than when they were in the heat of the sun*, a fact which appears to you *very singular*; you will permit me, Sir, in my turn to observe, that my proposition, in the way I have advanced it, does not relate to the jerbos in general, nor to those which live in entire liberty, but only to a few individuals that I kept in a cage. My expressions are far from equivocal, for I positively say: *Those that I kept were never more lively nor more awake, &c.* It would not be at all astonishing if animals who, when left to themselves, live and pass the greater part of their lives in burrows made under fiery sand and burning tufa, should suffer from the privation of heat, when they find themselves exposed to the action of the open air, to the wind, and to the coldness of the night; and this reason alone would be sufficient, why mine, which were most frequently confined in the shade, should be revived by the genial influence of the sun.

I was not to learn that the *gerboise* which was sent from Tunis to M. Klockner, slept during the whole of the day, and awoke only at the approach of night †; but what inference can be drawn from the habits of a little, solitary, and very delicate animal, when, deprived of

* Hist. Nat. des Quad. art. des *Gerboises*:

† Supplém. à l'Hist. Nat. des Quad. par Buffon, art. de l'Add. du Prof. Allamand.

the heat of its native foil, he is transported into a cold and damp climate like that of Holland? This observation applies equally to those which M. Doyat kept at Laufanne. I have also in favour of my opinion the most undeniable testimonies: in the first place, that of my eyes, which are good enough to deserve some confidence; next, that of several Europeans, who saw my jerbos at Alexandria; and lastly, that of the crew of the polacre *La Fortune*, on board of which those jerbos lived more than a month.

But I confess that I extended my proposition, when I said that the jerbos were met with in the daytime in the environs of their subterraneous habitation; which implies that they are not continually asleep. If the Arabs could be brought here to give evidence, they would assure you, Sir, that they shoot the jerbos when they are coming out of their holes. But a testimony, which is unquestionable, because it comes from *a good zoologist*, and an illustrious traveller, is that of Mr. Bruce. He relates, that in an unfortunate journey, which he made in that part of Africa formerly known by the name of Cyrenaicum or Pentapolis, where the jerbos were more common than elsewhere, he employed his people, and the Arabs who accompanied him, to knock them down with their sticks, in order that their skins might not be spoiled*. A little farther on, he adds, that the Arabs of the kingdom of Tripoli often amuse themselves by teaching their greyhounds to turn the jerbo suddenly; that a pretty little greyhound, of which the prince of Tunis made him a present, had often afforded him the pleasure of this sport; and that he has several times seen the greyhound run a quarter of an hour before it could catch its active prey in a large court-yard, from which there was no possibility to escape †. Surely all these circumstances are a sufficient proof, that the jerbos are not such determined sleepers by day.

The passage of M. Pallas, *protracti in lucem*, &c. which you quote at length in order to refute my assertion, does not in the least affect

* Travels in Nubia and Abyssinia.

† Ibidem.

it; and this remark will not escape *good zoologists*, any more than it will other sensible men, since this passage relates to an animal of a different species and country to the *mus jaculus* of M. Pallas; in other words, the *alak-daaga*, or *gerboise* of the North, which you have been at too much pains to distinguish from the jerbo, for them ever to be again confounded. Recollect, Sir, on the contrary, that M. Pallas has frequently seen his *mus sagitta*, the jerbo, *on the sandy hills, &c.*; now, I ask, how animals can be frequently seen that are sleeping, the whole day, in subterraneous habitations?

After all, I never meant to say that the jerbo does not sleep at all in the day, or that it is not sometimes awake in the night. My intention was only to circumscribe the too general assertion of those who laid it asleep during the whole day, and kept it awake during the whole night. I should even be inclined to believe that its sleep is longer and less interrupted, when the sun is above, than when it is below the horizon. This would be a quality that the jerbo would have in common with many other quadrupeds, which seek their food and hunt their prey rather in the dark, than by daylight. It is needless to give examples of this: they are sufficiently known.

This is, no doubt, more than enough to terminate a discussion by which, while seeking to awaken the jerbos, we run no small risk of setting our readers asleep. I will only add one word more. I presumed that the jerbos in the North lay torpid during the winter season, and that consequently they must propagate much less than in southern climates. You inform me, Sir, that M. Pallas has fully confirmed my conjecture, at which I feel exceedingly flattered. I am not less so at having an opportunity of assuring you publicly of the consideration with which I am, &c.

CHAP-

CHAPTER XII.

THE FRENCH FACTORY.—A STATUE.—ADANSON AND HIS MISFORTUNES.—AUGUSTE, ANOTHER FRENCH INTERPRETER.—AN ANCIENT TOMB.—HONOUR STILL PAID IN EGYPT TO THE NAME OF ALEXANDER.—VENETIANS AND ENGLISHMEN.—TRADE.—GERMS.—FISH.

AT Alexandria I lodged in the house occupied by the French consul and the merchants of his nation: it is near the sea, at the head of the new port. It is a quadrangular building enclosing a large court-yard, round which are warehouses under arcades: the latter are supported by pillars, or, more properly speaking, by fragments of pillars taken from among the remains of the ancient city: several are of granite, and one of them is of porphyry.

There was also, in this court-yard, a statue of white stone as large as life, and representing a woman seated, with a child standing by her side. It is a tolerably good piece of sculpture; the drapery, in particular, is well executed. Some Arabs having found this statue among the ruins, had sold it to a French interpreter, who intended to send it to his own country; but he died before he could execute his project; and since that time, the statue had remained exposed to damage from the bales of merchandise which were continually tossing about, and by which it had even been mutilated, without any body attending either to its preservation, or its conveyance to the place of its destination, where undoubtedly it would have been received with great pleasure. The demon of destruction must indeed have reigned with absolute sway, over shores covered with the sad effects of its power, to have thus introduced itself into a place set apart for the residence of individuals belonging to a civilized nation.

The

The apartments are over the warehouses : the windows are consequently at a considerable height from the ground ; while a single gate, of great solidity, shuts up the only avenue to this vast enclosure. Additional strength was given to that gate in times of tumult, by piling up against it bales of goods. If the insurrection was not speedily appeased, and there was reason to fear that the populace should make a breach, every body stole out of the windows during the night, and took refuge on board of some ship in the harbour.

Formerly there was only a vice-consul at the head of this establishment ; but M. Tott, during the time that he was inspector in Egypt, removed the consul from Cairo, where it was impossible to protect him from the insults and oppression of the Mamalûks, in order to station him at Alexandria. It may easily be conceived that he was not in much greater safety there. The French flag was constantly flying upon the terrace of the factory ; but, perhaps, it would have been better that it should not have appeared there at all, since there were no means of procuring it proper respect.

Among the small number of French who resided there, and whose kind and obliging disposition is not obliterated from my memory, was a man distinguished by a name dear to the sciences ; I mean that of Adanson, the brother of the academician at Paris, who, from his early youth, had applied himself to the study of the oriental languages, and had performed the difficult functions of interpreter in the Levant. In Syria he had met with one of those cruel adventures that are equally a reproach to the government under which they happen, and to that which tolerates them without taking adequate revenge. A slave to his duty, he was also the victim of the detestable barbarity of a Turkish pasha. Appointed, in concert with his colleague, to be the bearer of just remonstrances in the name of the French nation, they were both condemned by the ferocious Mussulman to undergo the cruel punishment of the bastinado on the soles of the feet. The other interpreter expired on the spot ; but Adanson,
still

still more unfortunate perhaps, with his wounded feet, and deprived of the power of walking, survived the infliction of his atrocious sentence, and the affront which the French government suffered to pass unpunished, as it did that of the murder of its consul at Alexandria.

So terrible a catastrophe would alone have sufficed to interest every one in favour of M. Adanson, even had he not also been estimable on account of his knowledge and talents; but the recompence of modest and distant merit was not included among the customs of governments. Their gilded doors scarcely ever opened, unless to gaudy folly, or importunate inutility. The man who possessed nothing but talents lived, for the most part, isolated and unrewarded; though perhaps the obscurity in which he remained was, after all, a more honourable distinction than all the pomp that attends upon unjust and indiscriminating power. Adanson was vegetating at Alexandria, where he performed the service of interpreter in conjunction with M. Auguste, whose wit and amenity of manners were almost a phenomenon in that country, and would have distinguished him in any other country whatever. Had I received from them only common civilities, I should have thought it unnecessary to make particular mention of these two interpreters, without knowing whether the expression of my gratitude will ever reach them; but it is to them, it is to their enlightened complaisance, that I am indebted for the facility of making my observations in countries difficult to explore. Travellers will be sensible how fortunate I was in meeting with such acquaintances; for they must know, like me, how seldom they are to be found.

I had heard of a curious monument, a sort of ancient tomb, that was in a mosque without the walls which enclose Alexandria. I in vain expressed a wish to see it; I was assured that such a thing was not only dangerous, but impracticable. The French consul and M. Adanson earnestly entreated me to relinquish the idea. However,

M. Augufte, lefs timid, undertook to have me conducted thither privately, and without the knowledge of the other Frenchmen. A janizary belonging to the factory accompanied us; the ſheick of the moſque, called *iman* by the Turks, *vicar* by the Chriſtians, was waiting for us; and by means of a little money that M. Auguſte had agreed to give this prieſt, we had an opportunity of examining every thing at our leiſure. This temple is ancient; it was conſtructed by a caliph; the walls are incruſted with marble of different colours, and ſome beautiful remains of moſaic were ſtill to be ſeen.

The tomb which was the object of our reſearches, and which may be conſidered as one of the fineſt pieces of antiquity preſerved in Egypt, had been converted by the Mahometans into a fort of pool, or reſervoir, conſecrated to contain water for their pious ablutions. It is very large, and would be an oblong ſquare, were not one of its ſhorter ſides rounded off in the ſhape of a bathing-tub. In all probability it was formerly covered by a capital, but no traces of it are at preſent to be ſeen, and it is entirely open. It is all of one piece, and of a beautiful marble ſpotted with green, yellow, red, &c. upon a fine black ground; but what renders it particularly intereſting, is the prodigious quantity of ſmall hieroglyphics with which it is covered, both within and without. A month would ſcarcely be ſufficient to copy them faithfully; and no correct drawings have been taken of them to this day. That which I ſaw, at Paris, on my return from Egypt, at the houſe of Bertin, the miniſter, could only ſerve to give an idea of the ſhape of the monument, the hieroglyphics having been traced by fancy and at random. It would be much the ſame as if, in endeavouring to copy an inſcription, we were to be ſatiſfied with writing the letters without any order or connexion. It is, however, only by exactly copying the figures of this ſymbolical writing, that we can attain the knowledge of a myſterious language, on which depends that of the hiſtory of a country formerly ſo celebrated. When this language ſhall be known, we ſhall learn the
origin

origin of the sarcophagus, and the history of the great man whose ashes it contains. Till then all conjecture must be vague and uncertain.

At the side of the tomb, upon a piece of gray marble, serving as pavement to the mosque, I perceived a Greek inscription, but in Roman letters; as it was half effaced, more time would have been required to decipher it than we could spare. I was able to distinguish, at first sight, only the word CONSTANTINON.

Formerly, it was impossible to enter this mosque; and this accounts for the silence of travellers concerning the sepulchre that renders it so interesting. A duke of Braganza was the first European who visited it, or rather who discovered it, for he was directed thither by mere chance. He had passed in front of the temple; the door was wide open, and perceiving nobody about, he had the curiosity to go in. Some children who had seen him, collected together and came shouting round him: had their shouts been heard, there would have been an end of the Portuguese prince: he took out his purse, and silenced the children, by throwing them some pieces of money, which procured him a free and peaceable retreat. Since then, Mr. Montague, of whom I have already had occasion to speak, had in vain offered a large sum for permission to enter the mosque. But some time after, the duties of it being performed by a sheick, whose fancy for gold prevailed over the laws of fanaticism, it was open to every foreigner that could pay a sequin. The same year that I arrived at Alexandria, several Englishmen had gone thither without any precaution; some of the common people saw them, and murmured loudly. The commandant of Alexandria hastened to reprimand the sheick, and ordered him to admit no Christian. The noise that this affair had like to have occasioned, in a country where Europeans live in continual fear, was yet too recent not to leave some uneasiness on their minds; but our excursion to the mosque had been

so prudently planned, that nobody knew any thing of it, and no notice was taken.

I was one day a witness to the fright with which the bare idea of a riotous mob at Alexandria struck the souls of our Frenchmen. A merchant came to announce that an European had killed a native of the country. The gates of the factory were instantly shut, and bales of goods were about to be moved, in order to serve as a support to them: already did the merchants endeavour to find out on board what vessel they could fly for shelter, by dropping out of the windows, when fortunately they were informed that it was one Mussulman who had killed another.

However, if a continual communication with the different nations of Europe had not yet been able to soften the manners of the Alexandrians, it must be acknowledged that it had already disposed them to more toleration respecting certain matters. Alexandria, for instance, as well as Rosetta, was the only town of Egypt where Europeans could wear their native dresses. Every where else they were forbid to appear, without being clad in the eastern fashion. This sort of indulgence, however, was not to be abused; for, on shewing themselves in any number, or with any degree of parade, particularly in places distant from the shipping, they ran great risk of being insulted.

Yet it was impossible to help feeling some sort of obligation to the inhabitants of this country, for having preserved to their new town the name of the ancient city. *Alexandria* is to be found in the Arabic name *Efscanderiè*, and the indignation that I could not repress against the barbarians, whose new town was rather infested than peopled, ceased for a moment when I heard them, as I have done more than once, pronounce with some respect the name of Alexander. It is considered among them as synonymous to courage and victory: *Enntè Scander*, say they sometimes, *thou art an Alexander*; this, in
their

their estimation, is the highest encomium upon valour. So true it is, that neither marble nor bronze perpetuates the memory of men. Great actions can alone transmit their names from age to age. Every thing is effaced, every thing perishes; virtues and good deeds alone remain, as indelible monuments raised in the heart, and as the eternal inheritance of admiration and gratitude.

The Venetians and English also had commercial establishments at Alexandria; the former, as well as the French, followed in their business the same track as their predecessors; the English, on the contrary, endeavoured to strike out new paths. The frequent journies of their agents in India; their prodigality, which gained them the good-will of the principal people in the country, who are always disposed to favour those who pay them the best, and their activity in operations that they had taken care to keep secret; every thing, in short, announced the project which they had conceived, and which they had already executed in part, of appropriating to themselves the exclusive trade of India by the way of the Red Sea.

The city of Alexandria, of so small extent at the present day, did not afford a consumption of much importance; it was therefore a mere *emporium* of trade; but that trade was considerable, and may become immense. The custom-house, which produced a great sum of money, was in the hands of a company of Christian merchants of Syria. To give an idea of their address, it is sufficient to say that they had supplanted the Jews, who preceded them in the collection of that branch of the public revenue.

The merchandize which European vessels convey to Alexandria is carried by water as far as Cairo; from whence, after having supplied the wants and luxury of that populous city, it is dispersed through all Arabia, Upper Egypt, and even as far as Abyssinia. The small vessels which serve to carry it from Alexandria to Rossetta, the first Egyptian city on the Nile, and to bring back to Alexandria the commodities of Egypt and Arabia, are called *germs*; they are a

kind of strong barks of tolerable construction: they are not decked; draw little water; and, according to their size, have two or three masts with very large latine sails, the yards of which are fixed to the head of the masts, and cannot be lowered; so that, however bad the weather may be, the sailors are obliged to climb up the whole length of them, in order to furl the sails; an operation equally tedious and difficult. They are, in general, of about five or six tons burden. It would certainly be possible to build decked boats of larger dimensions, and of as easy a draught of water. The goods would not then be exposed to be wetted and spoiled by the salt water, as they often are at present; and the conveyance of them would suffer none of those delays which are sometimes prejudicial to commerce, on account of the navigation of the *germs* being stopped by the roughness of the sea. Though the distance that they have to go by water is scarcely more than twelve leagues, and though the bay of *Aboukir*, which is in the middle of their passage, affords them safe shelter, this coasting trade is not free from danger. If a high wind raises the sea, which is always rougher over a shoal, they run a risk of filling and going down. But the most imminent danger to which they are exposed, is at the mouth of the western branch of the Nile, formerly called the *Bolbitic*, now *the branch of Rossetta*. It is a bar formed by the sand, upon which the waves, driven by the wind from the offing, and opposed by the stream of the river, break with great fury. A small island dividing the entrance of this branch leaves, on each hand, a narrow passage, called, in the language of the country, *Boghafs*, a canal or strait. But this passage is far from being navigable throughout its whole width; there is only a narrow channel, which, owing to the instability of the bottom and the agitation of the sea, is daily shifting. A pilot, *reis*, or master of the *Boghafs*, is continually employed in sounding this changeable passage, and indicating it to the *germs*. In spite of all these precautions they often get on shore; and, being soon overwhelmed with

water

water and sand, perish with their crews and cargoes. Accidents more frequently occur in entering the Nile than in going out of it, the *germs* which come from the sea being unable to avoid running into the channel, when they are only at a small distance from it; whereas, in dropping down the river, they can easily return, if, in approaching the bar, they should find it too rough. During the increase of the Nile, when there is more water upon it, these accidents are less frequent; but when the river has retired to its bed, it is so shallow at the mouth, that it is hardly possible for the boats to avoid touching. However habituated to it the Egyptian sailors may be, they never pass it without trembling. Several were pointed out to me, whose fear had been so great as to turn their beards white. During the year 1778, there were only three feet of water in the channel; it was even observed, that the bottom rose progressively every year. The same thing has happened to the Damietta branch, the *Boghafs* of which, although it was surrounded by sand-banks that long habit had taught the seamen to avoid, was not considered as dangerous; it was not even taken into consideration in the bargains of the merchants who freighted the *germs*. However, towards the end of the year 1777, during my stay at Rossetta, this passage was entirely choked up after the greatest rise of the Nile; and the very first boats which attempted it, perished. The danger attending the passage of the Rossetta branch increased every year, in proportion as the bottom rose; and as it was useless to expect, from the ignorance and apathy of the Egyptians, the construction of works calculated to confine the water, and give more depth to the channel, there was every reason to presume, that in a short time no vessel would be able to cross that formidable bar. Then they would, perhaps, have thought of cleansing the canal of Alexandria; and if the carelessness of the inhabitants had blinded them to such a degree as to make them neglect so important a work, all communication by water would have been

cut

cut off between Alexandria and the rest of Egypt; and trade must have been carried on by a more expensive route over land.

It is that which is generally taken by European travellers and merchants, as well as by those who prefer a small increase of expense to the risk of being drowned upon the *Bogbafs*; it is that which I took as often as I had occasion to travel between Alexandria and Rossetta.

Before I quit the coast, I shall present my readers with a short account of the salt-water fishes which I had an opportunity of remarking among the numerous kinds that are caught there. I saw that kind of ray which is known by the name of the *sea-eagle* *, and the flesh of which is tough and ill-flavoured; the *morgag* †, which is little better; the *bonito*, which is a species of small tunny ‡; the pointed fish, which is called the *gar-fish* §; and the *sur-mullet* ||, which is seen in calm weather, playing upon the surface of the water in innumerable shoals. The *basse* is also caught there, which occupied a distinguished place upon the tables of the Romans, and to which the name of *lupus* has been given on account of its voracity ¶. The Provençal sailors call it *carouffe*. I had a drawing made of one of these fish, which was two feet and a half long. (*See Plate XIV.*) Its head was blueish; it had red spots

* *Raia corpore glabro, aculeo longo serrato in cauda pinnata.* Arted. Gen. 45.—*Raia aquila*, L.

† *Squalus dorso vario; pinnis ventralibus concretis.* Arted. Gen. 44.—*Squalus catulus*, L.

‡ *Scomber pelamis, pinnulis inferioribus septem; corpore lineis utrinque quatuor nigris.* Arted. Gen. 25.—*Scomber pelamis*, L.

§ *Esox rostro cuspidato, gracili, subtereti, spithamali.* Arted. Gen. 10.—*Esox belone*, L.

|| *Trigla capite glabro lineis utrinque quatuor luteis longitudinalibus parallelis.* Arted. Gen. 171.—*Mullus surmuletus*, L.

¶ *Perca labrax, pinnis dorsalibus distinctis, secundæ radii quatuordecim.* Arted. Gen. Pisc. gen. 30.—*Perca labrax*, L.

upon the covering of the gills, and the body was of a blackish blue, clouded with gray. These tints were dark above the lateral line, and lighter below, with a mixture of yellow; and lastly, what is more interesting to the lovers of good eating, is that Alexandria affords excellent bearded mullet*.

* *Trigla capite glabro, cirris geminis in maxilla inferiore.* Arted. Gen. 171.—*Mullus barbatus*, L.

CHAPTER XIII.

JOURNEY FROM ALEXANDRIA TO ROSSETTA.—MAADIÉ.—HERACLEUM.—ROSSETTA AND ITS ENVIRONS.—A HASTY VIEW OF THE DELTA.

SITUATED between the Mediterranean sea on one side, and a sea of sand on the other, modern Alexandria is insulated, and seems to belong to no country or nation. To reach any other territory, it is necessary to trust to the inconstancy of the waves, or to pass over large tracts of land, which are a prey to desolation and a disgrace to nature. The road to Rossetta, by land, lies across a country little better than a desert. I have made this journey several times; the first with inspector-general Tott, having a numerous company in his suite, among whom was Savary. We set off from Alexandria on the 12th of July 1777, at seven o'clock in the evening. This company, I had almost said this crew, of foreigners, dressed in the French fashion, offended the inhabitants. In passing through the city, we were saluted with a great deal of abuse and with several stones, one of which was thrown with too good an aim, and gave me a violent blow upon the breast. Had I believed in omens, I should certainly have discontinued a journey begun under such unfavourable auspices. A mischance of another kind awaited us at a little distance from the town. It was a great misfortune to those whose provident appetites were disappointed in their expectations. The ass that carried our provisions, indignant at so weighty a burden, overset his paniers; and bottles, plates, *pâtés*, every thing, in short, went to wreck. Near half an hour was spent in gathering up the fragments, and putting them upon a horse of a less vicious disposition. We were soon overtaken by the night; it could not be darker; and except the *ennui* of travelling

travelling over unknown regions without seeing any thing, it was the same to me as if I had not stirred out of Alexandria. I had with me an old servant accustomed to travelling, a young draughtsman, and a bombardier belonging to the navy: we proceeded in close order, and with a janizary composed the advanced guard. Having performed half of our journey, we stopped to take a little rest: when the time came for setting off again, every one ran after his mule which he had let loose, and which the darkness prevented him from finding or distinguishing. Hence a great uproar and dispute. The muleteers beat one another, the janizaries beat them all. In the midst of this confusion, my little party was mounted from the very moment the signal of departure was given, and we enjoyed at our ease the comic scenes that were passing around us. Having taken care to keep our mules apart from the others, we could lay hold of them when we pleased. A whole hour was lost in a scene of confusion which might easily have been prevented. This observation will not, perhaps, be considered as useless; it proves that in travels, as well as in military expeditions, order and care are equally indispensable; and that, by neglecting them, we are sometimes exposed to greater inconveniences than that of the loss of time.

We arrived at Rossetta at six o'clock in the morning, and slept till dinner-time, without troubling ourselves about the preparations made by a Capuchin friar for a solemn mass, which was to be followed by a *Te Deum*. In the afternoon the whole company set off for Cairo with the same rapidity; remained there almost continually within doors for a month, and then returned to Alexandria with as much speed as they had left it. This is what those who are styled *people of fashion* call travelling: They afterwards return to Europe; talk with effrontery upon every subject, and sometimes write about things that they have never seen.

It is the custom to perform the journey from Alexandria to Rossetta by night, in order to avoid the inconvenience of a burning sun.

But having been long used to travelling in fiery climates, I had learnt to bear the strongest heat of the solar rays. Being convinced, besides, that there is never too much light for a traveller who is in search of information, I have since gone over the same ground during the day. It is estimated a twelve hours journey. There being no carriages in the country, mules are made use of, which are to be hired both at Alexandria and Rossetta, at a fixed and moderate price. Their pace is a very long amble, by means of which the rider goes a great way without much fatigue. These animals were so accustomed to the road, that it was unnecessary to guide them; and, night or day, they never deviated from it, though there is no beaten track over the moving sand; indeed they had neither bridle nor bit, but only a bad halter.

Although the traveller passes through no inhabited place, this is not, properly speaking, a desert. During half of the journey he sees, on one side, and at a little distance, some houses and a town; and, during the remainder, he meets with evident signs that habitations are not far off. He therefore has nothing to fear from the southerly gales, so formidable in the vast plains of sand with which Egypt is surrounded. Savary, who was acquainted with no other desert but this, applied to it what he had heard related of real ones. "Woe," cries he, "to him whom a whirlwind from the south surprises in the midst of this solitude. If he have not a tent to shelter him, he is assailed by clouds of burning dust, which fill his eyes and mouth, and deprive him of the faculty of seeing and breathing. The wisest plan is to perform this journey by night*." Nothing, it is true, is more terrible than these whirlwinds from the south; but it is also certain that there is nothing of the kind to be feared between Alexandria and Rossetta; that nobody ever lost his life there by clouds of burning dust; and that it is physically im-

* Lettres sur l'Égypte, tome i. p. 45.

possible that such a misfortune should happen. In fact, the southerly gale is cooled by the water of the lakes and canals which it crosses, and which would intercept the columns of sand taken up by the wind; provided, indeed, it could raise a great quantity in passing over the cultivated plains of *Babira*. There existed a more real danger, that of being robbed. There were, in fact, for the protection of the highway, guards, whose duty it was to give notice in the two cities, as soon as they perceived any band of suspicious appearance. All travelling was then interrupted, till it was publicly declared that the road was safe. But the incursions of the Bedouin robbers, and, according to circumstances, they are all so, are so sudden; they come with such rapidity, from places whence men cannot be expected to issue, that an act of plunder is the first signal of their presence; and not unfrequently travellers fall victims to their barbarity.

On leaving Alexandria, the road lies east-north-east along the base of a promontory, which stretches out to the northward of that city. At the point of it is *Aboukir*, a town built upon the ruins of Canopus. The coast of this promontory, as I have already remarked, is not so low as that of the Tower of the Arabs; nor has it, though it consists of hills of sand, the same appearance of solitude and sterility, being interspersed with habitations and cultivated spots of ground.

After having travelled about six leagues, we come to the banks of a kind of lake, the remains of the Canopic branch of the Nile. At present it is, correctly speaking, only a salt-water lagoon, which has no communication with the Nile, except at the time of its greatest increase. It is passed on horseback when the overflowing of the river, or a tempestuous sea, has not augmented the depth of the water. In those cases it was passed in a boat, which was, perhaps, the least safe and the most incommodious of all ferries. The mouth of this ancient branch of the Nile is very narrow, and formed by a bank of sand. Gulls* are constantly skimming over the surface

* *Mouette cendrée*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois.—*Larus canus*, L.

of the water, in order to catch the small fry that enter it from the sea. I also perceived some coots * and pelicans †. Upon the eastern bank stands a vast square building, the construction of which is the same as that of the French factory at Alexandria, and of all the caravanfaries in Egypt (*bockals*); but in giving it the name of an inn ‡, it must be confessed that some travellers have done too much honour to a place which absolutely contains nothing but a well of detestable water.

This place is called *Maadié*, which signifies *passage*. With the intention of discovering the remains of the ancient Heracleum, of which Dr. Shaw determines the position by that of *Maadié*, I minutely examined that building as well as its environs; but whether the site of Heracleum be elsewhere, or whether its ruins be hid by the sand, I could perceive nothing that indicated buildings of a remote time; the house, which is built of white stone of no great degree of hardness, is entirely modern. Except the door, in the construction of which a piece of granite and a fragment covered with sculpture have been employed, nothing is to be seen that has the least appearance of antiquity. But at half a league further, I remarked upon the coast old walls and ruins, which, in calm weather, the eye can trace a long way out in the sea. These are probably the remains of Heracleum.

After having rested a few hours in the shade of the walls of the building of *Maadié*, we proceeded to the sea-shore. It is so low in this gulf (for from *Aboukir* the sea forms an immense bight), that but for dykes of solid construction, the water would cover a great extent of land. In bad weather it overflows the dykes, extends itself beyond the high coast of the promontory of *Aboukir*, and

* *Foulque*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 197.—*Fulica atra*, L.

† *Pélican*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 87.—*Pelicanus onocrotalus*, L.

‡ *Corneille le Bruyn*.

inundates a great space of ground. We then followed the sea for nearly four leagues over the sand washed by the waves; that which is dry not affording a footing sufficiently firm. We trod under foot shells of every kind; among which I recognised muscles, *pholades*, limpets, and whelks. Sea-larks *, variegated horsemen †, and dusky sand-pipers ‡ hopped and fluttered about the beach; some curlews § also came in search of their prey; a number of gulls, of the great and small species, crossed each other in their incessant flight over the water; numerous shoals of porpoises exhibited the lively colours of the rainbow upon their arched and humid backs; while the waves, which came rolling successively upon the beach, seemed to play between the legs of the mules. All these objects formed a spectacle highly agreeable to persons who had been long in the midst of barren uniformity. They attracted our eyes, and prevented us from turning them to the south, where nothing was visible but a sandy waste, bounded by hills of a similar nature, and dismally broken by a few scattered and solitary palm-trees.

Travellers willingly stop a few moments at the tomb of the Mahometan saint, erected near the sea. An Arab, who lives there, furnishes them with coffee, and with brackish warm water, which the thirst, caused by the heat of the sun and the dust, makes them swallow with satisfaction. A small brick tower warns them to quit the beach ||; while others, which stand in the same direction, that is, east-south-east, serve to guide them over a moving plain, in

* *Alouette de mer*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 851.—*Tringa cinclus*, L.

† *Chevalier commun*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 844.—*Tringa littorea*, L.

‡ *Maubéche commune*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois.—*Tringa calidris*, L.

§ *Courlis, première espèce*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. et Pl. enlum. No. 818.—*Scolopax arquata*, L.

|| This small brick tower is, probably, that which Danville calls *Casa Rossa* upon his map of Egypt.

which

which they might lose their way, so much the more easily, as the city of Rossetta, surrounded on the western side by accumulated heaps of sand, does not present itself to their view till just as they are entering the first street. Eleven of these small towers occur on the way thither; some of them, which are of greater circumference than the rest, are not solid, and afford, in their interior, a shelter to the traveller, and to the Mahometans a house of prayer*.

Here the scene changes as if by enchantment; the transition cannot be more sudden, nor the contrast more striking; it is no longer those dismal ruins, those plains rendered hideous by their sterility; it is nature dressed out in all her ornaments, and bestowing her gifts with unexampled magnificence, and a profusion equally diversified and constant. The eye, inflamed by the scorching rays of the sun, and wounded by the particles of sand floating in a fiery atmosphere, dwells with pleasure upon an horizon which affords it the most refreshing and lively objects.

Rossetta is a handsome and populous town, built in a simple, but agreeable manner: it is modern, and if it does not contain any striking edifices; there is nothing at least in it to excite regret. The Nile washes its walls on the eastern side; weakened by the water with which it supplies the canals and meadows in its course, and restrained by the bar, which separates it from the sea at its mouth, it

* Dr. Shaw, in his Travels, says, that the caravans are guided from the *Medea* to Rossetta, a space of four leagues, by posts similar to those of *Schibkah el low-dea*, or lake of the marks in Barbary. But without speaking of the length of the road, in which there is a small error, these marks of *Schibkah el low-dea* are, according to the same author, nothing but trunks of palm-trees; whereas those which indicate the road to Rossetta are towers built of brick. I should not have noticed this trifling mistake in the work of a traveller less estimable than Dr. Shaw, whom I consider as one of the most learned and most correct of those who have travelled over this part of Africa. The most rational conjecture that can be formed upon this subject is, that Shaw, as well as almost every body else, performed the journey from Alexandria to Rossetta during the night.

has not the dangerous impetuosity of great rivers: it bears tranquilly upon its bosom the riches of three quarters of the world, and dispenses fertility to its banks. Its neighbourhood is not to be feared; and its very overflowings are a benefit to the circumjacent country.

An immense space of cultivated land extends north of the city; it is laid out in gardens, which are not divided in a dry and disagreeable manner by dismal walls; odoriferous hedges encircle bowers still more fragrant. Nor must we there seek those regular walks, nor those beds, nor compartments methodically arranged; monuments which art erects in our monotonous enclosures. Every thing seems to grow by chance; the orange and the lemon tree intertwine their boughs; and the pomegranate hangs by the side of the *anona* *. In a climate where winter is unknown, their blossoms exhale at all times a perfume which the sweet smell of the clusters of the *benné* † renders still more delightful. Esculent vegetables grow beneath this balmy shade. The lofty palm, rearing its head above all the other trees, takes away the smallest appearance of uniformity. No tree, no plant has its particular place; every thing is varied; every thing is scattered about with a kind of disorder which has no other rule but abundance, and which is seen every day with new pleasure. Is not this confusion, indeed, the symmetry of nature? Scarcely can the rays of the sun penetrate these tufted groves, which are intersected by winding paths; while meandering streamlets convey thither coolness and the aliment of vegetation. It is there that the slothful Turk, sitting all day long with his pipe and his coffee, seems to meditate deeply, and thinks of nothing. He would be far more worthy to enjoy these charming retreats, if he had the heart to share them with a beloved female; but neither the example of the birds, nor the amorous cooing of the turtle-doves which animate these natural

* The sweet-fop, a species of the custard-apple.

† A large shrub, of which I shall soon have occasion to speak.

bowers, is able to tune his soul to love, nor to awaken him from his cold apathy and gloomy insensibility. He flies, he despises a sex whose presence would give new charms to the most enchanting spot; and, guided by proud indifference, he would reject the hand of the Graces, should they attempt to erect there an altar to happiness. The ferocious Muffulman at least respects what he disdains to imitate; these turtle-doves, the emblem of fidelity and love, live near him in perfect security; he never disturbs them; he is pleased to see them associate with him, and considers them as sacred birds. The European alone dares to violate this asylum. I have sometimes seen him, regardless of the murmurs of the inhabitants, take a pleasure in carrying dismay and death into the midst of a winged race of lovers; a barbarous amusement, which the pretence of exercising his skill, or a slight motive of utility, cannot excuse; as these birds, being accustomed to man, do not avoid a stranger; and as their flesh, at the same time, is very indifferent eating.

If we cast our eyes on the other side of the river, we discover a plain which has no other boundary but the horizon; it is the Delta*, a delightful country sprung from the bosom of the water. The yellow harvest is succeeded in the same year by green fields. Groves similar to those in the vicinity of Rosetta; clumps of trees always green; others scattered about; and flocks of every kind vary the view, and animate this rich and verdant part of Egypt. Towns and numerous villages add to the beauty of the landscape. Here, through charming vistas, we behold the high and slender turrets of cities; there, we discover lakes and canals, a source of inexhaustible fecun-

* I am well aware, that the ancients carried the base of the Delta as far as the Canopic branch of the Nile (Strabo, lib. xvii.); but that branch being lost, and the space included between it and Rosetta being sandy, barren, and desolate, the Delta, which gives the idea of fertility, should be taken at present only from the Bolbitic branch, or that of Rosetta.

dity ; and every where we perceive the signs of easy culture, perpetual spring, and a fertility incessantly renewed and constantly diversified*.

There is no town in Egypt where public tranquillity was so little disturbed as at Rossetta. Those insurrections, disorders, and that restless agitation so usual in the other towns, were there unknown. A foreigner was in safety, and might walk about freely without being obliged to change his dress, a thing impossible in any other part of Egypt. He made excursions through the country ; penetrated into the enclosures ; crossed them in all directions ; and trod under foot the growing plants, without any one being offended. In the course of these charming walks, which I took a pleasure in repeating, the husbandman or the gardener used to invite me to come into his hut and take coffee. With the same manners, the same customs, the same ignorance, and the same fanaticism, the inhabitants of Rossetta would have remained like those who dwell among the ruins of Alexandria, or like those who reside at the foot of the barren rocks of Upper Egypt, the most barbarous people in the world ; but placed in a fertile and delightful country, the verdure and productions of which temper the heat of the climate and the dryness of the atmosphere, they have assumed greater mildness of manners, and laid aside the ferocity of their character ; a change due to the happy disposition of nature and the influence of agriculture, which, still more than commerce, is the first institution of nations, and the most direct means of raising them from a state of barbarism, and of conducting them to civilization with a rapid and steady pace.

* An idea may be formed of this part of Egypt by the inspection of Plate VI.

CHAPTER XIV.

DISTURBANCES AT CAIRO.—ORIENTAL DRESS.—BOATS OF THE NILE.—WINTER.—ROSFETTA.—COMMERCE.—RICE, ITS MODE OF CULTIVATION, AND ANTIQUITY IN EGYPT.—TREFOIL —OXEN AND COWS.

WHETHER the traveller, after having resided some time among the dust and ruins of Alexandria; after having traversed the twelve leagues of barren plains, which separate that city from the banks of the Nile; lastly, after having passed over the sand hills which adjoin Rossetta on the western side; whether the traveller arrive there, I say, or rather seems to fall at once into the midst of it, or whether he quit the dangerous and disagreeable abode of Cairo, that of Rossetta proves to him a desirable retreat which comparison renders delightful. Destined to penetrate into Upper Egypt, and afterwards into Abyssinia, I at first, as I have already said, made a rapid journey to Cairo with M. Tott, who there left me. Circumstances could not be more unfavourable. Very frequent dissensions between the rulers of Egypt were carried to the highest pitch of fury. The Said was filled with combatants, and infested with banditti; while at Cairo the European, confined to his house, or, at least, to a very narrow space, and always trembling, dared not shew himself in the midst of such confusion and disorder, of which no idea can be formed by any one who has not resided in that capital of Egypt. I was waiting till these troubles should be at an end, in order to proceed on my journey; but worn out by the uneasy state of inaction to which I was reduced, tired of living recluse, and not being able to foresee the period in which Egypt would resume a tranquillity that might permit me to travel without being exposed to so certain perils,

perils, I resolved to return to Rossetta, a privileged place, which the commotions of the rest of Egypt had not reached, and in which a foreigner had the advantage of walking about in perfect safety, especially when he was willing to conform himself to the customs of the country.

I had quitted at Cairo my European dress, in order to clothe myself after the manner of the Turks. My hair had been sacrificed: an enormous turban, of the kind worn by the Druses, enveloped with several turns my shorn head, and protected it from the burning heat of the sun; long and ample garments, which were partly kept together by a silk sash, covered my body, without compressing it, so that it was at perfect liberty. No part is bound up; no part is confined in the oriental habit; and after an European has worn it some time, he finds the inconvenience of our tight and scanty clothes, and has some difficulty in reconciling himself to them again. My draughtsman and my two Frenchmen had likewise changed their dresses; but they wore a lighter and less ample habit, that of the *ferrachs*, foot soldiers attached to the beys: our whiskers shaded our lips, and long scimitars trailed by our sides.

We joyfully quitted the city of Cairo on the 21st of October 1777, at one o'clock in the afternoon, and embarked on board a *kanja*, a sort of boat used upon the Nile. Their construction is elegant: they are of different sizes, and sail remarkably fast. At the same time that they serve for the conveyance of goods, they have abaft, for the accommodation of passengers, one or more airy cabins that would be very agreeable, were it not for the myriads of fleas, lice, and bugs, with which they are filled. In the two days and two nights that we employed in descending the Nile as far as Rossetta, it was impossible for me, or my companions, to shut our eyes for a moment. A prey to the bites of a prodigious quantity of these disgusting insects, we were tormented by them in an inconceivable manner, our bodies
I
being

being entirely covered with little wounds and painful lumps. I had been exposed, in South America, to the stings of innumerable swarms of musquitoes, but I do not recollect to have ever suffered so much as in this cursed *kanja*.

These boats, as well as the *germs* of Alexandria, have immense latine sails, attached to yards of an extraordinary length, which, like those of the *germs*, do not lower down (*see Plate VI.*); and when the boats are under sail, it is impossible to shift them over the mast-heads, in order to put about; so that in the tacks which the numerous sinuosities of the Nile force them to make, the sails lie, every now and then, flat aback against the masts and shrouds, without there being a possibility of brailing them up or lowering them down. The wind being unsteady, the squalls heavy and frequent, and the sailors very ignorant, it is not uncommon to see some of these boats overfet, when in that situation. That in which we were embarked was hired upon my sole account; it carried only us and our baggage. Having time to converse with the master, I endeavoured to make him comprehend, that, by means of some trifling alterations, it would be easy for him to avoid the too serious danger of overfetting in a squall. He admitted every thing I said; but constantly recurred to the common argument of plodding ignorance—*It is the custom.*

During our two days navigation upon the Nile, we met with a very thick fog, which did not disperse till ten o'clock in the morning, when it turned to drizzling rain. These fogs were the precursors of winter; but, by this word winter, I do not mean that sharp and cold temperature which, during several months in the year, stops vegetation, and is distressing to man, in the greater part of our Europe. No great degree of cold is known in the climate of Lower Egypt. Frost is never felt there; nor does Nature there ever clothe herself in that robe of old age, under which she would appear expiring, had

she not accustomed us to see her regularly resume her vernal dress. There, during the three winter months*, sea breezes and rains refresh the atmosphere without making it cold; there, the inhabitants need never have recourse to artificial heat; vegetation is never interrupted; nor does verdure ever cease to embellish the plains and delight the eye.

In this happy climate, and upon a vigorous and admirably verdant soil, is situated the city of Rossetta. We arrived there on the 22d, at four o'clock in the afternoon, not having stopped one moment in our route.

I landed at the vice-consul's of France, M. Troüi, who, by his taste for the *belles-lettres*, found means to enliven his solitude. I accepted the apartment which, in the handsomest manner, he offered me in his house; and I found in Fornéti, the interpreter, the same attention and the same complaisance to which Messrs. Adanson and Auguste had accustomed me at Alexandria. Some French merchants lived in the same building; it was a large *bockal*, of a similar form to the French factory at Alexandria, but exceeding it considerably in height. It is near the Nile, and, like all the houses of Rossetta, is built of brick.

This city is called in the country *Raschid*, an Arabic name which it bore as far back as the time of Edrissi the geographer, in 1153, and of which the Europeans have made Rossetta †. Some others have
thought

* November, December, and January.

† And not *Rosetta*, as it is at present commonly written. *Rosetta*, I allow, is more agreeable to pronounce. This word affords an idea more lively and more analogous to the delightful fertility of the gardens with which the town is surrounded; but in regard to proper names, it is custom that we must follow, and the custom is to pronounce it hard, *Rossette*, which is derived from the still harder Arabic name *Raschid*. This is certainly a frivolous observation, and for which I should not forgive myself, if, when I published in the *Journal de Physique*, observations upon the hippopotamus, a Traveller, in a note which he added, had not seriously reproached me with having written the
Arabic

thought that it was the spot where Canopus was situated; but this is a mistake. The Canopic branch is the lagoon of *Maadié*, and the ruins of Canopus are at *Aboukir*. Rossetta affords no trace of antiquity; it is nevertheless certain, that it cannot be far from the place where stood *Metelis* or *Metilis*, of which Strabo and Ptolemy make mention, and which was upon the western bank, and near the mouth of the Bolbitic branch of the Nile*.

It is certainly the most agreeable town in Egypt; and it would be so any where else. Its houses, much better built, in general, than those of Cairo; its situation upon the banks of the river; the view of the Delta, which presents the delightful prospect of the most beautiful culture; the perfumed groves in its neighbourhood; and its pure and wholesome air; have most deservedly procured it the name of the *garden of Egypt*. Every article of consumption is there to be had in abundance; there, are seen long streets formed by two rows of shops, in which are found all sorts of goods; the necessaries of life are very plenty, and at a low price. But Rossetta possessed sufficient charms without seeking to ascribe to it others which have no existence, and the supposition of which might possibly mislead travellers, and throw them into some embarrassment. Corneille le Bruyn, for instance, who saw inns every where †, or his translator, has said that *Rossetta is a most agreeable town on account of the number of its inns, where people are very conveniently lodged ‡*. Who would not have thought, after this, that no preparation was necessary to be made on going to Rossetta, and that the traveller had only to

Arabic word *baar* with a single *r*. Having been criticised for an *r* too little, I should be exposed to be so for an *s* too much. The pleafantest thing is, that the *Traveller*, instead of an *r* in his correction, substituted a *z*; so that he was obliged, the month following, to make a second *erratum*, in order to correct the first.

* The Romans named the mouth of this branch of the Nile, *Bolbitinum ostium*.

† Page 226.

‡ Travels of Corneille le Bruyn, tome ii. p. 110. note *a*.

alight there at the first inn; but he would have been strangely deceived, since there absolutely is not one in the place. The caravansaries, which cannot answer the same purpose, are generally, as in the other countries of Turkey, nothing more than places which afford no other accommodations but the four walls, where nothing but water is to be had, and where a stranger is obliged to provide himself with every thing. European travellers were usually received by the merchants of their nation, who were settled in houses which they rented.

Rosetta is the great emporium of the trade between Cairo and Alexandria; it diffuses thither life, motion, and comfort. It has also some branches of commerce which are peculiar to itself, such as spun cotton dyed red, which is drawn from the adjacent districts; dressed flax, linen-cloths, silk dyes for the eastern dresses, &c. Another article, though not so considerable as at Damietta, is not the less important, that is, the exportation of rice, in Arabic *roufs* *. When I arrived, at the end of October, the inhabitants were employed in drying this valuable grain, the pleasant and wholesome food of a great number of nations; they were spreading it upon the terraces of the houses, and in the public squares. They imagine that to this operation may be attributed the multitude of gnats † with which the town and the inside of the houses were then filled; in fact, there are fewer of them at other times. After the rice harvest they fly in swarms from the inundated fields in which the preceding generation had deposited their eggs. They come to torment mankind, to suck their blood, and to sting them in as sharp a manner as the well-known musquitoes of South America ‡.

Rice is sown, in Lower Egypt, from the month of March to

* *Oryza sativa*, L.

† *Culex antennis pilis verticillatis; rostro cinereo, apice nigro, crassiusculo; dorso fusco, fasciis sex pallidis.* Forkal, Descrip. Animalium Oriental.

‡ *Culex hæmorrhoidalis*, L.

that of May. During the inundation of the Nile, the fields are covered by its waters; and in order to retain them there as long as possible, small dikes, or a sort of raised embankments, are thrown up, round each field, to prevent them from running off. Trenches serve to convey thither a fresh supply; for, in order to make the plant thrive, its root must be constantly watered. The ground is so moistened, that in some places a person sinks in half-way up to his chin. Rice is nearly six months before it comes to maturity; and it is generally cut down by the middle of November. In Egypt the use of the flail is unknown. To separate the grain from the straw, the inhabitants prepare, with a mixture of earth and pigeon's dung, spacious floors, well beat and very clean. The rice is spread thereon in thick layers. They then have a sort of cart, formed of two pieces of wood joined together by two cross pieces; it is almost in the shape of the sledges which serve for the conveyance of burdens in the streets of our cities. Between the longer sides of this sledge are fixed transversely three rows of small wheels, made of solid iron, and narrowed off towards their circumference. On the fore part, a very high and very wide seat is clumsily constructed. A man sitting there drives two oxen which are harnessed to the machine, and the whole moves on slowly, and always in a circular direction, over every part of the heap of rice, till there remains no more grain in the straw. When it is thus beat, it is spread in the air to be dried. The manner of turning it over is altogether whimsical. Several men walk abreast, and each of them, with his foot, makes a furrow in the layer of grains, so that in a few moments the whole mass is moved, and that part which was underneath is again exposed to the air.

The dried rice is carried to the mill, where it is stripped of its chaff or husk. This mill consists of a wheel turned by oxen, and which sets several levers in motion: at their extremity is an iron cylinder near a foot long, and hollowed out underneath. They beat in troughs which contain the grain. At the side of each trough there constantly stands

stands a man whose business is to place the rice under the cylinders. He must not suffer his attention to be diverted; for he would run a risk of having his hand crushed, if he did not take care to withdraw it in time. After this operation, the rice is taken out of the mill, and sifted in the open air; which is done in a very simple manner, by filling a small sieve with as much grain as a man can lift; he raises this sieve thus loaded, above his head, and gently spills the rice, turning his face to the wind, which blows away the small chaff and dust. This cleaned rice is put a second time into the mill, in order to bleach it. It is afterwards mixed up in troughs with some salt, which contributes very much to its whiteness, and principally to its preservation; it has then undergone its whole preparatory process, and in this state it is sold.

It is only on the low lands of Lower Egypt that rice is cultivated. More to the south, the too elevated ground could not be moistened by the sheet of water, which, for the success of this culture, should be spread over its whole surface. The Delta, that inexhaustible source of the riches of nature, furnishes a great quantity. That which is grown in the environs of Rosetta is more esteemed than that of the plains in the neighbourhood of Damietta. This superior quality probably depends only on the preparation, which is better attended to in the former of these towns; for the nature of the climate and soil is the same. Near both, the culture of rice alike succeeds, and its produce in both is equally wonderful. The profit of the proprietors of rice-fields, in good years, that is to say, in those in which the rise of the Nile allows of a great expansion of its waters, is estimated at fifty per cent. after deducting all expenses.

It has often been proposed, in France, to adopt the culture of rice: it would certainly be a valuable acquisition to our agriculture. But if it be considered, that in Egypt it requires six months to ripen, and that, during those six months, it wants constant heat and humidity,

dity, very few parts of the republic will be found, that afford, in this kind of culture, the hope of certain and abundant crops.

It has been made a question whether the ancient Egyptians cultivated rice, and, as it almost always happens in similar cases, the discussion still leaves some doubt upon the mind. According to Messrs. Shaw * and Goguet †, the Egyptian people formerly lived upon rice. But M. Pauw affirms that this plant was as little known to these same Egyptians, as the cassavi of Brazil is, in our days, to the inhabitants of Germany. He adds, that it was only under the caliphs that rice-feed was originally brought from India into Lower Egypt, where they first began to cultivate it in the environs of Damietta; and he quotes for his author Frederic Hasselquitz ‡. In fact, the Swedish traveller has asserted, that, according to all appearance, the Egyptians learned the manner of cultivating rice in the time of the caliphs; for, says he, it was under their reign that several useful plants were brought thither by the way of the Red Sea §. This is a mere conjecture of Hasselquitz, and he does not support it by any authority.

On the other hand, the contrary opinion, that which reckons the cultivation of rice among the number of those that composed the agriculture of the ancient Egyptians, is founded upon a fact difficult to disprove. M. de Caylus, the celebrated antiquary, has described a bronze idol of Osiris which had been covered over with a coat of plaster. To make the adhesion of this plaster more firm and more solid, upon a substance smooth like bronze, and affording no hold in several places, they made use of rice-straw, which is *very easy to be distinguished* ||. It is true that M. Pauw calls in question

* Shaw's Travels, p. 391.

† Origine des Loix, tome ii. p. 344.

‡ Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. p. 138.

§ Voyage au Levant, par Fréd. Hasselquitz, traduit de l'Allemand, partie i. p. 163.

|| Recueil d'Antiquités, tome i. pages 13 et 14. See also the Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres de Paris, tome xiv. p. 13.

the botanical knowledge of M. de Caylus*, as if it were necessary to be very much versed in the science of plants, to distinguish the straw of rice from that of other grain. Besides, this idol was not examined by M. de Caylus alone. M. de Bose, in December 1739, gave the Academy of Inscriptions and *Belles-Lettres* an account of the same figure of Osiris, which was gilt in a singular manner, and which he had seen some time before in the possession of the Count de Caylus. Both of them had carefully examined the gilding that covered it, and they had observed that in order to make the white plaster upon which the gold was laid, adhere to the bronze, the workman had first laid upon the figure a good coat of size, entirely interspersed with chopped rice-straw †.

By the account of Herodotus, one of the esculent plants of the ancient Egyptians was the *olyra* ‡. There cannot be more resemblance, unless in being absolutely the same, between this name and that of *ozyra*, which the Greeks gave to rice; and this resemblance, so striking, would be an incontestable proof of the antiquity of the culture of rice in Egypt, if Citizen Larcher, whose opinion carries great weight in such matters, did not assert, that after a deliberate examination of a great number of passages of the ancients, *olyra* is not rice, but spelt §. M. Pauw had said that it was rye ||, the very name of which is not at present known in Egypt, and which, probably, never was a part of the ancient agriculture of that country. But these are nothing more than very luminous conjectures of

* Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. This supposed rice-straw could not, according to this author, be any thing more than chopped millet-straw. Note to page 138.

† Mém. de l'Académie des Belles-Lettres, at the place quoted.

‡ Book ii. § 77.

§ *Triticum spelta*, L. See Larcher's translation of Herodotus, book ii. § 77. Note 258.

|| Recherches Philosophiques, p. 138.

science ; a contrary fact still subsists, that of the straw which covered the antique statue of Osiris, so *carefully* observed by Messrs. de Caylus and de Bosc.

M. Pauw, in whose work paradoxes are not at all uncommon, goes still farther : he maintains, that should rice not have been unknown to the ancient Egyptians, they would have taken care not to cultivate it ; because, by his account, this sort of culture is sufficient to engender disorders in a country where it seldom or never thunders, and where the atmosphere, impregnated with saline particles which lightning does not consume, is very subject to promote corruption* : he even insinuates, that this is one of the causes of the plague, which he improperly supposes to be endemical in Egypt. What has led M. Pauw into this error, who has seen the rice-fields of Egypt only in his study, is, that he has considered them as marshes, the idea of rice-fields generally implying that of morasses, dangerous to cultivate, on account of the exhalations which they produce. But in the vast plains of Lower Egypt, besides that the strong and regular winds would purge the atmosphere of the noxious vapours with which it might be loaded, it is not on marshy grounds that rice is cultivated ; no stagnant and infectious water lodges on the fields where it is raised ; they are moistened and overflowed with the water of the river, in the conveyance of which all the resources of the art of watering are employed. This water runs off, and it ceases to be conveyed to them, as soon as the plants no longer require this state of slight inundation. Another kind of culture which does not need the same moisture, and which absorbs the remains of the too great humidity, succeeds to that of rice, and a beautiful verdant carpet takes the place of the yellow robe with which the same plains were recently clothed.

As soon as the rice is got in, the Egyptians sow a fine variety of

* Recherches Philosophiques, p. 89 et 90.

trefoil, which they call *barsim* *. Its seed is scattered without ploughing or even turning up the ground, and it sinks to a sufficient depth in a soil which, at that period, is still very moist. Happy country! where the land does not require to be painfully torn, to open its bosom to fecundity; where the cultivator, in a manner, has only to indicate the kind of riches that he desires, and they are lavished upon him; where Nature, in short, seems to exempt men, who are incessantly outraging her, from all labour, and even from all gratitude! This trefoil produces three crops before it again yields its place to rice: the second of these three crops is always better than the two others, because the plant has then spread its roots, and its stalks are no longer confined by the broken stubble. The beauties of such a succession of culture, which no other country is capable of affording, may be easily conceived. The *barsim*, green or dry, is the most common and the most succulent food for cattle, whether at pasture or in stalls. An essential quality of this excellent fodder, and which it is more natural to ascribe to the climate than to the difference of the species, is, that I never saw it occasion in cattle that sudden and often fatal swelling which our trefoil scarcely ever fails to produce when animals feed upon it, or eat it, when recently cut, unmixed, and in too great quantity.

In speaking of the best kind of fodder, I will take the opportunity of saying a word of the principal animals employed in agriculture. Of all domestic animals, the ox is, indeed, that which renders the most important services to man. Among a warlike and conquering people, the horse would be placed in the first rank; but such a people would neither be rich nor happy. In a wise nation, that would consider agriculture as the true source of public prosperity,

* *Trifolium alexandrinum*. Forskal, Flora Egyptiaco-arabica, p. 139.—N. B. Travellers have confounded *barsim* with sainfoin; it is a species, or rather a variety, of our trefoil.

the ox would have the preference. Behold that noble horse ; with what swiftness he scours over the plain ! What flexibility, what pride in his motions ! His eyes sparkle, his mouth is white with foam ; his large nostrils scarcely leave a free passage to his checked and burning breath ; he seems to participate in the ardour of the warrior who has broke him. Both afford, no doubt, an imposing spectacle ; but neither one nor the other can draw their subsistence from the bosom of the earth : it is the fruit of the efforts of that unfortunate being seen in the back-ground of the picture, painfully hanging over a ploughshare drawn by oxen that are humbly impelled by the courage and the constancy of labour ; it is he who, in tearing up the earth, forces it to new productions ; he alone knows how to employ iron in the only conquest that nature avows.

It is well known in what high esteem oxen were held in ancient Egypt ; they were, by that superstitious people, considered as gods ; the worship of them was universal ; and in several cities sacred oxen were kept. The celebrity of the ox *Apis*, which became the first of this drove of divinities, is also known : he had altars ; supported priests, and delivered oracles. Heifers were never killed ; and the law declared it sacrilege to eat their flesh *. Common oxen, when they chanced to die, were interred with funeral rites ; for, excepting those which were sacrificed to the gods, scarcely any were killed : it was also forbidden to put to death those which had already worked ; this was the reward of their services, a sort of gratitude very different from the brutality and the ferocious unthankfulness of most of our husbandmen, towards animals to whose labour they are indebted for their means of subsistence ; and this bluntness of insensibility has a greater influence than is imagined upon public morals. The Egyptian government, in concert with the priests, kept up this religious

* Even to this day, the murder of a man, or of a calf, are the only crimes that the Hindoos punish with death. *Mackintosh's Travels.*

enthusiasm for animals the most useful to a nation, in which almost all the laws had a reference to agriculture. What care, what regard was there not bestowed upon the improvement of a species, each individual of which might possibly aspire to deification? For if we pay attention to what we love, superstition lavishes it on what she adores.

In the inconsiderable number of oxen at this day existing in Egypt, it would be in vain to look for the vestiges of that perfection of beauty which they must have possessed there in former times. Although the race is still tolerably handsome, it may be conceived, that, being long neglected, it is very much degenerated. They have, in general, small horns, and are of a fawn colour, more or less deep, a colour which, in my opinion, does not require a great effort of the painter; though Maillet says, *these animals are so exquisitely beautiful, that they cannot be represented by the pencil**. I can affirm, that in travelling all over Egypt, I never met with any ox that struck me either by its shape or its colour. The same author, while describing the oxen of Egypt as the handsomest in the world, maintains that they are also the best. "Their flesh," says he, "is admirable; it is not inferior in goodness to that of the oxen of Hungary, nor to any other; it even possesses this superior excellence, it is extremely nutritious †." Nevertheless, in point of flavour, this meat falls far short of that which is eaten in France. The assertion of Maillet, false in fact, is still more so in principle. Indeed, it contradicts a general observation that all travellers may verify; which is, that the flesh of animals in very warm regions has neither the juice nor the relish of that of animals of the same species, fed in cold or temperate countries. The flesh of the calf, which, in our climates, affords a delicate and nourishing food,

* Description de l'Egypte, par M. Maillet, in quarto, partie ii. p. 27.

† Ibidem.

is, in Egypt, flabby, insipid, and consequently not very wholesome. I have made the same remark in some parts of South America, near the line, where calves killed at the age in which ours are delivered to the butcher, would not be eatable, on account of the insipidity and softness of their flesh; so that, in order to give it time to acquire a sufficient degree of firmness, they are obliged to let these young animals grow, till, ceasing to be calves, they would pass for oxen every where else. No veal is eaten in Egypt: this meat is forbidden by the law of the Mahometans; and the Copts, who have adopted almost all the customs of their rulers, alike abstain from its use.

It has also been said, that the cows of Egypt brought forth two calves at a time*. That, indeed, sometimes happens; but although less frequently, perhaps, than in Europe, this fecundity is there not reckoned very common. After having endeavoured to establish the superiority of the ox, it was natural that Maillet should speak of the cow in the same tone; he does not therefore content himself with two calves at a time, but he asserts that the cows even produce four†. Such traits, which disgrace a narrative, would, doubtless, not occur in that of Maillet, had death allowed him time to digest the memoirs which he had collected, and to the greater part of which he had no other claim than that of possession. I have seen a very long one deposited in the chancery of France at Rossetta, *composed for M. Maillet*, by a French merchant of that place, and I have again met with it printed at full length, in the work of the consul. In not making his own observations, but collecting materials from all quarters, and relying too inconsiderately upon the accounts of the people of the country, which are almost always imperfect, it is difficult for a traveller to avoid falling into a labyrinth of errors.

* Voyage de Corn. le Bruyn, tome ii. p. 101, note n.—Voyage de Paul Lucas, &c.

† Description de l'Égypte, partie ii. p. 5.

The oxen, in Egypt, are employed in tillage, which there requires little exertion. The industry of the inhabitants not having attained the art of using water or wind, to set their mills and their numerous hydraulic machines in motion, they likewise apply to them the strength of the ox. Each of the rice-mills, of which I have just now spoken, requires forty or fifty of these animals, and there being a great number of mills of this kind at Rossetta and Damietta, cattle could not fail to be at a high price: they commonly sold for two hundred and fifty livres a head, which is an exorbitant sum in a country where pasture is so plentiful. Sad effect of a horrid despotism: few calves are reared; the morrow is never thought of in a country where it is uncertain if a man's fortune, or even his existence, will endure till the morrow.

The oxen, when harnessed, have their head at liberty; the yoke or the lever being confined by a strap, rests upon the last *vertebræ* of the neck, so that they pull from the pitch of the shoulders. This method is generally in use in Turkey, and it appeared to me the most advantageous. The animal is more at ease, and has more speed and strength, than when he is in the fatiguing and extremely inconvenient attitude of drawing by the head. It is to this method that must be attributed the size of their withers, which in the oxen of Egypt are higher than those of our countries. It is not improbable that this swelling is natural, and that, in this respect, they have some resemblance to the species of bison or bunched ox*.

* *Bos ferus*, C. L.

CHAPTER XV.

INHABITANTS OF ROSSETTA. — PIPES. — COFFEE-HOUSES. — ARABIAN TALES.—MANNER OF MAKING COFFEE. — SHAMEFUL VICES OF THE EGYPTIANS. — WOMEN BELONGING TO THE RICH. — A CONVERSATION BY SIGNS WITH ONE OF THEM. — PARTICULARS CONCERNING THESE WOMEN.—JEALOUSY OF THE MEN.—HOMAGE PAID TO THE WOMEN.

AFTER having cast our eyes upon the brilliant agriculture of Egypt, it is difficult to bring them back into the interior of the towns. There, is the picture of fruitful and generous nature; here, are sacrilegious efforts to counteract and outrage her, made by men incapable of enjoying or relishing her beauties. There, the sweetest and purest sensations rapidly succeed each other, and deliciously occupy the feeling mind; here, it is shocked at the hideous aspect of vices which reign in a society alike degenerated and corrupt. But I have engaged to present, at once, all sorts of observations; and those which relate to the manners of the present Egyptians ought to find a place in a general description.

Rossetta not having, like Alexandria, an immediate communication with the sea, I did not see arriving there, that crowd of foreigners, adventurers, and dangerous men, whose element is bustle, tumult, and mobs, and who rendered my stay in that town so very disagreeable. Remote from the noise of sea-ports, and from the frequent political revolutions of Cairo, its inhabitants were tolerably peaceable. Not that an European was entirely secure from all unpleasant occurrences: he had now and then a few to encounter; but they were very trifling when compared to those which attached to him at Alexandria, and which more particularly overwhelmed him at Cairo. The foolish and ridiculous pride which persuaded the

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the Mahometans that they are the only men whom God has adopted, the only men to whom he is to open his bosom, a pride which the lawyers or the priests, the most vain and the most intolerant of all, took great care to foment, was the principal cause of these unpleasant occurrences. A Turk never designates an European but by the name of *Infidel*: an Egyptian Mussulman, still more brutal, never calls him any thing but *Dog*. With him, *Christian* and *Dog* were two synonymous terms so much in use, that they were no longer noticed; and we were often saluted with them by people who had no intention to offer an insult. Europeans, in their usual dress, were also exposed, at Rosetta, to be hooted, in the populous quarters, and to be pursued by the redoubled cries of *Nouzrani*, *Nazarean*. The Jews also experienced these little insults, and, though inhabitants of the country, they were much worse treated than the Christians of Europe. But this nation is composed of debased individuals, and who deserve that degradation, since, being insensible to the contempt and opprobrium that was so copiously lavished upon them, they suffered themselves to be in a manner overwhelmed with it; provided they were not deprived of the means of gratifying their sordid and insatiable covetousness. Clad in the oriental style, they were obliged, in Egypt, to dress their head and feet in a manner that was particularly assigned to them; but what principally distinguished them, was the tufts of hair or of beard which they were forced to leave growing and to preserve near the ear, on each side of the face. Most of the merchants were Turks or Syrians; there were also some from Barbary. The Copts, those degenerate descendants of the ancient Egyptians, were also pretty numerous. Some Arabs had likewise settled there, and the plains in the environs were inhabited and cultivated by *fellahs*; a word which, in Egypt, is a sort of term of contempt, as formerly that of *payfan*, to which it corresponds, was among us, when we wished to describe coarseness of manners and

clownish ignorance. The command of the town was in the hands of an officer of the Mamalûks, who bore the title of *Aga*.

The most ordinary pastime here, as in all the other countries of Turkey, is smoking and drinking coffee. From morning to night, the inhabitants have their pipe in their mouth; at home, in each other's houses, in the streets, on horseback, they keep their pipe lighted, and the tobacco-bag is hung at their waist. These are two articles of luxury; the bags, which serve to contain the stock, are of silken stuffs richly embroidered, and the shank of the pipes, which are excessively long, are of the most rare and odoriferous wood. I brought home one of jasmine that was upwards of six feet: an idea may be formed of the beauty of the jasmines of those countries, from their producing branches of such a size, straight and thick enough to be bored. The pipes of commoner wood are wrapped round with silk fastened with gold wire. The poor, to whom the smoking of tobacco is a call of the first necessity, make use of common shanks of reed. The top of the pipe is covered with a kind of factitious alabaster, as white as milk, and enriched with precious stones. Among persons less opulent, they are adorned with false ones. What is put in the mouth is a bit of *succinum*, or yellow amber, the sweet and agreeable odour of which, when it is heated or slightly pressed, contributes to correct the pungent taste of the tobacco. To the extremity of these shanks are fitted very pretty cups of baked clay, commonly called *noix de pipes* (pipe-bowls). Some are marbled with various colours, and inlaid with *or moulu*. They are to be had of different sizes; those which are most generally made use of in Egypt are large, and shaped like a vase. They almost all come from Turkey, and the reddish clay of which they are formed is procured from the environs of Constantinople. There was, at Rossetta, a Turk who excelled in works of this sort. I used to take a pleasure in seeing him work; a heap of small punches served him to engrave, in a very delicate manner, different drawings

upon the clay while yet soft ; but he was a long time employed on them ; and indeed his pipe-bowls were very dear. I bought a few of him that cost me as much as six livres apiece ; some of them were covered with a capital pierced with holes, in the shape of a perfuming-pan. This Turk, who had lived a great deal at Constantinople, did not want for sense ; his shop was the rendezvous of persons of the first consequence in Rossetta ; he was the friend of the French, and exerted the interest that he possessed, in order to procure me the means of travelling in Lower Egypt.

It is difficult for Frenchmen, especially for those who are not in the habits of burning their mouths with our short pipes and our strong tobacco, to conceive how it is possible to be incessantly smoking. In the first place, the tobacco of Turkey is the best and the mildest in the world ; it has not that acrid taste which in our countries provokes a continual spitting ; then the length of the shanks, in which the smoke rises, the odoriferous nature of the wood of which they are made, the amber tube that is held in the mouth, the aloes wood with which the tobacco is scented, contribute to make it still milder, and to render the smoke of it not unpleasant in a room. Even the beautiful women are fond of passing their time in pressing the yellow amber with their rosy lips, and gently inhaling the smoke of Syrian tobacco, perfumed with that of aloes. Neither is it necessary to draw up the smoke strongly : it almost rises of itself. People turn aside their pipe, chat, look, now and then rest it in the middle of the lips, and gently inhale the smoke, which immediately escapes from the half-open mouth. Sometimes they amuse themselves with making it pass through the nose ; at others they fill their mouth with it, and blow it with art upon the extended hand, where it forms a spiral column, which remains there some moments. The glands are not pricked, nor are the lungs dried up by a *saliva*, with which the floors of our smokers are covered. They do not experience the want of spitting ; and this action, so frequent among us, is considered

considered as an indecency in the East, before persons to whom any respect is due; it is also the height of ill manners for a man to blow his nose in their presence.

The Orientals who are not obliged to work, remain almost always seated, with their legs crossed under them; they never walk without occasion, but only to go from one place to another, when any thing calls them. If they have a mind to enjoy the coolness of an orchard, or of the vicinity of the water, as soon as they get there they sit down. They know not what exercise is, except on horseback, for they are very fond of riding. It is a curious thing to see them survey an European that is walking in a room, or in the open air, and continually turning about. They cannot comprehend the motive of this going and coming, without any apparent object, and which they consider as an act of madness. The most rational among them think it is by the advice of our physicians that we walk about in this manner, as an exercise necessary for the cure of some disease. The negroes in Africa have no better idea of this custom; and I have seen the savages of South America laugh at it most heartily among themselves. It is peculiar to thinking men; and this agitation of the body participates in that of the mind, as a relief to its too intense application. Thence it is that all those people, whose head is empty, whose ideas are confined, whose minds are neither occupied nor susceptible of meditation, have no need of such a resource, or of such an alleviation; and, with them, the immobility of the body is a symptom of the inaction of the brain.

Those who are overwhelmed with want of occupation, and this is the lot of the rich, repair to the gardens of which I have drawn the picture; and, always seated, they delight in breathing a fresh and balsamic air, or in hearing bad music. If they do not leave the town, they go to the coffee-houses, of which an erroneous idea would be formed by judging of them by ours. Theirs are places filled with smoke, without any decoration, and in which nothing is to be had

had but coffee, and burning charcoal for lighting pipes. Mats are the only seats; and these smoking-rooms are frequented by men of all the nations that inhabit Egypt. Little conversation is carried on; a few words only are heard from time to time. The Turk is cold and reserved; he regards other people with disdain. The African is more loquacious; but he wishes to follow the example of the Turk: and those who are not Mussulmans take good care to submit servilely to the inclination of their tyrants. With a pipe in one hand, and a dish of coffee in the other, they slowly swallow a mouthful of coffee, which is succeeded by a few whiffs of tobacco. Female dancers, merry-andrews, and *improvvisatori*, flock thither to captivate attention, and collect a few pieces of money. There is scarcely any of these places of resort that has not a regular story-teller, who is never tired of talking, and whom the company is never tired of hearing. The stories of these indefatigable narrators are, in general, very tedious. The Arabian writers, however, from whom they are taken, sometimes furnish them with very pleasant tales. Such is the following, which I have remembered, because it is short, and has some point.

A Turk had given his wife an account of a sermon preached by the Iman of his mosque. The priest had descanted upon the sacred obligations of wedlock. "All those," said he, "who acquit themselves of conjugal duty at the beginning of the night, do as meritorious an act as if they sacrificed a sheep. Those who, in the middle of the night, pay a second tribute, do as much, in the eyes of God, as if they sacrificed a camel: lastly, those who at sun-rise pay a third homage to the sanctity of their union, deserve as much as if they released a slave." The wife, very anxious for her husband's salvation, said to him at the beginning of the night, "My dear, let us sacrifice a sheep:" the sheep was sacrificed. At midnight the Turk was awakened, by her saying to him: "Come, my dear, let us sacrifice a camel:" that sacrifice was

also made. The day began to dawn; when the Muffulman's fervent wife apprised her husband that it was time to release a slave. When turning towards her, and stretching out his arms, " Ah! my dear " soul," said he, " I conjure you, release *me*; it is I that am the " slave."

If a person is at all known, he can hardly go along a street without being invited to come in and take coffee. This politeness is so habitual, that even those who have not a grain of coffee in the house, such as the cultivators of the gardens of Rossetta, never fail to make the offer, though they would be greatly embarrassed were it accepted. Iron utensils are not used in roasting the coffee-berries; it is in an earthen pan that they undergo this preparation. They are afterwards pounded in a wooden or earthen mortar, which preserves their flavour much better than by reducing them to powder in a mill. The vicinity of Arabia affords the facility of procuring from thence the excellent coffee which it produces. According to the *connoisseurs*, it required forty berries to make a cup; no where is any to be drunk of a finer flavour. It is not allowed to settle; but when it has boiled three times, being still held over the fire, and a long-handled coffee-pot being successively and at each time filled, it is poured out into cups, and though it be not clear, there is no reason to regret the want of sugar, which it is not here the custom to use.

I shall not undertake to describe all the other customs which the Egyptians have in common with the rest of the Mahometans. These details rather belong to the history of Turkey, and would carry me too far; I shall therefore content myself with speaking of those which I have more particularly observed.

If the inhabitants of Rossetta be less barbarous than those of the other parts of Egypt, they are not less ignorant, less superstitious, nor less intolerant. We find among them, although with shades more softened down, the same roughness of character, the same implacable aversion towards the nations of Europe, the same revengeful disposition,

disposition, in a word, the same treachery; and they are addicted to the same shameful vices. The unnatural passion which some Thracian women punished by slaying Orpheus, who had entertained it*, the inconceivable inclination which has dishonoured the Greeks and the Persians of antiquity, constitute the delight, or, more properly speaking, the infamy of the Egyptians. It is not for women that their amorous sonnets are composed; it is not to them that they lavish tender careffes: no; other objects inflame their desires. Enjoyment, with them, has nothing in it of love; their transports are nothing more than the convulsions of brutality. Such depravation, which, to the shame of polished nations, is not unknown to them, is universally spread in Egypt. The contagion has seized the poor as well as the rich; contrary to the effect which it produces in colder climates, that of being exclusive, it is here blended with an inclination for women. After having satisfied his favourite and criminal passion, the man of these countries ascends to his *barem*, and there burns a few grains of incense in honour of Nature which he has just outraged; and with what sort of worship, great God of love! does he honour her? Gross sacrificer! he knows not that delicious intercourse, those soft effusions, those burning raptures of two souls animated by the same desire, the same passion: no delicacy in the preludes; no unison in the thing itself, no true gratification in the enjoyment: all is brutish; all seems inanimate; all is confined to the most disgusting sensuality.

The outrages which the Egyptians commit against nature do not stop here: other beings have also a share in their horrible favours; and their women are often the rivals of animals which are preferred to them. The crime of bestiality is familiar to these wicked men; it is there committed with the most glaring effrontery. Wretches

* *Ille etiam Thracum populis fuit auctor, amorem
In teneras transferre mares.* OVID.

have been seen at Rossetta abandoning themselves to it, in by-streets, in the open day.

But let us drop a thick curtain upon these disgusting scenes, and pénétrate into places where beauty languishes ; where, like the flower forsaken by the careffes of zephyr, to become a prey to the withering breath of the impetuous southern blasts, deprived of the homages of sensibility, she fades and decays under the yoke of a barbarous and jealous tyrant, who torments her with his suspicions, and sullies her with his profanations.

The women of the masters of Egypt, of the other Mamalûks, of the Turks that are settled there, and of the rich inhabitants of towns, were not Egyptians : they originally came from the other countries of the East, and particularly from those parts of Greece in which beauty is a valuable and regular article of traffic.

Perpetually recluse, or going out but seldom, and always with a veil, or, to speak more correctly, with a mask which entirely covers their face, the sun cannot possibly affect the bloom or the colour of their complexion ; nor can a sharp and saline air impair the whiteness and the delicacy of their skin. And for whom are so many charms thus carefully preserved ? For one man alone ; for a tyrant who holds them in captivity. An insurmountable line of separation is drawn, in these countries, between the two halves of mankind : the one, whose graces form so agreeable a contrast with the strength and manly beauties of the other, captive of the latter, becomes here the exclusive possession of a few individuals. No man can enter the spot where the women are kept ; no man can even look at them, if they do not belong to himself. No where is jealousy carried to a greater excess ; no where is it more intractable. A certain death awaits the stranger that attempts to introduce himself into the places reserved for the women, or dares to address them on meeting them out of their houses. Not but that these beautiful captives are disposed to break some links of their chain ; and adventures have been related to me in which they had

had openly made the first advances. But such intrigues are very hazardous, and it was only with fear and trembling that assignations of this nature were kept.

During my first stay at Cairo, I one day came, by chance, upon a young Frenchman, who was making a great many signs behind the half-drawn curtains of a window of the consul's house. I drew near, and asked him if there would be no impropriety in being witness to a conversation that appeared to me very animated, although not a word was spoken. He readily consented. He was on the point of quitting Cairo, and besides, he could have no other motive than that of singularity, in an acquaintance with a female of whom he had just got a glimpse, and with whom he could not keep up a correspondence, but at the distance of upwards of sixty feet. I distinguished, through a wooden lattice, the figure of a woman that lived opposite, on the other side of the *kalisch*, or canal of Cairo. She answered the Frenchman's signs, and these silent conferences were repeated several times a day, at appointed hours. I did not fail to be present, without being seen by the lady: I thus learnt the art of signals, which, in a country where it is impossible to speak to the women, is a very expressive language; and I was soon able myself to become a pretty good telegraph. The young man, being obliged to quit Cairo with the consul, had taken his leave. Having remained alone in the house, I presented myself to replace him: I gave the lady to understand, that, being like him a Frenchman, I came to express the same sentiments, and to offer her the same homage. Soon tired of perceiving nothing but the narrow openings of a thick grate, and of extending my wishes to a beauty, perhaps imaginary, I requested her to exhibit herself to full view. She made some difficulties; I insisted, and she promised me that towards the evening she would ascend upon the terrace of the house. I went upon mine, and I saw, still at the distance of sixty feet, a woman elegantly dressed; but she wore her veil. This was worse than the lattice of
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her window, through which I at least could discover part of a face. I begged, in the most urgent manner, that this intrusive veil might be removed. A black female slave, who accompanied her mistress, joined her exhortations to my prayers: all was in vain. To unveil is, among these women, the greatest of favours; and, by a strange sort of modesty, they would rather suffer their whole body to be seen, than shew their face. The next day I renewed the same solicitations, and they were attended with success. After a great many difficulties, the officious negro girl, who was in her mistress's secret, snatched away the veil, and I beheld a young and pretty woman. The carnation blush of bashfulness spread over her face a very lively bloom; it softened by degrees, and left behind it only the roses of beauty. From that moment the greatest freedom reigned in our interviews. I had received the highest mark of good-will. My neighbour informed me, that her husband, who was an old Turkish merchant, was going to be absent for some time, and she invited me to have some closer conversation with her, by coming to her house. She pointed out to me a little door facing the canal; and which was opened only for the purpose of drawing water. The black slave was to wait for me there at night-fall, and to introduce me in safety. She gave me to understand that, to reach this door, I had only to cross the canal, which was then dry; and she swore by her head (a Frenchwoman would have said by her heart), that I ran no sort of danger. I made difficulties in my turn. The dreadful consequences that might attend such a step, were in my eyes a barrier, which the most loving and ingenuous entreaties, and the most affectionate promises, could not determine me to surmount. Several evenings passed away in this contest, between the eloquent, though silent, invitations of a tender passion, and the often feeble resistance of prudence. But we had been discovered: our silent communications had excited the fury of some Mahometans; and a musket, fired from one of the neighbouring terraces, the ball

ball of which whizzed close to my ears, warned me that it was high time to put an end to fruitless interviews, and made me feel how wisely I had acted in not crossing the canal.

These women frequently visit each other. Decorum and modesty do not always preside at their conversations. The total want of education and of principle; the idleness and plenty in which they effeminately pass their days; the restraint under which they were continually kept by men extremely remote from delicacy, both in their sentiments and actions; the convincing proofs they have, that the desires of these men are directed towards other objects; the ardour of their affections; the climate, which communicates its warmth to hearts so uselessly disposed to love; Nature, whose powerful voice, which is too often unheeded by those whom she calls to submit to her laws, as well as to enjoy her pleasures, stirs up their passions: every thing, in short, contributes to direct their burning imagination, their desires, their discourse, towards an end which they are not at liberty to attain. They amuse themselves in their parties by completely changing their dresses, and putting on each other's clothes. This sort of disguise is only the prelude and the pretext of less innocent diversions; the particulars of which Sappho is thought to have both practised and taught. Skilled in the art of eluding and not of quenching the ardour that consumes them, the same ungovernable desire still follows them into their retirement; sad resources, feeble solace for a privation, which, under an atmosphere equally hot and dry, seems very difficult, and especially for ardent minds, to support.

The men are well acquainted with these dispositions, and their jealousy takes the alarm. They not only forbid all other men to approach the apartments of their women (for the name of men must not be given to those mutilated beings who have only the form), but they do not suffer even the introduction of inanimate objects, which might foster the illusion. They cannot conceive how it is possible to

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rely upon the virtue of a woman ; and they do not hesitate to assert that those who, among them, pass for the most modest, suffer no opportunity to escape of being unfaithful, nor omit no means of gratifying their desires. Monsters ! dare they talk of fidelity ? does their polluted mouth dare to utter the word chastity ? Unfaithful to Nature, whom they serve only by outrages, they carry their impudence so far as to aspire to the most desirable favours of her most beautiful work ! Wretches ! are they not sensible that these infidelities of which they complain, are the just reward of their disdain, of their severities, and of their criminal and disgusting caprices ? Let them, if they can, open their heart to a delicate passion, their soul to sacred friendship, to the confidence that it commands, to the esteem that it inspires, and they will see if the sex that they calumniate, because they are acquainted with it only by the frightful and heavy irons with which they fetter it, know how to make a suitable return to generous sentiments, and if it be itself the precious sanctuary of the most tender affections, and of the constancy that renders them perpetual *.

* I shall be asked, perhaps, how I could possibly be informed of what passes in the interior of the *harems*, since all approach to them is so strictly forbidden. The means that I employed are very simple ; but I must be permitted to pass them over in silence. It is enough to assure the reader that he may rely on the truth and accuracy of the particulars I have stated.

CHAPTER XVI.

WOMEN OF THE LOWER CLASS.—BLACK DYE FOR THE EYES.—ALQUIFOUX, OR TESSELLATED ORE OF LEAD.—RED DYE FOR THE HANDS AND FEET.—HENNE', OR EGYPTIAN PRIVET.—DEPILATORIES.—EMBOINPOINT OF THE WOMEN, THEIR CLEANLINESS, THEIR COSMETICS.

WHEREVER an excess of luxury is concentrated in a privileged rank of the inhabitants of cities, misery and its attendant horrors are the portion of the most numerous class, and the défoliation of the plains. It would shew little acquaintance with the women of Egypt, to imagine that they are all endowed with the same charms, and that they have the same effeminacy in their habits as the beautiful foreigners of whom I have just been speaking; and who, like exotic plants, the brilliancy of which is preserved only by care and management, make it the sole employment of their life to prolong the duration of the gifts they have received from nature, and to improve them with all the riches of art. The women of the lower class, instead of that whiteness, of that delicate bloom with which the complexion of the former is animated, have, like the men, a swarthy skin; and, like those of the same class, they wear the appearance and the rags of frightful poverty. Almost all, especially in the country places, have no other garment than a sort of ample tunic with sleeves, of an extraordinary width, and which serves them both for shift and gown; it is open on each side from the arm-pits to the knees, so that the motions of the body easily admit of its being partially seen; but the women are not at all concerned on that account, provided their face be never uncovered.

It is not enough for the rich and idle women to be adorned with so many charms; they must likewise endeavour to augment their splendour

dour by the art of the toilet, which is also with them in high estimation. But this art consists only of old and constant practices; fashion never deranges and perplexes them by its numerous caprices; and if ancient and invariable customs be a proof of little progress towards perfection, may it not also be said, that a restless versatility in habits is a symptom of the degeneracy of those whom it torments?

In the East, the most remarkable trait of beauty is to have large black eyes; and it is well known that Nature has made this a characteristic of the women of those countries. But, not content with these gifts, those of Egypt are also desirous that their eyes should appear still more large and black. To effect this, all females, whether of the Mahometan, Jewish, or Christian faith, rich or poor, dye their eyebrows with tessellated ore of lead*, which is called, in the Levant trade, *alquifoux* or *arquifoux*. They reduce it to very fine powder, to which they give a consistency by mixing it with the fuliginous vapour of a lamp. The more opulent employ the fumes of amber, or of some other oily and odoriferous substance; and they keep the drug all ready prepared in small vials. With this composition they paint their eyebrows and eyelids; and with a small piece of wood, reed, or quill, they also blacken the lashes, by passing it, with a light hand, between the two eyelids; an operation which the Roman ladies practised, and which Juvenal has described with so much truth †. They also tinge with it the angles of the eye, which makes it appear considerably larger and more oblong.

The ebony of these very black eyes is agreeably set off by the dazzling whiteness of the skin of the beautiful Circassians, and gives additional liveliness to their complexion; but it is at a little distance

* *Galena tessellata.*

† *Illa supercilium, modicâ fuligine tactum
Obliquâ producit acû, pingitque, trementes.
Attollens oculos.*

that this contrast has the most pleasing effect ; quite close, the paint is too apparent, and it even impresses on the physiognomy a gloomy and rather a hard shade.

The French merchants of Cairo received a great deal of alquifoux. A part was consumed in the country for the fine eyes of the women ; but the greater quantity was sent into Arabia and into Yemen, where it is used in varnishing earthen-ware. They considered that which they procured from England to be of a better quality than any other ; but this branch of trade yielded them only a trifling profit.

If large black eyes, which are rendered still blacker, are essential to Egyptian beauty, as an important addition it also requires that the hands and nails should be dyed red. This latter fashion is as general as the former, and not to conform to it would be a piece of indecorum. The women can no more dispense with this daubing than with their clothes. Whatever may be their situation in life, whatever their religion, all employ the same means to acquire that sort of ornament, which the empire of fashion can alone perpetuate ; for it certainly spoils fine hands much more than it improves them. The animated whiteness of the palm of the hands, the pale rose colour of the nails, are effaced by an unpolished coat of reddish or orange-coloured dye. The soles of the feet, the epidermis of which is not hardened by long or frequent walks, and which daily frictions render thinner still, are likewise loaded with the same colour.

The women have recourse to the greenish powder of dried leaves of the *benné*, to procure themselves such whimsical allurements. This powder is principally prepared in the Said, whence it is sent into all the cities of Egypt. The markets are constantly supplied with it, as an article of habitual and indispensable use. It is diluted with water, and the parts required to be dyed are rubbed with this soft paste : they are then wrapped up in linen, and in the course of two or three hours a strongly adherent orange colour is produced. Although the women wash their hands and feet several times a day

with warm water and soap, this colour stands a long time, and it is sufficient to renew it about once a fortnight. The dye lasts much longer on the nails, and indeed can hardly ever be effaced. In Turkey also, the women make use of the *benné*; but they content themselves with colouring their nails with it, and leave their hands and feet the tints of nature. It appears that the custom of painting the nails was known to the ancient Egyptians; for those of the mummies are, most frequently, dyed red*. But the Egyptian women even refine upon the general custom; they also paint their fingers, partially only; and in order that the colour should not take every where, they wrap them round with thread, leaving intermediate spaces, before they apply the colouring paste; so that, when the operation is finished, their fingers are marked in a spiral direction with little orange-coloured stripes. Others, and this fashion is more peculiar to some of the Syrian women, wish that their hands should exhibit the rather disagreeable mixture of black and white: the stripes which the *benné* has at first reddened, become of a shining black, by rubbing them with a composition of sal ammoniac, lime and honey.

Some of the men also cover their beard and anoint their head with the dye of *benné*. They imagine that it strengthens the organs, prevents the beard and hair from falling off†, and keeps away vermin.

The *benné*, or Egyptian privet, is a large shrub very much propagated in Egypt. It is adorned with smallish oval-oblong pointed leaves, opposite, and of a pale green, and with loose bunches of small quadripetalous flowers. The slender branches which support them are red, and opposite: from their axilla grows a small leaf nearly round, yet terminating in a point. The corolla is formed

* See Mém. sur les Embaumemens, par M. de Caylus, dans les Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, tome xxiii. p. 133.

† It is well known that the followers of Mahomet preserve, upon the crown of the head, a long tuft of hair.

of four oval spear-shaped petals of a pale yellow. Between each petal are two stamens, filaments white, and the anther yellow: it has only one white pistil. The pedicle, at first of a reddish colour, afterwards turns to a pale green. The calyx is quadrifid, or cloven into four divisions, of a pale green as far as their extremity, which is reddish. The fruit, or berry, is a green capsule before its maturity; as it ripens, it assumes a red tint, and becomes brown when it is dried: it is quadrilocular, and contains many triangular brown seeds. The bark of the stem and branches is of a deep gray, and the wood itself of a pale yellow.

This shrub had at first been considered as a species of the common privet*, to which it has, in fact, much resemblance; but some differences in the parts of fructification determined botanists to make it a distinct genus, to which Linnæus has given the name of *lawsonia*; and to the species in question that of *lawsonia inermis* †. Its Arabian name is *benné* or *hanna*; and with the article, *elhenna* or *elhanna*; in Turkey it is called *kanna* or *alkanna*. Although its form has been already given in several works of natural history ‡, in none has it been represented with so much accuracy and minuteness, as in the drawing that I had made of it at Rossetta. See Plate III. in which the different parts of the shrub are faithfully delineated.

Miller has cultivated the *benné* in England, where it is obliged to be kept constantly in the hot-house. It does not yet make part of the rich and magnificent collection of plants in the national garden of France. But by the care of the men of science who share in the

* *Ligustrum vulgare*, L.

† *Lawsonia inermis*, *foliis subsessilibus oratis, utrinque acutis*, Lin. Octandr. monogyn.—*Lawsonia spinosa, albenna*, Hasselq. Voy. au Levant. N.B. The epithet of *spinosa* is not at all applicable to the *benné*, because it is thornless.—*Lawsonia inermis*, Forsk. Flora Egyptiaco-arabica.

‡ Walt. Hort. iii. t. 4.—Rhead. Malab. iv. t. 57.—Rauwolf. Itin. t. 60.—Belon. édit. Clas. p. 135, &c. &c.

glory of the astonishing expedition to Egypt, this charming and useful shrub will, no doubt, be speedily ranked in the number of the conquests which they will obtain for their grateful country. More happily situated than England, the French republic will some day, perhaps, be able to embellish with the *benné* its southern departments, and add this branch of commerce to all those with which they are already enriched.

In fact, it is one of those plants which are most pleasing to the eye, and grateful to the smell. The light colour of its bark, the green of its leaves, the softened mixture of white and yellow with which its flowers, hanging in long bunches like those of the lilac, are coloured, and the red tint of the branches which support them, produce all together the most agreeable effect. These flowers, the shades of which are so delicate, diffuse to a great distance the sweetest fragrance, and perfume the gardens and apartments they embellish. They are also the most usual nosegay of the fair. The women, the ornament of the prisons of jealousy, while they might be that of a whole country, take a pleasure in adorning themselves, and in setting off their habitations, with it; in carrying it to the baths; in holding it in their hand, and in making it a perfume for their bosom. They attach to the possession of this flower, which the mildness of the climate and the facility of culture seldom deny them, so high a value, that they would reserve it to themselves exclusively; and they cannot, with any degree of patience, bear that it should be worn by the Jewish and Christian women. Beauty then, although in these countries the victim of tyranny, has also its despotism! But in this despotism there is nothing harsh nor vexatious; even its caprices are amiable, since flowers are its only object.

A remarkable singularity is, that the perfume which the flowers of the *benné* exhale, ceases to be agreeable when smelt too closely; it is then almost entirely absorbed by a very powerful spermatic odour. If these flowers be pressed between the fingers, this latter odour prevails;

vails; indeed it is the only one that is then smelt. This peculiarity is a source of dull jokes among the *wits* of the country; and the property that is ascribed to the *benné* of causing abortion, renders them inexhaustible. A scented water is extracted from these flowers, which supplies their place during the short time that they are out of season. As to the numerous medicinal virtues which the different parts of the plant are said to possess, they are not as yet sufficiently ascertained. Several authors have enumerated them, to whom I shall content myself with referring my readers*.

But the useful and admitted properties of the *benné* are not confined to objects of mere pleasure or fashion: the arts also derive great advantage from the powder of its leaves. It may easily be conceived that a substance which furnishes, with so much facility, an adherent and durable colour, and which, according to the mixture, may be varied from yellow to the brightest red, cannot fail to be extremely useful in dying. It will probably soon be added to the dyes of France, where its use is not known, and where the skill of our artists will extract from it all its beneficial qualities. In Egypt it made a pretty considerable branch of trade. Fourteen or fifteen ships were annually loaded, at Alexandria, with these leaves reduced to powder, and dispatched to Smyrna, to Constantinople, and to Salonica, from whence their cargoes passed into several countries of the North, and, as I have been informed, even into Germany: they are there used in dying furs, and in the preparation of leather.

The *benné* grows in abundance in the environs of Rossetta, and constitutes one of the principal ornaments of the gardens adjoining that town. Its roots, which strike very deep, find no difficulty in penetrating and growing in a soft, loamy soil, mixed with sand, and of such a nature as every cultivator would wish to possess: indeed, the shrub attains a greater growth, and is also more propagated

* Vide Prosp. Alpin. de Plantis Egypt. cap. xiii.—Ejusdem, de Medici. Egypt. lib. iv. cap. ii.—Boutii Notas in Garciam ab horto, in cap. iii. lib. ii. &c. &c.

there than elsewhere, though it is to be met with in all the cultivated places, and principally in the upper part, of Egypt.

There is every reason to presume that the *benné* of Egypt is the *kupros* of the ancient Greeks. The descriptions, certainly incomplete, given of it by authors, and particularly the shape and sweet smell of its flowers which they have extolled, scarcely leave a doubt as to the identity of these two shrubs*. Hence the bunches of *cyprus*, *botrus cypri*, of Solomon's Song †, can be no other than the bunches of the flowers of the *benné*; at least such is the opinion of the best commentators. See Scheuchzer, *Physique Sacrée*, tome i. p. 189; Junius, and a long list of interpreters.

It is by no means astonishing that so charming a flower should have furnished Oriental poetry with agreeable traits and amorous comparisons. This answers part of the forty-fifth question of Michaëlis ‡; for the flower of the *benné* is disposed in bunches, and the Egyptian women, who are very fond of its smell, delight in wearing it, as I have already said, at the place indicated by *the text of the Canticle*, that is, at their bosom §. But it is not so easy to account for the difficulty that occurred to Michaëlis, when he asks afterwards what is the meaning of the following words: *In the vine-*

* The name of *kupros* is no longer in use among the modern Greeks: they give to the *benné* the corrupted denominations of *kené*, *kna*, &c. The sailors of Provence, whose vessels were employed in the conveyance of *benné* powder, called it *quéné*.

† Chap. i. ver. 14. *Botrus cypri dilectus meus mihi, in vineis Engaddi*.—N.B. The English translation of the Bible has it *camphire*—"My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the gardens of En-gedi."

‡ "Que peuvent signifier, dans le style amoureux, les grappes de eypre, Cant. i. 14.? Ce n'est point des feuilles dont la poussière sert de fard aux Orientaux, mais des grappes qu'il est question. Les femmes de ces contrées les portoient-elles on forme de bouquets là où le texte l'indique?" *Voyageurs savans et curieux*, &c. par M. Michaëlis, tome i. quest. 45, p. 172.

§ *Inter ubera*, &c. ver. 13. "A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts."

yards of Enge-di *; and what affinity is there between bunches of *cypress* and vines? For my part, I know of none, except that the flowers of the *cypress* have, in their characters, a resemblance to those of the vine.

A soft and smooth skin, all over the body, without the smallest appearance of roughness, is one of the things, which, through motives of self-love and the desire of pleasing, is most sought after by the women of Egypt. The parts veiled by nature, with them, lose their shade, and all is equally sleek and polished. It is well known that the followers of Mahomet are in the habit of plucking out their hair: they, who consider whiskers as an ornament, and a long beard a mark of distinction, will admit of no other hair upon their body; and the inhabitants of Egypt, whoever they may be, have the same taste. Formerly, the priests alone shaved their whole body every three days; in order, says Herodotus, that neither vermin nor any other filth might be engendered upon men who served the gods †. At the present day, all the Egyptians shave themselves in the same manner, and they are, in general, not the less devoured by vermin. Most of them use only a razor for this operation, which they frequently repeat. Others, as in Turkey, make use of a depilatory which the Turks call *rufma*, and the Arabians *nourct*, a very common drug, which is sold at a low price. This is not, as has been imagined, a mineral substance which is found ready for use, as a depilatory, in the bowels of the earth. It requires a preparation and an alloy, in order to give it that property. In fact, Bellon, the first who has described (at Cuta, in Galatia) *the source of a mineral which they call rufma* ‡, adds, that this mineral alone

* *In vineis Engaddi*, *ibid.* and Michaëlis at the place quoted.

† Herodotus, trad. de Larcher, liv. ii. § 37.

‡ *Observ.* liv. iii. chap. xxxiii.

cannot be used till it has been beaten into a very fine powder, putting half as much quick-lime as *rusma*, which is then diluted in a vessel with water*. Thus, the *rusma* of Bellon is not of itself a depilatory; but it contains some caustic matter, which, being mixed with lime, gives it that property. And this presumption is confirmed by the experience of Citizen Valmont de Bomare, who, having received from Constantinople some small pieces of mineral *rusma*, perceived that, on throwing it upon hot coals, there immediately exhaled from it a vapour which gives room to suspect that it is a *calchitis* mineralized by sulphur and arsenic†. The same naturalist farther says, that this depilatory is very scarce in France, and that it is there fold at its weight in gold. But how is this scarcity, and this high price, to be reconciled to the abundance of *rusma* in the provinces of Turkey? How can so common an article have remained till now unknown? It is offered to every body in all the baths; and it would have been easy for the French, who, in the great sea-port towns of the Levant, took a pleasure in frequenting them, to procure some and send it to France. But the fact is, that, in consequence of Bellon's observation being badly understood, and incorrectly given in several medical works, persons would not see the *rusma* in a preparation, and constantly looked for a mineral, *an ore extracted from earth and slightly burnt*, of which Bellon makes mention; without recollecting that, a few lines farther on, he adds, that it requires to be mixed with lime, in order to produce the desired effect.

This mixture is the true *rusma* of the Turks, and, as I have already said, the Arabs call it *nouret*, a word which, according to the Turkish dictionary, is Persian. It is certain that the *rusma* and the *nouret* are the same substance, or rather the same composition; and if the same Turkish dictionary be consulted for the words *nuré*

* Observ. liv. iii. chap. 33.

† Dict. d'Hist. Nat. art. *Rusma*.

and

and *nuret**, it will be seen that this is the name of a depilatory composed of lime and arsenic.

It is, in fact, with arsenic or orpiment †, mixed with quicklime ‡, that the drug for taking off the hair is prepared in the Egyptian baths. The proportion is seven parts of lime, to three of orpiment. It is necessary for the person desirous of using it, to keep in a very warm place, such as the hot baths of the East, in which a profuse sweat exudes from all parts of the body. The mixture is diluted with water, and lightly rubbed on the parts where the hair is meant to be taken off. After a few moments, it will be seen if the hair be loosened; it can then be plucked out without pain, and the skin is afterwards washed with hot water. Care must be taken, however, not to leave this liniment on too long, otherwise it would burn the skin. This does not prevent the hair from growing again, and, at the end of some time, the operation must be repeated.

The women (I here mean only those that are married, for the unmarried women retain their hair, and it is not till the day of marriage that they are unmercifully stripped of the veil of nature), anxious to preserve over their whole bodies an exact and uniform polish, employ neither the razor nor the *nouret*, thinking that they leave behind them an unpleasant sensation to the touch, which they are at great pains to avoid. Nothing can resist their anxiety to appear completely beautiful. They submit to a painful process, to a violent and total *eradication*. This effect is produced by the application of boiled honey and turpentine, or some particular gum; and when these substances become dry, they are removed with all that adheres to them. There is, fortunately, no occasion to recur often to this rather harsh remedy. If a new growth make its appearance, it is only a light down, soft as the finest wool, and easy to be eradi-

* *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium*, by Menenski, Vienna, 1680.

† In Arabic, *zernich*. ‡ In Arabic, *guir*.

cated; and after a few years, this sort of vegetation is absolutely stopped. If nature errs in furnishing the faces of any of the women with beards, they use the same receipt, in order to remove them effectually.

After the desire of having the skin soft, and of the finest polish, the next care of the women is to acquire a good deal of *embonpoint*. The taste of the men does not run upon long taper waists, easy and elegant shapes. They delight in extreme corpulence, which is, therefore, fought after by every woman. To attain a superiority in this perfection of beauty, they use different drugs, as cocoa-nuts, the bulbs of the *bermodactylus officinalis**, grated and mixed with sugar. They never fail, after lying in, to take a quantity of this latter kind of conserve, considering it as the best mean of regaining their strength and restoring their *embonpoint*.

The idea of a very fat woman is, in Europe, almost uniformly accompanied with that of flaccidity of the flesh, disproportion in the shape, and want of elasticity in the contours. This would be a mistaken notion of the Turkish women in general, though all of them endeavour to acquire plumpness. In the first place, it is certain, that the women of the East, more favoured by nature, preserve a firmness of flesh longer than any others; and this valuable property, joined to the softness and whiteness of their skin, and their florid complexion, renders them vastly agreeable, and makes them very desirable objects when their *embonpoint* is not carried to excess.

It is proper to add, that there is no part of the world where the women pay a more rigid attention to cleanliness, than in these Oriental countries. The frequent use of the bath, of perfumes, and of every thing tending to soften and beautify the skin, and to preserve all their charms, employs their constant attention; nothing, in short, is neg-

* In Arabic, *chamire*. The greatest quantity of what is consumed in Egypt is brought from Barbary. It grows also in abundance in the environs of Aboukir.

lected, and the most minute details succeed each other with scrupulous exactness. So much care is not thrown away. No where are the women more uniformly beautiful; no where do they possess more the talent of assisting nature; no where, in a word, are they better skilled or more practised in the art of arresting or repairing the ravages of time, an art which has its principles, and a great variety of practical receipts. I amused myself in procuring these recipes, not only in Egypt, but also in Greece, where I made a long residence, and had particular opportunities of completing my collection. I have indulged some European ladies with a sight of it; but here I must stop—This is not the place to speak of things of this nature: a book of travels should not be made a course of cosmetics.

CHAPTER XVII.

DOGS OF EGYPT.—CATS.—A BEAUTIFUL ANIMAL OF THAT KIND WHICH THE AUTHOR KEPT.—DOMESTIC ANIMALS.—ICHNEUMON.—CROCODILES.—A SPECIES OF TORTOISE OF THE NILE, AN ENEMY TO THE CROCODILE.

AMIDST the inhabitants of Rosetta exists a horde of animals which, repulsed by man, for whose use nature seems to have intended them, cannot, however, quit him; and, as if against his inclination, endeavour to render him service. In all times, and among all civilized nations, dogs have, in a manner, deserved to enter into society with men. The very savages, who hardly associate with each other, keep dogs, and partake with them the fatigues and the fruits of the chase. By a ridiculous prejudice, conceived by a religion still more ridiculous, the Mahometans alone abhor this race of animals. They are considered by them as unclean beasts which they do not suffer in their houses, which they carefully avoid, and dare not touch, under penalty of becoming themselves unclean. Hence an idea may be formed of the full signification of the epithet *dog*, with which they salute Europeans. Very different in this, as in every thing else, from the ancient Egyptians, who paid the dog particular worship and greater honours than to all other animals, as being the most intelligent, and whose excellent qualities rendered him the most worthy of associating with man*.

By one of those contradictions which would be inconceivable among any other people than Mussulmans, there are few towns in the world that contain so many dogs as those of Egypt; or, at least, there are none that appear to contain more, because they are there

* The worship of the dog was spread all over Egypt.

constantly

constantly assembled in the streets, their only habitation. They have no other food than that which they can pick up at the doors of the houses, or discover by raking up the filth and dirt. The females deposit their young in some corner of a by-street, or in one that is little inhabited; for a follower of Mahomet would not bear them near his dwelling. Continually liable to the blows of passengers; sometimes butchered without pity by an armed mob; exposed to the intemperature of the air; with difficulty finding enough to support a miserable existence; lean, lank, generally eaten up with a mange that sometimes degenerates into a sort of leprosy; and frightful even from their forlorn and battered state, these unfortunate animals inspire as much compassion as their appearance excites contempt and indignation against the barbarians in the midst of whom they live.

It is no doubt astonishing, that, leading a life of misery and pain, these dogs are not frequently attacked with the hydrophobia, which is uncommon in the north of Turkey, still more so in the southern parts of that empire, and under the burning sky of Egypt is altogether unknown. I have seen no instance of it; nor had the inhabitants whom I questioned the smallest idea of such a disorder. It should seem, however, that madness has not always been unknown in this country, since, according to the hieroglyphics of Orus Apollo, quoted by M. Pauw, those who were commissioned to embalm the sacred dogs, when these animals died of the hydrophobia, contracted a particular disorder*. The same author remarks, indeed, that these accidents were not very common. It might also be possible that the passage of Orus Apollo was susceptible of another interpretation: however this may be, it is very certain that at this day in Egypt †,

as

* Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome ii. p. 112.

† “ M. Lecoindre, who has resided in Egypt, asserts that in that country the hydrophobia is never met with; and that at Aleppo, where there is a prodigious multitude of dogs of different kinds, without masters, and left to provide for themselves;

as well as in other parts of Africa, and in the warm zone of America, dogs are never attacked by madness. So that the observation contradicts a plausible presumption, founded, apparently, upon natural principles; namely, that madness must be common by reason of the intensity of the heat; a proposition which is overturned by facts that will one day, perhaps, throw some light upon the nature of this cruel disease, as well as upon the method of its cure.

The dogs of Egypt are a race of large greyhounds, which would be very handsome if they were taken care of, or even if they were only less cruelly treated. In losing the elegance of their make, they should, methinks, no longer possess even the impression of those qualities which, every where else, render them so worthy of notice. Nevertheless their instinct, though perhaps decayed, is not destroyed. They are seen going and coming in the most frequented streets, and avoiding to touch the clothes of the passengers, with an attention truly curious, and far more interesting than that of the imbecile Mussulman, who, at their approach, turns aside his robe. They even watch over the safety of their executioners; during the night they are the terror of thieves; upon the wharfs, boats, and timber, and in the interior of the towns, goods are entrusted to their vigilance. An admirable instinct, a natural inclination to make themselves useful to man, induces them to assume a superintendance which nobody confides to them, nobody points out to them; and it would be impossible to approach the charge that is surrounded by these voluntary guardians. But what is no less singular is, that these dogs never quit the quarter in which they are born. They form distinct tribes, which have limits that they never exceed; should one dog go

“ selves; that there, where these animals perish in great numbers, for want of water
 “ and food, and through the heat of the climate, the hydrophobia has never been
 “ seen.” (Mém. sur un Moyen de guérir l’Hydrophobie, par M. de Mathéis, inséré dans la Biblioth. Physico-econom. Année 1784, p. 216.)

into another quarter, he would soon be attacked by the whole of the strange tribe, and would find it no easy matter to escape from their clutches.

The Bedouins, who, in all respects, are far less superstitious than the Turks, keep large greyhounds, which also watch round their tents; but they take the greatest care of them, and they love them to such a degree, that to kill a Bedouin's dog would be to expose one's own life.

With the most decided as well as the most unjust aversion for a species of animals, which, without hopes of imitating them, man has constituted the symbol of unalterable attachment and fidelity, the Turks have a great fancy for cats. Mahomet was very partial to them. It is related, that being called upon some important and urgent business, he preferred cutting off the sleeve of his robe, to waking his cat that lay upon it fast asleep. Nothing more was necessary to bring these animals into high request, if, in other respects, their extreme cleanliness, the lustre and polish of their skin, their mild and quiet disposition, their gentle and cautious caresses, did not render them amiable creatures in the eyes of the Mussulmans. A cat may even enter a mosque; it is caressed there as the favourite animal of the Prophet, and as the enemy of other troublesome animals; while a dog that should dare to appear in the temples, would pollute them with his presence, and would be punished with instant death. But compelled to avoid man, to whom he would wish to devote his domestic qualities, and the perfection of his instinct, no dog is tempted to go into places where the Mussulmans are gathered together; they would there find neither friend to accompany, nor master to follow.

In ancient Egypt, cats were held in great veneration, but dogs in still more. In any house where a cat died a natural death (for no person killing a cat, even involuntarily, could escape a capital punishment), the inhabitants shaved their eyelids only, but upon

the death of a dog they shaved their head and their whole body*. Cats that happened to die were carried to the sacred temples, and after having been embalmed, were buried at Bubastis†, a considerable city in Lower Egypt, now called *Basta*.

These honours and prerogatives were not merely a matter of fancy; they had a great political end, the interest and subsistence of a whole people. It was necessary to put under the immediate protection of the law a species of animals whose defence against the prodigious multitudes of rats and mice with which Egypt is infested, was absolutely indispensable. Deification appeared to the priests the most certain means to induce the people to respect those objects which it was their interest to preserve. What signifies it, in fact, to a religious idolater, whether he adores a man or a cat, a woman or an onion? Are not they all alike remote from Divinity? Superstition being then necessary to men, was it not better to turn it to a useful purpose? Happy the people whose superstition is directed to the advancement of agriculture and of the public good!

In a country where physical enjoyment is every thing, and moral sentiment almost nothing, the alluring figure of the cat appeared preferable to the docility, the exquisite instinct, and the discerning fidelity of the dog. A single trait of this kind often marks the character of a nation better than a thousand observations on their manners and customs, which soon become mere routine, are in time considered as indifferent, and at length are so habitual, that men persevere in them rather than take the trouble of making any change. From this, cannot an opinion be easily formed of a people that detests the dog and loves the cat, because the latter carefully hides her excrements, and does not devour filth, upon which the nature of the dog sometimes incites it to feed?

There are cats in all the houses in Egypt. In those of the rich they

* Hérodote, liv. ii. § 6. trad. de Larcher.

† Ibidem, § 67.

are indulged in the apartments, and partake of the effeminacy and indolence of their masters, who amuse themselves in stroking them, and lavishing upon them careffes which these cold and haughty men will not deign to bestow on beings endowed with superior sense. In a word, unless they were deified, as in the time of the ancients, it would be impossible for them to be better treated.

Here, it is true, the cats are very gentle and familiar: they have none of that suspicious and ferocious disposition which, in some parts of France, distinguishes a race of animals more wild than domestic. But these differences are as much the work of man as the effect of the influence of climate. In the department where I reside, as well as in the neighbouring ones, the cats, especially in the country, are, next to the farm-horses, the most unfortunate of all animals; masters and servants alike hunt, beat, and throw stones at them, set dogs at them, and keep them without food. If hunger, which their meagre appearance attests, induce one of them to watch and take the smallest morsel, the pretended robber, because nature would not suffer her to die for want, forfeits her life for the dexterity she employed in its support. How can cats, in the houses of such hosts, whose cruelty approaches to barbarity, fail to have a savage look, the mark of ferocity? And if we compare the miserable cats of my country to those kept at Paris, where, better treated, and free from perpetual fear, they shew an amiable familiarity, we shall find this an additional proof, how far the disposition of man can influence that of the animals about him.

I was for a long time the possessor of a very fine Angora* she-cat.

* The custom of speaking of *Angola* instead of *Angora* cats is not yet disused. This mistake is even to be found in modern works of science. In the *Encyclopédie méthodique* we find, under the article *Kakatöes*, that a yellow-crested cockatoo took a pleasure in playing with an *Angola* cat. *Angola* is on the west coast of Africa, and *Angora* in Asia Minor, not far from Smyrna. It is there that are found these animals with the long hair, of which the finest camlets are manufactured.

Her long and thick hair covered her entirely ; her bushy tail formed a brush, resembling a beautiful plume of feathers, which she could at pleasure turn upon her back. No spot, no shade tarnished the dazzling whiteness of her coat. Her nose and the turn of her lips were of a pale rose colour. In her round head sparkled two large eyes, the one of a light yellow and the other blue. The graceful motions and attitudes of this charming cat were even surpassed by her amiable disposition. Her aspect was mild, and her gentleness truly interesting. Though ever so much handled, she never exerted her claws from their sheath. Sensible of caresses, she licked the hand that stroked her, or even that by which she was teased. When travelling, she would lie quietly upon my knees, without the necessity of being held ; she made no noise, nor was she at all troublesome while near me, or any other person she was in the habit of seeing. When I was alone, she sat at my side ; would sometimes interrupt me with little affectionate caresses, in the midst of my labours or meditations ; and she would also follow me in my walks. In my absence, she would seek me, and at first cry after me with uneasiness, and if I did not soon make my appearance, she would leave my apartment and attach herself to the person in the house, whom, after me, she most loved. She knew my voice, and seemed to receive me every time with additional satisfaction. Her step was straight, her gait free, and her look as mild as her disposition ; in a word, under the brilliant and furry skin of a cat, she possessed the good temper of the most amiable dog.

This animal was for many years my delight. How expressively was her attachment painted in her face ! How often have her fond caresses diverted my mind from care, and consoled me in my misfortunes ! How often has an animal, of a species accused of treachery, formed, at my house, a striking contrast to a crowd of real traitors, who, under the mask of friendship, beset the door of an honest man, only the better to deceive him ; to those serpents that I have so many
times

times fostered in my bosom, only to feel as often their sting! Unfortunately for mankind, the life of the wicked is long. Those audacious, criminal, and execrable men, whose names my pen should trace, were it not reserved to Heaven to signalize against them its justice, are yet alive; while my beautiful and interesting companion is no more. After several days of suffering, during which I never left her, her eyes, constantly fixed on me, closed never again to open—my tears flowed—they now flow. Feeling minds will pardon this digression, the result of grief and gratitude. Those whose souls are rendered callous by egotism and insensibility, give me no disquiet; it is not for them I write.

In the hot climates of those ancient countries which, from periods enveloped in the darkness of ages far too remote to be ascertained with any precision, have been by man covered with colonies and flocks, are reared the most gentle and the most docile animals of their species; while in the depopulated parts of the same countries such animals continue wild and exceedingly ferocious. No where are domestic animals more familiarized, and, if I may use the expression, more completely domesticated, than in the hot countries of the East. The horse, ardent as the air he breathes, is, nevertheless, extremely gentle. The buffalo, scarcely taken from his state of savage liberty, and while he yet wears the aspect of ferocity, is as tractable as the ox is in Europe: he allows himself peaceably to be rode and driven; and a child is equal to the task of conducting numerous droves. It is not to the nature of the soil and food, nor even to the temperature of the climate, that we are to look for this characteristic gentleness, which is not to be found elsewhere. It is not here, in fact, a want of energy, nor natural indolence, such as is observable in the animals inhabiting the very hot, but, at the same time, very wet regions of South America. Every species is endowed with all the fire, strength, and vigour, of which it is susceptible.

But

But it is that the men of those countries, after having acquired the possession of useful animals, have found means to turn their conquest to the best account. This part of the East has ever been the residence of wandering nations, who possessing no other property than their flocks and herds, the preservation of these was their only care. They do not send them to feed in places distant from their habitations; but they are suffered to live with themselves: they neither despise nor forsake them; but conduct them wherever they are led by their erratic kind of life. Having no stables to confine them in, there is no occasion for their being tied with halters. The dromedary, after feeding at liberty during the day, comes of his own accord in the evening to lie down before his master's tent; and the same tent lodges the Bedouin and his family, as well as his mare, a ewe, and some goats. They are never parted off; and in this manner they pass the night together, without confusion, without accident, and in the most perfect tranquillity. It is not at all astonishing, that animals which have so familiar an intercourse with man are, of all others, the most tame; and, as it is the Bedouins, and people resembling the Bedouins, who have furnished, and daily furnish them to other nations settled in the same countries, it is still less astonishing, that all the domestic animals should here be remarkable for their quiet and gentle disposition.

An animal that might be added to those which the Egyptians have accustomed to domestic habits, is the ichneumon*. Much has been written, and many fabulous stories related of this quadruped. It was one of the sacred animals of ancient Egypt. Particular care was taken of it while alive, and honours were paid to it after its death: funds were set apart for the support of this animal, as well as for that of others: it was fed, like cats, with bread soaked in milk, or with the fish of the Nile cut in pieces †; and it was every

* *Mangouste*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Viverra ichneumon*, L.

† See Notes in Larcher's translation of Herodotus, § 65 and 67.

where forbidden to be killed. The object of worship of a celebrated people, the supposed protector of the most singular country in the world, against a scourge which, though unknown in our climates, is the most dreadful to an agricultural people; what accumulated motives for producing the marvellous! And it has indeed been employed with no sparing hand. Most travellers have merely seen, not examined, the ichneumon; and prejudiced by the tales which both ancients and moderns have written upon that subject, they have successively copied them in their different narratives. It was reserved for the torch of criticism, guided by the genius of Buffon, to dispel a crowd of errors which obscured natural history in general, and that of the ichneumon in particular*. I shall not here repeat what may be read with infinitely more interest in the work of that sublime painter of Nature. But as I have had an opportunity of observing the ichneumon in its native country, and in a state of liberty, I shall give the substance of my remarks upon this quadruped, and endeavour to ascertain the extent of its usefulness, in reducing to their just value its boasted and exaggerated services †.

With great dispositions to familiarity, the ichneumon is not domestic in Egypt. The inhabitants do not now rear them in their houses; nor do they even remember their having been so brought up by their progenitors. Is it not therefore probable, that those which Bellon ‡ and Prosper Alpinus § assert they saw in a domestic state, were some individuals kept rather as an object of curiosity than use? For if they hunt rats and mice, they also destroy poultry; and this appetite would fully counterbalance the service they might render in clearing houses of noxious animals, which cats would destroy with more certainty and less inconvenience.

* See l'Hist. Nat. des Animaux Quad. article *Mangouste*.

† These remarks upon the *ichneumon* or *mangouste* of Egypt have already been published in the *Journal de Physique* for May 1785.

‡ Observ. liv. ii. chap. 22. § *Descrip. Egypt. lib. iv.*

Very similar in its habits to weasels and polecats, the ichneumon feeds upon rats, birds, and reptiles. It prowls about the habitations, and even steals into them to catch the hens and eat their eggs. This natural fondness for eggs induces them often to rake up the sand for those deposited there by crocodiles; and thus they certainly prevent the too great propagation of those detestable animals. But it must now justly excite laughter to read, that, leaping into the gaping mouths of the crocodiles, they enter into their belly, and never quit it till they have devoured their entrails *. If some ichneumons have been seen flying with fury at the little crocodiles that have been offered them †, it must have been the effect of their appetite for all sorts of reptiles, and not, as many persons have imagined, that of a particular enmity, or of a law of nature, which specially directed them to stop the multiplication of this amphibious species ‡. It would at least have been as reasonable to suppose, that Nature created the ichneumon on purpose to prevent the too great propagation of poultry, which, in fact, they destroy in much greater proportion than they do crocodiles.

What proves still more that such intentions, with respect to the ichneumon, have been erroneously ascribed to Nature, is, that in more than half of the northern part of Egypt, that is to say, in that part comprehended between the Mediterranean sea and the town of *Siout*, they are very common, although there are here no crocodiles; while they are more scarce in Upper Egypt, where crocodiles are, in their turn, very numerous. The ichneumon is no where

* Almost all the ancient writers, and of the moderns, Maillet, Jauna, and others.

† Maillet, *Descript. de l'Egypte*, partie ii. p. 34.

‡ Maillet, at the place already quoted. See also *l'Histoire de Chypre, de Jérusalem, et d'Egypte*, par le Chevalier Dom. Jauna, tome ii. *Etat présent de l'Egypte*, p. 1230. The latter will be found almost an exact copy of the former, except that he has improved upon his model, by the addition of other fabulous details which Maillet disdained. Thus it is that immense quartos are often manufactured.

more multiplied than in Lower Egypt, which, being better cultivated, more inhabited, more moist, and more shady, affords also a more abundant supply of prey and food; and, I repeat it, crocodiles are there never seen.

I shall correct an error on this subject, which would be of no importance in the writings of a traveller of less reputation than Dr. Shaw: it will be a proof, in addition to so many others, of the distrust and discrimination necessary to be shewn and used, when a person who visits distant countries, not having the opportunity of seeing things himself, relies upon the reports of others, which too often prove erroneous. “The Egyptians,” says Dr. Shaw, “know so little of the real crocodile, that they call it *timsab*; and it is so rarely to be found below the cataracts of the Nile, that the Egyptians consider it as great a curiosity as the Europeans*.” Dr. Shaw, who went no farther than Cairo, has too lightly adopted an assertion contrary to truth, as well as to the testimony of those who preceded him. Had he been better informed, he would have learned that Upper Egypt, below the cataracts, is infested with crocodiles as real as they are numerous.

The antipathy to the crocodile, erroneously attributed to the ichneumon, is really an innate sentiment in an animal of a quite different kind. What has happened on this occasion has been seen in other instances. While the ichneumon receives the honour of carrying on a perpetual and desperate war against the crocodiles, a species of tortoise of the Nile, aiming at them more certain, but, at the same time, more silent blows, is successfully employed in their destruction. As soon as the young crocodiles are hatched, and reach the river, this tortoise attacks and devours them. Maillet was not ignorant of this fact, but he did not think proper to relate it on the testimony of the

* Dr. Shaw's Voyage, vol. ii.

natives, although that is the best kind of evidence for ascertaining facts so generally known. “ I know,” says the Consul, “ some persons suppose that this animal (the ichneumon) is no other than a species of turtle of a whitish colour, called by the Arabs *cerfê*, that is *thirfê*, the generic name of the turtle in the Arabic language. They say, that, by a natural instinct, it watches the crocodile when going to deposit its eggs in the sand; and, as soon as she retires, goes in search of them, in order to break and eat them. But without speaking of the drawing that Dapper has given of the ichneumon, which has no resemblance whatever to the tortoise, the numerous representations in stone still remaining of that animal, several of which are accompanied with hieroglyphics, leave no room to doubt that this is the animal called *Pharaoh's rat*.”—This only means, that there can be no doubt of the existence of the ichneumon, which nobody contests.—“ It is,” continues he, “ a species of small wild hog, very pretty, and easily tamed, with bristles like those of a porcupine*.” Here we find the rat transformed to a small pig, &c. Such authorities, it must be admitted, have very little weight in natural history.

This species of tortoise is only to be found in the upper part of the Nile, to which crocodiles are confined. To give an idea of the advantage with which this *thirfê* of the Egyptians and Nubians makes war upon the crocodiles, I shall relate a circumstance, which persons belonging to Thebais, whose veracity upon other occasions has been ascertained, assured me they had observed. This is, that they had an opportunity of remarking, that out of fifty young crocodiles, hatched at the same brood, seven only escaped the *thirfê*. It is therefore principally to this animal that Egypt is indebted for the most sensible diminution of a species of reptile, as hideous in form

* Descrip. de l'Égypte, partie ii. p. 33, 34.

as it is destructive from its ferocious disposition. In this point of view, the *thirfè* had a much better title than the ichneumon, to be the God of the ancient Egyptians, and the wonder of writers.

But this valuable race of testaceous animals must also have its enemies; for it is by no means so numerous as it should be from the fecundity of its nature. May we not then accuse the ichneumon itself, which, led by its avidity for eggs, will seek for those that the turtles, as well as the crocodiles, hide in the sand? Thus it becomes the favour of crocodiles instead of being their implacable enemy, as has been alleged.

The name of *ichneumon* is at this day unknown in Egypt; we do not even find the denomination of *Pbaraob's rat*, which Hasselquitz has falsely asserted was by the French supposed to be the same animal. With a little reflection, or rather with less partiality, he would have seen that *Pietro della Valle*, an Italian *, and *Corneille le Bruyn*, a Dutchman †, have both made use of that name; and that Klein, who was not a Frenchman, had applied it to the Guinea-pig ‡, &c. &c. If this traveller had formed his opinions with less precipitancy, he would have learned that a common denomination should not be rigorously examined, particularly where it is not unreasonable; and that of which he speaks is not so extravagant as a thousand phrases of nomenclature which he had got by heart. But he had the *mania* of criticising our nation, a *mania* for which Buffon has reproved him with sufficient severity to cure him, had he lived to see his work §.

When a person has once committed a fault, he is apt to be suspected at other times. Buffon did not choose to rely upon Hasselquitz, when he says that the Arabic name of the ichneumon in Egypt

* Voyages, Paris 1670, tome i. p. 239.

† Voyages au Levant, nouv. édit. 1725, tome ii. p. 72, note [a] de l'éditeur.

‡ Klein de Quadruped.

§ Hist. Nat. de la Mangouste, en note.

is *nems*, and has preferred the testimony of Shaw, who asserts, that in Barbary *nems* is the name of the weazel, and that of the ichneumon *tezer-dea* *. However, it is certain, that the present Egyptians, who, it may be observed by the way, have no greater regard for the ichneumon than we have for the martin or pole-cat, call the ichneumon *nems*, and give to the weazel the appellation of *berfê*. I have even had an opportunity of ascertaining that the two live animals which M. de Vergennes, the French ambassador at the Ottoman Porte, had ordered to be sent to him from Alexandria to Constantinople, in order to be forwarded to Buffon, and which he actually received, were *nems*, the ichneumons of Egypt. But this difference of names in different countries is by no means extraordinary. Although the Arabic language is spoken both in Egypt and Barbary, the two dialects are so dissimilar, that an Egyptian and a native of Barbary would be very much at a loss to understand each other.

* Shaw's Travels, vol. ii.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CASTLE OF ROSSETTA.—HOUHOU, OR EGYPTIAN CUCKOO.—HOOPOE, OR DUNG-BIRD.—TURTLE-DOVES.—LITTLE OWL.—LOTUS, OR WATER-LILY.—INDIAN FIG, OR PRICKLY PEAR.—FARNESIAN FRAGRANT ACACIA, OR SENSITIVE PLANT.—SYCAMORUS, OR MULBERRY-LEAVED EGYPTIAN FIG-TREE.—SCHISM.—DOURRA, OR INDIAN MILLET.—AFRICAN MARYGOLD.—DUCKS.—THRUSHES.—WOODCOCK.

MY excursions in the environs of Rossetta were frequent, and they were always a new source of pleasure and information. I never failed to take my gun; it served to procure me the different species of birds which enliven the plains, already so interesting on account of the variety and abundance of the plants that are there cultivated. I went, on the 24th of October*, to an old ruinous castle, which is at some distance to the northward of Rossetta. It was intended, as well as another placed upon the opposite bank of the Nile, to defend the entrance of the river. At present, these two castles are not much less than a league from the sea. The former, the construction of which is commonly attributed to St. Lewis, in the time of the cruades, is almost entirely demolished: there still remained in it some pieces of cannon, but they were unfit for service. More ancient monuments have been employed in its erection, as I remarked several stones covered with hieroglyphics. I had drawings taken of some of these antique stones, and addressed them to Bertin the minister, with several others, of the fate of which I am equally ignorant.

* I am well aware, that the date of my excursions will appear a matter of indifference to all others but naturalists, who will be sensible that it is essential to fix the periods in which I met with such and such a bird, in order to ascertain that of their passage into Egypt.

The date-trees are very much propagated in all these countries. Several species of birds perch upon their long leaves ; while others hop from branch to branch, in the thick hedges of the enclosures. I killed on that day some houhous, hoopoes, turtle-doves, and a little owl.

The first of these birds, although pretty common in the environs of Rossetta, and, as I was informed, in those of Damietta, was not known to naturalists previous to my travels to Egypt. I sent descriptions of it, with notes, to Buffon ; and his skilful co-operator, Guéneau de Montbeillard, has published them in the Natural History of Birds, article *Houhou of Egypt*. Although this little discovery in ornithology belongs to me, I shall not here repeat the particulars of it, Buffon's work being in every body's hands. What little I am going to add, is the result of observations posterior to those which are inserted in the *Histoire Naturelle, générale et particulière*.

The *houhous*, or Egyptian cuckoos, have very short wings, and yet they are exceedingly long in proportion to their body. Indeed they fly badly, and cannot raise themselves, nor even traverse, in the same flight, a space of any extent ; so, unless they meet with some bush to alight upon, they are soon obliged to let themselves, in a manner, fall to the ground. In short, they possess the faculty of flying only in a sufficient degree to enable them to catch grasshoppers and other insects of the same kind, on which they chiefly subsist. They are by no means wild, and easily suffer themselves to be approached.

If any thing could determine the naturalist to abandon methodical arrangements in natural history, founded solely upon some exterior forms of the animals, and by which those are frequently classed together whose nature is entirely opposite, it would, no doubt, be the comparison of the *houhou* with the *cuckoo*, of which two species have been made of the same genus. In fact, the common cuckoo, the only bird of all others that shews neither attention nor attachment

to its offspring; the only one that carries indifference so far as to entrust them to a strange mother, whose hopes it has had the barbarity to annihilate; the only one, in short, that Nature has deprived of the happiness of bringing up its young, and of lavishing upon them those affecting kindneses in which, in our woods, most of these little winged families take a part; the cuckoo, I say, is very different in its habits, which form an exception in the history of animals, from a bird whose manners have nothing in them uninteresting. The *boubou* is not solitary; they live in pairs, and the attachment which unites them appears lasting; it hatches its eggs and rears its young: it does not go and seek the shade of the forests; but it delights in being near inhabited spots: it does not fear the neighbourhood of man; and modest on account of its plumage, the grave tone of its voice, and the gentleness of its habits, it occupies itself in rendering him services, by continually hunting after the insects that devour the harvests; a new proof that show and noise are not always the companions of utility. So characteristic a difference in the manners, whatever may be the exterior resemblance in other respects, separates very distinctly two species of birds that have only some similarity of form; a similarity even pretty remote, since the nail of the internal and posterior toe of the *boubou* is straight and long like that of the lark; and this remarkable conformation is not to be found in the foot of the cuckoo.

One of the most common birds in Lower Egypt, principally at the beginning of the winter, is the hoopoe, or dung-bird*. Those that do not quit the country are joined by flights of travellers, who, from northern regions, come in quest of a warmer climate and a greater abundance of food, which they find in the vast number of insects that the Nile, in retiring to its bed, leaves exposed to view. The latter are very fat, and their flesh is tender and well tasted;

* Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 52.—*Upupa epeps*, L.

whereas

whereas the sedentary hoopoes are reckoned very bad eating*. The inhabitants kill none of them. They are not wild: there is a great quantity in the tumultuous city of Cairo, where they build their nests, in perfect security, upon the terraced roofs of the houses.

In Egypt, I have often seen hoopoes assembled in small flocks. When one of them is separated from the others, it calls its companions, by a very shrill cry, of two notes, *zi, zi*. When they are perched, their cry, to which I have taken a pleasure in listening with attention, may be tolerably well expressed by the syllable *poun*, which they pronounce with a strong and grave voice, almost always three times in succession; at each time they draw in their long bill close to their breast, and briskly raise their head. They sometimes also utter a hoarse and disagreeable sound, in one note. When at rest, their bill and their crest, laid back, are upon an exact level.

There is, as in the hoopoes, a great difference in point of the goodness of the flesh between the migratory turtle-doves, and those which do not quit Egypt: the former are good eating, and the others afford only a dry and unfavoury dish. Neither are these birds of the same species. The turtle-doves which arrive in Egypt, after our autumn, and which there spread themselves from the sea as far as Cairo, are of the common species †, and those which constantly inhabit the same country, form a very distinct race. The top of their head and neck is of a light gridelin; the back and the lesser wing coverts of the same colour, but the red tint is the most lively. Upon the upper part of the neck is a sort of half-collar, black and narrow; the throat and inferior coverts of the tail are white; the under part of the neck is of a pale gridelin; the stomach and the belly are of a dirty white. The primary wing quills are brown mixed with rufous, and the others

* Hoopoes are eaten in several places in Italy. I generally saw them hanging upon the hooks of the cooks' shops in Genoa.

† *Tourterelle commune*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 394.—
Columba turtur, L.

cinereous, and tipped, without and within, with a light ash-colour gray. The tail-quills are wedge-like, of a bright ash colour, and tipped with white, except the exterior feather on each side, which is entirely white. All these quills, those of the wings, as well as those of the tail, are, underneath, of a deep cinereous for about a third of their length; the remainder are white, but their colour is much lighter in the females. The iris of the eye is orange; the bill cinereous; the whole of the legs and feet are rose-colour.

I kept, for two years, several pairs of these pretty birds, and I never perceived any change in the colour of their plumage; whence it results that the other turtle-doves to which they may be compared, are of different species, or at least uniform varieties of the same species: such, for instance, are the collared turtles of Barbary, which would perfectly resemble these, if the ground of their plumage were not of a fine white; whence it also results that a knowledge of the species of turtle-doves foreign to our climate, is not yet acquired; and that in hastily classing together several races, really distinct, we have thrown their history into some confusion. The race of the collared turtle-doves of Egypt, not so large, and more delicately formed than that of Europe*, appears to be the same as that of the *collared turtle of Senegal*, mentioned by Brisson †, as far as a judgment can be formed from the whole of the descriptions.

In other respects, these turtle-doves, of whatever species they may be, whether birds of passage or never migrating, are equally spared by the inhabitants of Egypt, who neither kill nor eat them. Wishing to learn the motive for this forbearance, among a people who manifest so little in most of their actions, I was informed that it was in honour of humanity. It is the consequence of a respect for hospi-

* *Tourterelle à collier*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 244.—*Columba risoria*, L.

† *Ornith.* tome i. p. 95. gen. 1.—*Tourterelle à collier du Sénégal*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. étrangers qui ont rapport aux Tourterelles, art. 2.—*Columba vinacea*, L.

tality, which the Arabs hold in high estimation, and some shades of which they have communicated to the people who live among them. They would consider it as a violation of that hospitality, not to spare birds which come, in perfect confidence, and mix with them, and there become the able, but useless preceptors of love and affection. The cultivator even, who sees his crops the prey of flights of turtle-doves that alight in the fields, neither destroys nor disturbs them, but suffers them to multiply in peace. This forbearance was not imitated by the Europeans, who made no hesitation in killing turtle-doves in the fields. It is from them I learned the delicate distinction between the flesh of one and that of the other. But they would not have ventured openly to put these birds to death at Cairo, where they are both very numerous, and exceedingly tame. On my first journey thither, I had the pleasure of seeing, at the end of the month of August, a pair of collared turtle-doves build their nest upon the bottom of a window of the consul's house. Accustomed to the protection of man, neither having any thing to fear from the intemperature of the atmosphere, these charming birds pursued their work with very little art. It consisted only of some pieces of straw carefully arranged. On the evening of the 28th the female deposited an egg, which assuredly was to have been followed by another. I took the greatest precaution that she might not be disturbed, and I was not sparing of my entreaties in that respect; but all was in vain. The nest and eggs were taken away, and, with them, the fruits of the love of that species of birds which knows best how to feel it, and the satisfaction that I should have enjoyed in watching them, in observing their motions during the continuance of their incubation, and of the attentions which they pay to their young. A Turk or an Egyptian would have respected these affecting operations of nature; it was an European by whom they were annihilated.

Whether these turtle-doves take up their abode in the heart of the cities in which they experience so much hospitality, or whether they

embellish their more natural retreats, they are every where without distrust, and their familiarity is equally interesting. The orchards of Rossetta are full of them. They are not intimidated by the presence of man; but they are more frequently heard than seen: they delight in the midst of the thick and interwoven branches of the orange and lemon trees, and seldom rise to the top of the more lofty palm. Their cooings denote that they have chosen the most beautiful of trees for the throne of love, and that, under a balmy shade, they are concealing its sweetest mysteries.

In short, the last bird that I shot in my walk to the western castle of Rossetta, was a little owl*. Its colours were somewhat different from those of the owls of Europe; but this difference, so common in this species of birds, did not appear to be sufficiently decisive to constitute a variety, still less a distinct species. It therefore seems unnecessary to give the particular description of it which I made. It is well known that owls see much better during the day than other nocturnal birds; indeed I killed this, in the daytime, perched upon a tree. Its name, in Egypt, is *sabr*; it was a female.

I walked, that day, over a charming country enriched by the culture of a number of plants; while, in some places, several sorts of trees formed shady and delightful groves. The waters which refresh it, vied with the earth, and also offered their tribute to an useful fecundity: the large leaves of the *lotus* covered their surface, in the brooks and ditches, and announced an abundant crop of roots.

This plant is the *noufar* of the Arabians, of which we have made *nénufar*. It is a water-lily, with white and odoriferous flowers †. Its roots form one of the most common articles of food of the Egyptians, as they formerly did under the name of *lotos*. It appears sin-

* *Chevêche, ou petite chouette*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum, No. 439.—*Strix passerina*, L.

† *Nymphaea lotus*, L.—Forsk. Flora Egyptiaco-arabica, p. 100.

gular that several authors, from Maillet * to M. Pauw †, would not in this *lotos* see the water-lily, and that the latter has asserted that this plant had disappeared in Egypt, where it had formerly been so abundant. Savary had already detected this error of Pauw ; but he goes too far, in saying, it is not astonishing that this intelligent writer should be mistaken, *since few of the travellers who have visited Egypt have ever seen the lotus ‡*. It is impossible, on the contrary, not to travel over Egypt, but merely to enter that country, without seeing a great many ; for the neighbourhood of Rossetta, and the numerous ditches surrounding the fields where rice is cultivated, are entirely filled with this aquatic plant.

But what has contributed to throw confusion into the history of the *nymphæa lotus*, is, that it has often been taken for a plant of a quite different kind, to which the ancients had also given the name of *lotus*, and which served for food to certain nations in Africa, thence called *lotophagi*. The latter has no resemblance to the *lotus* of the waters of Egypt ; it is a shrub, a species of wild jujube or buckthorn, as Citizen Desfontaines has proved §, and which grows in some parts of Barbary||.

However this may be, the *nymphæa* of Lower Egypt sends forth tubercles, that are gathered when the waters have retired. Those which remain are sufficient for the production of new ones. They are then dried and preserved, to be eaten boiled, the same as our potatoes, which they very much resemble in taste ; but they are not so firm, and are more farinaceous ; so that there is a difficulty in swallowing them, and it would be no easy matter to eat more than one, without being obliged to drink. They are sold ready dressed, and at a very low price,

* Description de l'Egypte, partie ii. p. 18.

† Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois; tome i. p. 157.

‡ Lettres sur l'Egypte, tome i. p. 8. notes.

§ Journal de Physique, Octobre 1788.

|| *Rhamnus lotus*, L.

in the streets of Rossetta, where the lower class of people eat them in great quantities.

Among the useful plants I remarked the Indian fig, or prickly pear*, the fruits of which are also eaten by the inhabitants; and among the trees, the *seiffaban*, or acacia with yellow and sweet-scented flowers †, and the *sycamorus*, or mulberry-leaved Egyptian fig-tree ‡. The foliage of this last is of a very pleasing green; its branches expand, and cover with their shade a great extent of ground. Its wood is very hard, and almost incorruptible. The ancients usually employed it in making the cases for their mummies. Its fruit does not hang, like that of other trees, along and at the extremity of the branches and boughs; but is attached to the thickest stems, and even to the trunk itself. It is a species of fig, not unlike the common one, but more insipid. The natives eat it with pleasure; they reckon it cooling, and calculated to quench thirst.

A scarcer shrub, and which is cultivated only out of curiosity, in some of the gardens at Rossetta, is the *schismè*. It bears leguminous flowers of a deep yellow, and oblong leaves terminating in a point. The flowers are succeeded by long pods, bent in the form of a scythe: they contain flat heart-shaped seeds, the middle of which is gray, and surrounded by a broad projecting brown-coloured border. These seeds are considered by the Egyptians as a specific against the *ophthalmia* so prevalent in their country: they are pounded and reduced to a yellow powder, which is blown into the eyes, pure, or mixed with pulverized fugar. Although the *schismè* thrives very well in the cool and shady places adjoining the plains of Rossetta, the seed which it there pro-

* *Cactus opuntia*, L.

† The Farnesian fragrant acacia of the gardeners. *Mimosa farnesiana*, L.—N.B. This *seiffaban* must not be confounded with the *seiban* (*æschynomene seiban*, L.)—Egyptian obtuse-lobed *æschynomene*, or bastard sensitive plant, a shrub with yellow flowers, of the size of the myrtle, and which the Egyptians use to make hedges.

‡ *Ficus sycamorus*, L.—*Ficus sycamorus vera*, Forkal, Flora Egyptiaco-arabica, p. 180.

duces is not esteemed: that is preferred which comes from Nubia, where probably this shrub is indigenous.

I also saw several fields, covered with a species of large millet, which is named in Egypt, *dourra**. It is an article of general culture, and affords abundant crops. Its produce is estimated at near fifty for one. The Egyptians make bread, or rather very indifferent cakes, with the seed of the *dourra*: they likewise ascribe to it great virtues, in the cure of fractured limbs, by applying it reduced to powder.

The erect African marygold † displayed its beautiful yellow flowers in the midst of the other plants of some of the gardens.

It was at that period of the year, when ducks of several species arrive in Lower Egypt from all quarters. The small species, such as the *farcelles* or teal, come there at the beginning of October, and the larger appear later. They all assemble upon the lakes of the Delta, which are not far from Rossetta and Damietta, and there form innumerable flocks, which do not disappear till the expiration of winter: they are caught with nets; and this sport, which was very productive, had not escaped the fiscal tyranny of the Mamalûks or of their overseers; it was farmed out, and consequently became exclusive. A great quantity of these birds were brought to the market of Rossetta, where they were sold very cheap. As the Mahometans eat no animal that has not been bled, the throats of the ducks were cut, or they were left alive, after having had their wings broken, which were fastened upon their back; so that it was very difficult to procure one of these birds that was not mutilated, or whose plumage was uninjured.

Thrushes arrive in these countries in the same season, and continue there till the month of March. But, while the ducks animate the various distant pieces of water, the thrushes remain near the habitations. They delight in the same orchards as the turtle-doves, and,

* *Holeus durra*, L.—Forsk. *Flora-Egypt.-arab.* p. 174.

† *Tagetes erecta*, L.—Forsk. *ibid.* p. 120.

like them, seek the thick and fragrant shade of the orange and lemon trees.

A peasant called me to a thicket, and told me that he had just seen a woodcock fly in: in fact, I found it there. The arrival of these birds in Egypt does not, in general, take place before the month of November, and they are then not very numerous. It is rather singular to see the woodcock, which seems to be a bird peculiar to cold climates, seek a mild winter, even in countries situated so far to the south.

CHAPTER XIX.

NATRON.—BLEACHING OF CLOTH AND THREAD.—OTHER PURPOSES FOR WHICH NATRON IS USED.—SENNA.—BIRDS.—DESCRIPTION OF A SPECIES OF FALCON.—BERGERONNETTES, OR WAGTAILS.—DRAGON-FLIES.—WASP.—LOCUST.—RAIN.—DELTA.—LITTLE EGRETS, OR CRIEL HERONS.—COOT.—QUAILS.—SNIPES.—SPUR-WINGED PLOVERS.—FENU-GREEK.

IN Roffetta there are storehouses of natron, and manufactories where it is used. It is well known that it is an earthy alkaline salt, or mineral alkali, which is more particularly found in Egypt, in the middle of a desert, called by the ancients the Desert of Nitria. Our saltpetre being absolutely unknown to them, they had given the name of nitre to the substance that the Arabs describe under the denomination of *natroum*, of which we have made *natron*. It is for want of having examined the passages of Theophrastus, Dioscorides, Galen, and Pliny, that several moderns have confounded nitre and natron, which are substances materially different.

Natron is seldom to be met with perfectly pure: independently of the earthy substances with which it is almost constantly mixed, it is not an alkali entirely unadulterated; it is generally blended with marine salt, with Glauber's salt, in short, with some degree of vitriolic tartar. In the storehouses are to be found two sorts, the common and the *sultaniè*. This word answers to the epithet *royal*, by which some commodities of a superior quality were designated in France. The *sultaniè* natron is whiter, better crystallized, and purer than the common; it is consequently stronger, and, when used, a smaller quantity is sufficient.

This mineral alkali possesses the same properties as vegetable alkali, or *soda*; but it possesses them in a higher degree of strength. Its principal

principal use is for the bleaching of cloth and thread. The following is the method that I saw pursued at Rossetta. The skeins of thread are arranged in a large copper, set in mason-work; above them is put a layer of natron; a sufficient quantity of cold water is then poured in to soak both the thread and the natron. The whole is left in this situation for three days, at the end of which the thread is taken out, and hung upon sticks placed over the copper. When it has drained, a fire is lighted under the copper, and the water in which the thread was soaked, with the natron, is made to boil, after having received an addition of some lime. The thread is steeped and stirred about in this hot lie, and washed in it several times, without being left there. It is immediately taken to the Nile, in which it is washed and beat: it is then spread out to dry.

When the skeins are very dry, they are again washed in the whey which runs from cheeses, and which, in Arabic, is called *mesch*. It is a sort of stiffening that improves the cloth; and when the Egyptians handle a soft cloth, they say that it wants *mesch*.

To bleach two hundred pounds of thread, it generally requires a hundred pounds of natron, and from sixty to eighty pounds of lime; observing, however, that the *sultaniè* natron, that is to say, the purer sort, being stronger than the common, a smaller quantity must be used; without this precaution, the thread, or linen, would be exposed to be burnt.

So expeditious a manner of bleaching thread and linen deserves to be tried in France. It is said, that it was formerly practised at Rouen, but that it was disused because it burned the cloth*. It is most probable that either the proper proportions or the process of the Egyptians were not there adopted; for it is very certain that neither their cloths nor their thread are burnt. The natron trade, though pretty brisk with Turkey, and even with the state of Venice, where

* Voyages de la Boullaye-le-Gouz, Paris 1657, p. 383.

this alkali, mixed with sandy stone, makes the beautiful blown glass of *Murano*, was absolutely at an end, in regard to France; however, it appeared likely to be revived towards the end of the year 1777. A French merchant, settled at Rossetta, had just sent off a pretty large quantity of natron to his correspondent at Marfeilles. I have had no opportunity of knowing whether this incipient commerce was continued; but our manufactories would derive great advantages, if this alkali, which nature produces abundantly in Egypt, were made an article of trade.

It is not solely to the bleaching of cloths and thread, that the use of natron is confined in the country where it is formed. It is also used in dying, in the preparation of leather, in making glass, in bleaching linen, in dough instead of leaven, for preserving meat and making it tender, and lastly, to mix with snuff, and make it more pungent. This last use, I presume that we shall not be tempted to imitate. It is, however, not the less general in Egypt, where the inhabitants dislike our tobacco unmixed, because it makes no more impression than dust upon their organs, accustomed to the pungency and sharpness of natron.

I can answer, by the way, the seventh part of question sixty-four of M. Michaëlis*—*Is the natron procured from the lake that is in the desert of St. Macarius, made use of for salting meat, and sometimes as salt for cooking? At least, do the poor use it? Is it also used for salting bread?* Marine salt is in great abundance in Egypt, and at a very low price, so that the inhabitants have no occasion to supply its place with natron, which is not so cheap. In the eighth part of the same question, M. Michaëlis also asks, if *natron* be found only in the lake of the desert of St. Macarius. It is found in the lake called the lake of *Terané*, because at that village it is shipped on the Nile; and this lake is, in fact, in the desert of Nitria, or of

* *Voyageurs sçavans et curieux, ou Tablettes instructives, &c.*

St. Macarius. There is some also in a less considerable lake near *Damanbour*; but that of *Terané* is the largest, and furnishes a greater quantity.

The collection of natron was farmed out, and was sufficiently productive both to those who undertook it, and to the public treasury. This lease did not resemble the forced grant of the fenna, which the government of Cairo had thought of making the European merchants take who resided there. They were obliged to purchase the great quantity of this drug that is gathered in Upper Egypt. It was, in respect to them, a sort of exaction*; for the crop of fenna was so considerable, that they could not find a sale for it. The Venetian merchants took a third of the annual produce, and the French the remaining two-thirds, the price of which, to the latter, made a sum of upwards of twenty-five thousand livres. Their loss was also increased by the agreement that they had made with the druggists of Marseilles, not to sell the fenna but to them alone; and the latter, on their side, were authorized to take no more than the quantity they wanted. The consequence of this arrangement was, that the greater part of the fenna remained on the hands of the French merchants. There were still, in their house at Rossetta, storehouses that had been filled with it for several years.

While our merchants, bound by their engagement with the druggists of Marseilles, were losing considerably by this article, the Venetians were gaining, by sending it to Holland, where it had a great sale. Some Englishmen bought a quantity of it, at Cairo, of the Venetians themselves, and still found means to turn it to account.

To conclude, the fenna of the Levant is improperly designated by the denomination of the fenna of Alexandria. It is, indeed, shipped there; but none of it is produced in the vicinity of that town. It

* *Avanie*. This is the name given, in the Levant trade, to the violent and vexatious means employed by the Turks to extort money from the Europeans. These exactions were practised in Egypt to an intolerable degree.

grows, in Egypt, only towards the cataracts of the Nile, near Assouan. Its Arabic name is *séna**.

In an excursion I made on the 4th of November, I killed a kingfisher †, a thrush of the large species ‡, and a bird of prey which has not been described, and which appeared to me a species of the falcon. The top of its bill is incurvated at its extremity, and covered at its base with a yellow skin; the second feather of its wing is longer than the others, and those of the tail are almost wedge-like. Its whole length is one foot; that of the bill, nine lines and a half; that of the spread of the wings, one foot eleven inches; that of the wings, nine inches; lastly, that of the tail, six inches; it exceeds the wings by fifteen lines, whether expanded, or in a state of rest.

The feathers of the top of the head are black in the middle, and the remainder reddish; those of the sides of the head are variegated with gray, black, and rufous, with the exception of the part beneath the eyes, which is black, and of a gray spot at the posterior angle of each eye. All the upper part of the body is of a reddish brown, transversely striped with black. The throat is covered with gray feathers, almost entirely tapered. The upper part of the stomach is reddish, with black longitudinal spots. The rest of the under part of the body is gray, tinted with rufous. The feathers of the legs are of the same; but their stem and extremity being black, give them the appearance of globular spots of that colour. The upper surface of the wings is variegated with brown, gray, white, and reddish. The tail is of the same colour as the back; but is marked transversely with blackish stripes. The bill is gray towards its base, and black in every other part. The iris is a hazel colour; the skin

* *Cassia fenna*, L.—*Cassia lanceolata*, Forskal, Flora Egyptiaco-arabica, p. 85.

† *Martin-pêcheur, ou alcyon*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 77.—*Alcedo ispida*, L.

‡ *La draine*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 489.—*Turdus viscivorus*, L.—*Ang.* The missel thrush.

of the circle round the eyes, of the legs and feet, is yellow like that of the base of the bill; and the claws are black.

It was a female. The intestinal canal was one foot nine inches and a half long. The membranous stomach was filled with animal substances, among which I distinguished parts of large insects. The food of this bird must have been very plentiful; for, in my life, I never saw one so fat. Of three I killed that day, this was the only one I got; the two others, though they had fallen from the tree upon which they had perched, having escaped into the gardens at the moment I was going to pick them up.

This species of birds of prey generally alights upon the top of the date-trees, and utters a sharp cry. It may possibly be the same as that described by Forskal, as a species of falcon*. There is, in fact, a great deal of conformity in our descriptions. Forskal then asks himself whether this falcon be really a falcon or a kite, and if it may not be the *falco fortificatus* of Linnæus. This is a question which I certainly will not undertake to resolve, since Forskal, far more versed than I in the art of explaining the terms of nomenclature, could not recollect himself upon this occasion. But, as far as I was able to judge, the bird I have described is of the genus of the falcon.

I also saw, in the hedges, the *trogodytes*, or common wren; and every where chaffinches; larks in the open grounds; and near the water a great many bergeronnettes or wagtails †. This species is spread all over Egypt, and appears never to migrate. The yellow bergeronnette ‡, on the contrary, is only a bird of passage; and it

* *Falco cera pedibusque flavis, supra cinereus, subtus ferrugineus, alis supra fuscis; caudâ fortificatâ, fusco fasciata, longitudine corporis.* Arab: Haddj. Forskal, *Descript: Animalium*, p. 1.—From the description of the Danish professor, Gmelin has designated the same bird in the thirteenth edition of the *Systema Naturæ* of Linnæus, under the denomination of *falco Ægyptius*.

† *Lavandière*, Buffon, *Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum.* No. 652.—*Motacilla alba*, L.

‡ *Bergeronnette jaune*, Buffon, *Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum.* No. 28, fig. 1.—*Motacilla boarula*, L.

was the first time of its appearing there this year: it takes its departure towards the spring. The two species have the same habits; and they both frequent the vicinity of habitations and of water. The wagtail, however, approaches man with more familiarity: it enters the towns, and hops with nimbleness and confidence upon the places where the rice is spread out, notwithstanding the number of workmen employed in drying that grain. The yellow bergeronnette, on the contrary, gives the preference to the country.

It seemed that all the most charming productions of nature were assembled in the gardens of Rossetta, and there offered to the man, capable of appreciating them, such riches as she does not always dispense. These agreeable enclosures were then chequered with little animated and winged bodies, shining with the brightest purple, sometimes fluttering between the branches of the shrubs, at others eclipsing the beauty of the flowers which they approached. I there saw a great number of a remarkable species of these pretty insects, which, on account of their elegance and their attire, are called *demoiselles* (*libellulæ*, or dragon-flies).

The body of this species is entirely of the most beautiful purple; the wings, which are of an orange colour at their base, have a spot of the same towards their extremity: a black line dividing the under part of the body lengthwise, gives an additional relief to its purple hue. The length of this insect is eighteen lines; that of the corselet, which is covered with hairs, also purple, is four lines and a half. The wings measure an inch two lines.

A pretty species of another genus of insects, more noxious than the dragon-fly, also displayed its brilliant colours. A wasp of ten lines in length was there very common. It has two large black eyes; and upon the top of the head, three small black points, placed in the form of a triangle, and resembling eyes; the fore part of the head of a beautiful yellow; a triangular spot of the same colour between the antennæ, or feelers, which have also a small shade of

yellow at their base; the antennæ are purple in the remainder of their length; the rest of the head, the corselet, and the thighs, purple; the whole of the legs of a brownish gray; the claws black; the upper surface of the wings yellowish, and the under surface gray.

The first articulation of the belly is of a shining black, bordered, upon the belly only, with a beautiful yellow; this border is itself terminated by a small line which appears to be of the purest gold. The second is entirely black. The third is yellow, both above and below; it is divided at top, in its breadth, by a black line, which is also accompanied by a spot likewise black; and upon the under part of this articulation is, on each side, another black spot, smaller than those which are on the upper part. The fourth is black above, and brown below. Lastly, the other articulations are of a blackish brown.

I found some individuals of this species, the colours of which were less brilliant, with some differences in their shades. These wasps, very common in the country, also make their appearance in the towns. Several of them came into my apartment at Rosetta.

In this season of the year there is also met with a species of hopping insects, known by the name of locust, *gryllus*. I believe it has neither been described nor drawn, and I will therefore here give its description. This locust is fourteen lines long; and its greatest breadth is a little more than three; the antennæ are five lines, and the elytra thirteen lines in length: they exceed that of the body by three lines.

The distribution of its colours is elegant: the antennæ are red; the top of the head is marked lengthwise by a blackish line, bordered with yellow, and which, growing wider, extends over the corselet. Its large eyes are striped lengthwise with black and white. The small glossy eye in the middle of its head is of an orange colour; the others might be taken for little particles of the most sparkling gold-dust; the rest of the head is of a greenish gray; the remainder of

the

the corselet, and the under part of the belly, are gray, shaded with yellow; the upper part of the belly is greenish.

The elytra, or wing-cases of this insect, are also of a dull red, with an apple-green stripe, one third of their length; the wings, when expanded, are of a gray tinged with yellow, and their veins red; the thighs of the four anterior legs yellow; the other parts of these legs are red; the claws black; the thighs of the posterior legs yellow without, and reddish within; the lower joints are of the most beautiful red, except the upper part, which is tinged with the brightest blue.

On the 6th of November, at three o'clock in the morning, there was a heavy shower of rain, the wind being then at north-north-west. This is not an uninteresting period, as it was the first rain that fell this year to cool the atmosphere of Lower Egypt, and, as I have already said, it was the beginning of that season to which was given the name of winter, because the temperature of the air became somewhat less sultry.

The following day I crossed the Nile, and took a long walk over the moist and verdant grounds of the Delta. This part of Lower Egypt is an immense plain, but it does not possess the fatiguing monotony common in flat countries. The towns and villages are built upon small hills rising above the level of the inundation; bowers which verdure never forsakes; trees standing alone, though but at a little distance from each other, limit the view, and suffer it to extend only through numerous vistas, which lead it to points more or less distant, and more or less agreeable. Enclosures where plants of every sort are growing, where the golden apples of the orange-tree overhang the most odoriferous flowers, as well as the useful and humble herbs of the kitchen garden; fields in which fertility has fixed her abode; the very huts of the husbandmen, the animals that live around, every thing, in short, pleases, every thing rejoices the soul and flatters the eyes in so diversified a landscape.

A mul-

A multitude of birds flock together in so beautiful a country: by their numbers, their motions, and the variety of their notes, they seemed to be celebrating this continual holyday of nature, these eternal favours of fecundity.

I there saw turtle-doves of the two species, blackbirds, hoopoes, and little egrets*, or criel herons, which the French settled in Egypt call *garde-bœufs* (ox-keepers), because, in fact, they seek the places frequented by those animals, follow them, and often alight upon their backs. In Egypt there are two species of egrets: their plumage is entirely of a dazzling white, but they differ in point of size. The small species is the most common: the individuals of which it is composed differ also in the colour of their feet, which in some of them are black, in others green, and in many of them yellow. There is every reason to presume that this difference is the effect of age or of sex, and not a distinction of race. The large and small species have upon the back long tapering silky feathers, which serve to make plumes and tufts. All have not this natural ornament; perhaps it is confined to the males alone. However this may be, it would have been easy to procure, in Egypt, the most beautiful feathers of these birds; for they were exceedingly numerous in the lower part of that country, and more particularly towards Damietta, where the waters, in the vicinity of which they delight, occupy a greater extent. The inhabitants did not consider them as game, and nobody ate them.

I cannot refrain from laughing, when I recall to mind a trifling adventure to which the egrets gave occasion, in my journey from Rosetta to Alexandria with M. Tott. He took with him a surgeon, quite puffed up with folly and conceit. Combining their knowledge of natural history, they had decided that the numerous egrets, whose dazzling whiteness, so interesting an emblem of candour and

* *Aigrette*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 901.—*Ardea garzetta*, L.

virginity*, constituted the most beautiful ornament of the banks of the Nile, were the ibis, or curlews of the ancients, birds on which antiquity conferred the highest honours. Whatever I could say to them, they would not give up their opinion. A contemptuous simile was cast upon the travellers who had preceded them, and who had not possessed sufficient discernment to see the ibis in Egypt, while they met with flocks of them, almost as soon as they landed. They were congratulating themselves on being enabled to affirm that the ibis was so very common in Egypt; and, indeed, they wished to make an ample collection of these birds. Whenever they perceived an egret, they bawled out as loud as they could, to induce the Egyptian sailors to manage the boat so as to bring the bird within gun-shot. The sailors lost all patience, and swore at so many delays and so much fatigue, the importance of which they were at a loss to conceive. Near two hundred shots were fired; but, very fortunately for the egrets; they were as unskilful as marksmen as they were uninformed as naturalists; and two or three only of these birds fell victims of the high opinion that had been conceived of their species. The firing would not have ended so soon, and we should, probably, have been eight days in reaching Cairo, on account of the numerous zigzags which our sportsmen obliged us to make, and of the frequent stops with which they interrupted our navigation, had not the surgeon, in a transport of ornithological enthusiasm, fallen down into the vessel's hold, and into the middle of a large pot of lentils that were cooking for the crew. This catastrophe was the signal of peace with the supposed ibis; and we were enabled to continue our route, without any other inconvenience than the fatigue of hearing repeated exclamations about the importance of a pretended discovery, which had like to have cost the little surgeon so dear.

* It was a fine idea of Hasselquitz (*Voy. au Levant*) to name the white egret *ardea virgo*, the virgin heron. If every denomination offered so much truth, and as many charms as this, nomenclature would not be so dry a science.

I found,

I found, in a watery place covered with reeds, a coot* of the common species, in Egypt a *boor*. I have since had an opportunity of procuring several of these birds, and, on comparing them with the description given by Buffon, I remarked some differences in the tints of their plumage. The most obvious of these differences is on that portion of the naked leg above the knee, which, according to Buffon, is circled with red, whereas, in the coots that I saw, this circle was yellow. These birds are, in general, fat; and their flesh is tender and well flavoured.

I also met with a quail, which I killed. It is uncommon to see any at this period: this, indeed, was the only one in the grounds over which I walked. On the coast of Egypt, the passage of the quails takes place in the month of September; they then flock together, more particularly in the sandy island which divides the mouth of the Nile, near Rossetta. But I shall have occasion to speak again of the truly astonishing migration of these birds.

The fields from which a crop of rice had just been got in, were filled with snipes †, which are here remarkably numerous. A sportsman of Rossetta one day brought us a basket full of these birds, which he had shot in less than a day. I myself killed a dozen, and missed as many more, in the course of the morning. This is pleasant sport, from the great plenty of the game; but it is also very fatiguing. The light soil of the rice-fields is so deeply impregnated with water, that a person sinks in at every step, and sometimes half way up to his chin. The snipes arrive at the beginning of November, in search of the watery districts of Lower Egypt, and there they pass the whole winter.

Crested and spur-winged plovers ‡ were also found there, but in

* *Foulque*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 197.—*Fulica atra*, L.

† *Bécassine*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 883.—*Scolopax gallinago*, L.

‡ *Pluviers à agrettes*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 801, sous le nom du Pluvier armé du Sénégal.—*Charadrius spinosus*, L.

smaller numbers. The Europeans settled in Egypt called them *dominicans*, on account of the resemblance that the distribution of black and white, with which their plumage is variegated, gave them to that order of monks. These plovers, exactly the same as those which I had seen some years before, in the month of August, in the country of the Jalofs, upon the west coast of Africa, delight in the banks of pools, in the rivers, and in all wet places, although they never go into the water. They are noisy and wild birds, and it is difficult to get near them; but if they have learnt to avoid man, the tyrant of animals, they enjoy among themselves love, and the practice of social intercourse: they are never alone, being always seen in pairs, or in small flocks.

In the streets of Rossetta were sold the stems of fenu-greek*. This plant is cultivated for fodder; and it would be superior to every sort of food that Lower Egypt affords to animals, if the *barsim*, a species of trefoil peculiar to that country, and of which I have already spoken, were not there produced. Its Arabic name is *helbè*.

Although this *helbè* of the Egyptians is a succulent fodder for the numerous cattle that cover the plains of the Delta, although the horses, oxen, and buffaloes, eat it with equal pleasure, it does not appear to be particularly intended for the nourishment of animals, because the *barsim* furnishes them a still better and more abundant food. But what will appear very extraordinary, is that in this country, so fertile in singularities, the Egyptians themselves eat the fenu-greek, so that it may there properly be called *the fodder of men*.

November is the month in which the green *helbè* is cried about for sale, in the streets of the towns. It is tied up in large bundles, which the inhabitants are eager to purchase at a low price, and which they eat with incredible avidity, without any kind of seasoning whatever. They pretend that this singular dish is an excellent

* *Trigonella fœnum grecum*, L.

stomachic, a specific against worms and the dysentery, a preservative, in short, against a great number of disorders. I have myself eaten some bundles of this plant. I did not dislike it; but I was very far from experiencing, in this repast, the same pleasure as the people of the country. As for its effects, I did not feel that it did me either good or harm.

The Egyptians do not content themselves with devouring the stalks and the leaves of the fenu-greek; they also make the seeds sprout, and eat their long shoots. They consider it as an excellent preparation, and possessing in an eminent degree the good qualities they ascribe to the plant. In order to obtain a quick germination of the seeds, they fill a basket with them, which they let soak in running water for two or three days; they then heap them up upon a bed of straw or grass, in order that they may grow warm; they cover a portion of these seeds, thus steeped, with small earthen vessels, in the shape of mutilated cones, open at the top. Through this opening the sprouts, which are soon large, shoot out and intertwine; and they then are confined in that situation by being bent. Lastly, the vase filled with young sprouts is taken up, and they are eaten with the seeds from which they were produced. Twelve little pots thus provided are sold for a medine, about a *sous* of our money. It is necessary to have great confidence in the virtue of these sprouts, to eat as great a quantity of them as the Egyptians, for they are exceedingly bitter. The seeds are also roasted, and prepared like coffee, with the addition of lime-juice. This beverage is not unpleasant. I cannot say as much of a ragout greatly in fashion in this country, and which is made with the sprouts of the *helbè*, dressed with honey.

In other respects, the Egyptians consider this plant as endowed with so many good qualities, that it is, in their opinion, a real panacea. Prosper Alpinus has entered into long details upon its uses in

medicine*. From so many excellent properties, real or imaginary, it is by no means astonishing that the Egyptians hold the fenu-greek in so high estimation, that, according to one of their proverbs : *happy are the feet that press the ground on which grows the helbè.*

But, independently of its properties, as yet little ascertained, the culture of fenu-greek deserves to be diffused in France. This excellent fodder preserves the health of horses, and even contributes to the cure of their disorders. I have cultivated it with success for several years, at my solitary retreat at Manoncourt, in the department of La Meurthe. See *La Feuille du Cultivateur, du 27 Messidor de l'An III.* a journal which, under a modest title, is of the greatest utility.

* See his books of the Plants, and of the Medical Practice of Egypt.

CHAPTER XX.

JOURNEY TO ABOUKIR.—RUINS.—BEDOUINS.—HARBOUR AND ROADSTEAD.—JEW DRUGUEMAN.—GREEK RED PARTRIDGES.—RUINS OF CANOPUS.—FLUTED COLOSSAL STATUE.—CANOPUS.—GOVERNOR, CASTLE, AND VILLAGE OF ABOUKIR.—LITTLE PYRAMID.—RETURN TO ROSSETTA.

BETWEEN Rossetta and Alexandria there yet remained for me to examine a place formerly celebrated under the name of *Canopus*, now called *Aboukir* by the Arabs, and corruptly *Bikiere* by the European navigators. Being out of the common road, it has been little frequented by travellers. I knew that it was worth seeing, and I set out for that purpose on the 12th of November. M. Forneti, drogueman at Rossetta, willingly accompanied me, and we took with us a janizary, my draughtsman, and two servants.

Mounted upon mules, we ascended the hills of sand which form the parched and moving rampart that encircles the city of Rossetta on the western side. We entered the plain of Turrets or Pillars*, whence we struck off towards the sea-shore, which we followed as far as the lake of *Maadiè*.

A flock of Egyptian vultures, to which the people of that country improperly give the name of *Pharaoh's hens* †, were devouring upon the sands the putrid carcase of a dead animal.

From the bad construction of our vessel, the passage of the lake *Maadiè* employed a whole hour. With a common ferry-boat we should have made it in a quarter of the time. A little before

* See page 136.

† Foreign birds which have an affinity to the vulture. Art. ii. Buffon, *Hist. Nat. des Ois.*—*Vultur percnopterus*, L:

we reached this remnant of the Canopic branch of the Nile, we met with a small camp of Bedouin Arabs, consisting only of four tents, under which the men and women, with their animals, had retired. The wandering life of this roving and thievish people does not allow them to remain long in the same place. They offered us some bad water, which our thirst made us accept, and for which we paid them very handsomely.

After passing *Maadiè*, we regained the sea-shore, along which a dike or embankment had been thrown up, in order to confine the waters, the sandy soil being upon a level with the sea. Upon this dike small towers are erected at some distance from each other. We quitted the Alexandria road, and following the coast, we reached Aboukir at one o'clock in the afternoon.

Aboukir is only a village, with a castle built upon the point of a cape which projects a considerable way into the sea. Some shoals stretching out beyond the cape enclose, in a large bay which the coast here forms, a small harbour, where vessels lie in safety, at the very foot of the castle, in the front of which there is a good roadstead. This was the usual anchorage of French frigates when cruising in these seas. It was also frequented by merchant-ships, when they were obliged, from bad weather, to quit the new and dangerous port of Alexandria; and likewise by the country *germs* when they could not make Alexandria, or clear the *Boghafs* of the Nile at the mouth of the Rosetta branch.

It was in this very roadstead, but at too great a distance from the coast, that the fleet of the French republic, commanded by the brave but unfortunate Bruyes, fought so fatal a battle against the English fleet under the command of Admiral Nelson; an action which it would have been both easy and prudent to avoid; but the disastrous issue of which has, nevertheless, added new lustre and glory to the French name.

We alighted at the house of a Jew, who held the patent place
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of agent to the consul-general of France in Egypt. His ancestors had constantly exercised the same functions with honour and fidelity. He had the greatest regard for the French, and was in fact become a Frenchman. He was a man of a mild and obliging disposition, and certainly the most honest Jew I ever met with. His salary was six parats or medines, equal to seven or eight *sous* a day. It was impossible to requite more poorly the services he rendered to the French vessels that anchored off Aboukir, and which could not dispense with his assistance in an isolated place where no European resides. Formerly the person holding this office had only an allowance of four medines, as appears by a regulation made in 1706, by M. de Gatines, then intendant of the marine, and the commissary appointed for the general inspection of the ports of the Levant. The article respecting the establishment of a drogueman at *Aboukir*, which I here insert, on account of its relation to the port of Alexandria, and the navigation of the coast of Egypt, is conceived in the following terms :

“ Whereas a number of French vessels have for some years past
 “ loaded at the roadstead of *Béquiers*, and it being proper to
 “ encourage this practice, which gives greater facility to the shipping
 “ of the cargoes, and might eventually be beneficial to the French,
 “ should they be obliged to quit Alexandria, the port of which is
 “ daily becoming choked up ; it is hereby directed, in order to save
 “ the expense of a number of messengers between Alexandria and
 “ *Béquiers*, which cost the nation a great sum ; and also, in order
 “ to have a person that will pay attention to the goods to be
 “ embarked at *Béquiers*, that there be there established a Jew
 “ drogueman, at a salary of four medines a day, for every sort of
 “ allowance ; which sum shall be included in the accounts of Alex-
 “ andria.”

Another inspector-general, M. Tott, wished, in 1777, to deprive the French nation of the services which were considered important

in 1706. He gave notice that the drogueman was no longer to be kept at Aboukir. This may be called an economy injurious to trade, and it is by no means uncommon. A useful servant was deprived of subsistence, while the man in power, whose forbearance must be felt as an obligation, was filling his pockets with gold. Giving himself little concern as to the interest of the public, the object of all others the most dear to a good citizen, but generally disregarded, the latter too often pays attention to those only who can flatter his ambition and satisfy his rapacity. However, the remonstrances and solicitations of the merchants of Alexandria prevailed over the caprice of a person ignorant of local circumstances; and the paltry office of drogueman at Aboukir was not abolished. The poor Jew informed us, that he had heard he was to lose his little stipend: he added, with noble simplicity, “*I have always been quiet. I should have shewn the honourable commissions held by my fathers, the testimonies of the important services rendered by them to the French nation; the proofs of my own active zeal in their interest; and it would have been impossible for the justice of the government to which I am attached, to have ever permitted me to be deprived of the means of existence.*” We took care not to disturb his tranquillity; but I observed to my companion: This inoffensive man is poor, and probably necessary; nevertheless he would be sacrificed without attention being paid to his claims and services, any more than to his remonstrances. Such sacrifices are the amusements of governments, and the most ordinary acts of their justice.

The house of *Mallüm Yousef**, for that is the Jew's name, is pleasantly situated; it is pretty large, and would have afforded convenient apartments, had they been cleaned. Travellers coming to Aboukir should provide themselves with bread, there being none to

* The word *Mallüm* answers to that of *Master*: *Mallüm Yousef*, *Master Joseph*. This is the appellation which the Turks give to those whom they do not choose to distinguish, but whom they rank above the lowest class.

bè bought in this village. They may, however, very easily procure there fish, sea hedge-hogs, oysters, and other shell-fish; and they may trust to the attention of the drogueman and his son in purchasing such provisions. They had at their house a pair of tame Greek red partridges*. They informed us that these birds were frequently seen at Aboukir, and that it was not difficult to take them even alive. Having finished our frugal repast, prepared by the landlord's wife, we remounted our mules, in order to visit the ruins in the neighbourhood.

These remains of an ancient city occupy a vast extent of ground. All is thrown down, all is destroyed. The place is strewn with ruins, which still offer many objects of admiration; and from what we saw on the surface, we could judge how much more valuable relics might have been discovered, had permission been granted to dig there; but researches of this nature are absolutely forbidden among an ignorant and superstitious people, who having no idea of any other riches than gold, imagine that foreigners would not travel over their country, but with the intention of carrying off their hidden treasures; and cannot conceive that the inspection or acquirement of monuments of art should be the motives of their journeys.

I saw several columns fallen to the ground; they were of the most beautiful granite; their shafts were fluted and of one piece, although of astonishing magnitude: the capitals were of the finest workmanship. The Jew drogueman told me that he remembered one part of these columns standing, and also a large arch which formed the entry to a subterraneous cavern; but the natives had entirely destroyed it for the sake of the stones, which they employed in their buildings, or in repairing the dikes erected to confine the sea. There still remained the openings to subterraneous avenues, built of brick, and in

* *Bartavelle, ou perdrix Grecque*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 231.—*Tetrao rufus*, L.

good preservation ; but their entrance was choked up with rubbish. In a word, every thing we saw announced that this had formerly been the site of most magnificent edifices. These majestic ruins are, by the inhabitants of Aboukir, denominated the city of Pharaoh.

On the sea-shore are observable, and still in tolerable preservation, the foundations of a very large, regular building, in the midst of which is a cavern leading to the sea, where ruins are to be seen at a great distance : this proves that here, as in a number of other places, the sea had made considerable encroachments. I had a drawing made of these ruins. (*See Plate IV.*) Blocks of granite of different forms are lying in heaps by the side of these remains of antiquity. In the midst of them is a colossal statue of a woman ; and what is very singular, it is fluted all its length. This is likewise of granite ; it is thrown down, and some parts of it are mutilated. The sea, whenever it is at all rough, covers it with its waves : to examine it at leisure requires, therefore, calm weather. I was fortunate in this respect, and I got a drawing made of its remains. (*See Plate V.* in which is represented the statue with the ruins that surround it.) Figure 2 of the same plate exhibits it alone and detached.

The people of the country, who had conceived the whole ruins to be the remains of the city of Pharaoh, imagined this extraordinary statue, with which they were very much struck, to be the figure of Pharaoh's daughter. The draughtsman who accompanied a French traveller to Egypt at the time I was there, and who went to Aboukir, had represented this statue perfect in its execution, as well as in its preservation ; he has drawn it, not as it really was, but as he conceived it ought to be, that is, standing perpendicular, and placed upon a pedestal of his own imagination. Such drawings are less calculated to inform than to mislead ; and they should never be admitted into the port-folio of a traveller. I can answer for the fidelity of all my drawings, my draughtsman being accustomed to
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the most perfect correctness, and all of them being taken immediately under my own inspection.

A propos of this Frenchman; the Jew informed us, that when he came to Aboukir, he neglected to employ in the researches he made in its environs a native appointed by the governor, who, by way of *avanie* (exaction), demanded a sequin from the traveller. In consequence of this, our Jew caused us to be attended by the governor's own son, and made me give him as a reward a patacke, or six livres, in order to avoid an *avanie* of seven livres ten sous, which is the value of a sequin in Egypt. This arrangement appeared to us extremely pleasant.

By the side of the statue there is a very large sphynx, partly mutilated, the pedestal of which is encircled with hieroglyphics almost entirely effaced. (*See Plate V. Figure 1.*)

Such are the remains of a celebrated city founded by the Greeks, and embellished with the most sublime and beautiful works of art. A magnificent temple, of which these astonishing columns of granite, now thrown down, probably formed a part, had been consecrated to Serapis. Foreigners resorted thither in crowds, attracted rather by the pleasures they could enjoy in the city, than to offer sacrifices to the god. The surrounding country, which was inundated by the Nile, was clothed with the riches of nature; while the city afforded all the enjoyments of luxury in the greatest profusion. The attractions of the situation, the beauty of the climate, the delicacies of the table, and the general affluence of the people; the pleasures, in short, of every kind, which seemed to have made this their favourite abode, all concurred to make Canopus the most enchanting retreat, and to render its inhabitants the happiest assemblage of people*. But dissipation had there attained its highest pitch; licen-

* — *Pelæi gens fortunata Canopi.* VIRG. Georg. lib. iv.

tioufness knew no bounds; the venial errors, the amiable favours of the women, inspired by tenderness alone, degenerated into effrontery*; in a word, this could no longer be the retreat of the sage †.

Excess of luxury, and a general depravity of manners, are the certain precursors of the approaching fall of states, and of the degeneracy of the people. Canopus is no more. The descendants of its former inhabitants are mere barbarians; the Nile now denies its refreshing moisture to a depopulated soil; the plains are become parched deserts; no part of the monuments of its magnificence have retained either their place or their position: all is fallen; all is overthrown; all is destroyed; and the proud and delightful Canopus exists no longer but in the memory of a few.

The day after our arrival at Aboukir, M. Forneti and I went to pay our respects to the governor: he was a barber. Being apprized of our intended visit by the Jew, he immediately put on his best suit, and covered his head with a white shawl. We found him sitting in his shop, with a fan of feathers in his hand. He received us with all the gravity of a vizier; at the same time he offered us every service that lay in his power, expressing his regret that he could not invite us to take coffee, from its being unfortunately locked up. On our retiring, he preserved the same state that he assumed on our entrance. Our landlord was on very good terms with him, a circumstance by no means remarkable, as he was not only the Jew's governor, but likewise his barber.

We solicited and obtained permission to visit the castle. It is a place of very trifling importance. On the land side, it is surrounded by a ditch filled from the sea. There is placed on it a light-house, which was so badly illuminated, that it could be distinguished only

* According to Strabo, the canal was night and day covered with barges filled with men and women, dancing and singing in the most lascivious manner.

† “Should a sage wish for retirement, he would not choose Canopus as a place of retreat.” *Seneca, Epistle 51.*

at a short distance. The fort is defended by a few pieces of small cannon, which, however, are insufficient to prevent the Russians from taking the *germs* immediately under the batteries. The governor had us attended to the fort by his lieutenant, a very filthy and lousy officer, who was so well satisfied with our behaviour, that, from mere gratitude, he gave us the most pressing invitation to partake of the amusement of fishing: he was by profession a fisherman.

During the day, the village of Aboukir appeared uninhabited; the doors of the houses were shut; no person appeared in the streets; for this reason, that the inhabitants, almost to a man, were either fishermen or sailors belonging to the *germs*.

When we left the castle, we passed by the shop of the governor, who was now a simple barber. He invited me to purchase a valuable antique engraved stone, upon which he set a high price, from the circumstance of his name being engraved on the reverse. In order to insinuate myself into the good graces of a personage of his importance, I purchased the seal at a sum rather above its value.

In the market-place there is a long black stone covered with hieroglyphics. An inhabitant of Aboukir perceiving me attentively examining and endeavouring to decipher this piece of antiquity, came up and offered to dispose of a statue, which he said was very fine, but was partly buried in the ground. I sent one of my people with him, but the statue was not to be found. However, that the man might not lose his expected profit, he began to remove the earth, and in a few minutes discovered a very beautiful marble monument, inscribed with hieroglyphics, of which he immediately came to give us notice. We repaired to the spot, and found a little pyramid in perfect preservation. It was of the finest black marble, and all along each side of its base was encircled with hieroglyphics in a state of equal preservation. This piece of antiquity I purchased from a man who had no more right to it than myself, and employed the Jew drogueman to send it to me at Rossetta by the first *germ* that was

coming from Aboukir. The reader may conceive the riches of this mine of antiquities, covered by a very slight layer of earth and rubbish, when a man unprovided with any implement, and with his hands alone, could scrape up the foil at hazard, and discover, in less than half an hour, such a valuable treasure.

Having made this purchase, we took leave of the honest Jew, and set out for Rossetta, where we arrived at ten o'clock at night. We saw on the beach a great many wagtails; and upon the palm-trees some blackbirds, which, as well as the thrushes, arrive in the northern part of Egypt at the beginning of winter. They come in greater numbers when the rains have set in. They are said to be at that time very fat and delicate. Five or six jackals passed close by us: we could easily distinguish them by the light of the moon, and the sight of us appeared to give them no alarm.

All this day there was a very strong wind from the east-south-east; the sky was cloudy, and in the evening there was a shower of rain. The sea was high, its waves breaking against the dikes of Aboukir, and rolling with violence along the coast. Their roaring spread through the solitude over which we were travelling, and which they seemed desirous to invade.

CHAPTER XXI.

BEDOUINS. — BIRDS. — BOGHASS. — TOWER OF CANOPUS. — ABOU-MANDOUR. — GRAPES.—
DESERT. — JACKALS. — LIZARDS. — INSECTS. — SERPENT. — DIFFICULTIES IN REGARD TO
THE PYRAMID OF ABOUKIR. — OPINION OF THE EGYPTIANS RESPECTING TRAVELLERS.

ON my return from Aboukir, I was desirous of taking a near view of the mouth of the Nile, the *Boghass*, so celebrated for danger and shipwrecks. The vice-consul, his drogouman, and a French merchant wished to be of the party, and we set out, mounted upon asses. We stopped at the gardens above the castle, where some Bedouin Arabs were encamped; their tents were not large, and still less comfortable; they announced the misery of those they served to shelter. Their women do not cover their faces like those of the other people settled in Egypt. The bloom of youth rendered tolerably agreeable the youngest of them, notwithstanding the rather too tawny colour of their skin; and they appeared to be of an obliging disposition.

We were immediately surrounded by these women asking charity. One or two medines * were sufficient to satisfy them. The old women, perceiving that these trifling presents were most readily given to the young ones, took care to send them to us, the better to excite our interest and generosity. They broke out into loud fits of laughter when they saw that their plan was successful, and particularly, that the girls became in some degree objects of attention. While my companions were carrying on a lively conversation with the young Arabs, I was encompassed by a group of old women frightfully ugly. Having, perhaps, considered me more generous than the

* In Turkey the medine (*parat*) is a piece in which there is a small portion of silver; it is worth rather more than a *fous*.

rest, they kept me in the midst of them, and would not let me go. I made a thousand efforts to get rid of them, and was sincerely thankful when I escaped from the circle of these importunate old hags, whose shrivelled and swarthy faces were rendered still more ugly by the black compartments which, by means of indelible punctures, they had traced upon their chin.

There were in these gardens turtle-doves, thrushes, and black-birds; and also some grosbeaks, or hawfinches*, upon the date-trees. I likewise saw there two birds of prey of the species described in page 212; and I shot, near a small pool of water, two snipes of the species distinguished by the name of green sandpipers, vulgarly called by the French *culs blancs*, and in Provence *béchants* †. The male and the female were together.

Continuing our route towards the sea, the ground, which had lately been covered with the waters of the Nile, was slippery, muddy, and intersected by ditches. Our beasts fell down, sunk in the mire, and several times left us in the water or the dirt. None of us escaped these little accidents, nor the mutual pleasantries to which they gave rise. At length we approached that narrow and dangerous channel which forms the bar across the mouth of the Nile. The sea running high in the offing, was breaking over it with fury, and raising boisterous waves mingled with foam and sand. We here also saw the mast-heads of two *germs* which had been wrecked some days before; and upon the beach, sailors were employed in carrying away the dead bodies of some of their shipmates cast on shore by the sea.

The coast is low, and entirely of sand; it was covered with a number of water-fowl, such as gulls, sea-larks, herons of the com-

* *Gros-bec*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 99.—*Loxia coccyzina*, L.

† *Bécasseau*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 343.—*Tringa ochropus*, L.

mon species *, &c. These last were so remarkably wild, that it was impossible to approach them.

The next day I went half a league to the south of Rossetta, to see a tower, which they call the Tower of *Canopus*, from the erroneous supposition that the town of Rossetta is the site of the ancient Canopus. This tower has been built in modern times, upon a hillock of sand, which, at this place, forms the west bank of the Nile. It is square: it was partly demolished, and the remains announced approaching ruin. In the lower part, the inhabitants of this district shewed the opening of a subterraneous passage, which, according to their account, led to Alexandria.

From the top of the tower is seen a general view of the country: it has no other bounds than those which Nature has prescribed. Vast plains exhibit their beauties in uninterrupted succession. How sublime, how diversified are the prospects that strike the eye! What other spot can boast a similar assemblage? In these variegated scenes, the most magnificent and the most awful decorations of nature alternately present themselves to the admiring beholder. In the east, verdure and fertility display their treasures upon the rich carpet of the Delta; to the north, the sea, alike the source of wealth and misfortunes, heedlessly rolls along its waves, the emblems of inconstancy; while to the west, the dominion of sterility seems eternally established upon the parched deserts of Lybia.

Near the foot of the tower, and close to the edge of the Nile, stands a mosque consecrated to a holy Mussulman, called *Abou-mandour*, which signifies *Father of the light*. This saint, if he is the father of the light, is also the terror of the sands, as, but for him, they would long ago have overwhelmed the city of Rossetta, and added it to their dreary domain. The credulity of the Mahometans does not stop in

* *Heron commun*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 787.—*Ardea cinerea*, L.

so good a road. Abou-mandour is the enemy of every kind of sterility; women afflicted with this malady go to implore his aid, and pay their *novenas* under the direction of the sheick of the mosque; and it seldom happens, according to report, that their prayers are not heard. The worship of this powerful protector is general; not a boat passes before the place consecrated to him, without the sailors and passengers making an offering to the sheick, in order to secure the favour of the saint.

Plate VI. represents a view of this mosque. In the fore-ground is the Nile, which a little higher up, after having ascended it in a southern direction, forms a considerable elbow to the eastward, and afterwards again runs to the south. On the other side are the delightful plains of the Delta. This landscape was taken from the foot of the tower of Canopus.

Ten or twelve years before my arrival at Rossetta, a Turk residing there employed people to dig in the environs of this tower. He found several very beautiful columns of granite, which he had conveyed to Rossetta, with a view of using them in the construction of a building. Ali Bey, apprized of this discovery, imagined, or rather pretended to believe, that the Turk had found some gold. He condemned him to pay a considerable sum, which totally put it out of the poor man's power to build, and completely disgusted him with making researches. Part of these columns were still upon the bank of the Nile, opposite to the house of the French, and the others had been broken, to be appropriated to various purposes. They appeared to have belonged to the ancient city of *Metelis*, the site of which should be indicated by the tower of Canopus.

Opposite to the mosque of *Abou-mandour*, upon the east bank of the Nile, are two or three houses. They are called *Maadiè*, because they stand at the place facing the usual passage to the Delta. Above *Maadiè* is *Bouffourath*, a village formerly dreaded on account of the great number of robbers who inhabited it, and used to plunder

plunder the boats. They were exterminated by a Bey of the name of *Mebemet*. A little higher than *Bouffourath* is another village, called *Hafsbet*.

On the west bank, at a short distance above *Abou-mandour*, is *Dgeddiè*, a considerable village, in the environs of which a great number of vine-plants grow in the sand. From thence Rossetta and Alexandria are supplied with grapes.

Although no wine is made in Egypt, the vines are nevertheless much multiplied by layers. These are, in general, laid in the sand, where they easily take root and grow rapidly; and the grapes which they produce acquire a most delicious flavour. Most of those which are eaten contain but one stone. The Arabic name of the grape is *aneb*. The leaves of the vine are much used in Egyptian cookery. They are made use of to envelop large balls of hashed meat, one of the dishes most commonly served up at good tables. The leaves must be young, and they are often sold dearer than the grapes themselves.

The wines of the environs of Alexandria, and of some of the other districts of Egypt, were formerly very famous. It will be easy for us to restore their ancient reputation, by covering the sandy soil with the excellent vine-plants which are there yet to be found.

The sands in the vicinity of the tower of Canopus have a lively appearance, from the assemblage of a variety of birds. I distinguished the Alpine vulture, a number of lapwings running along the beach in search of their food, that is to say, of different kinds of insects. I also saw some wagtails; and, lastly, a few crested larks*.

While the draughtsman, with whom I left the consul's janizary, was taking the sketch of *Abou-mandour*, I penetrated into the desert. At a distance, this sandy region appeared a level surface: it is, never-

* *Cochevis, ou la grosse alouette huppée*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 503, Fig. 1.—*Aulada cristata*, L.

theles, diversified with steep hills, forming between them very narrow and deep valleys, to which it is easy to descend without the fatigue of walking: a person has only to let himself go, and the moving sand, which sinks under his feet, brings him gently to the bottom. These deep ravines have, according to all appearance, been made by the waters running over a soil, which, though so ungrateful at this day, they formerly fertilized.

The tracks of different animals were here to be seen. I distinguished those of numerous jackals, and also their fresh dung, which they hide with the sand, by scratching it up like cats.

The dust which covers the beds of sand is so fine, that the lightest animal, even the smallest insect, leaves in it, as upon the snow, the marks of its feet. The variety of these impressions produces an agreeable effect, which relieves the mind, saddened in districts where nothing but symptoms of the proscription of nature can be expected to be found. I could not help admiring the tracks of a species of small lizard very common in this desert; the extremity of their tail describes regular sinuosities, in the middle of two rows of impressions made by their four feet with their five slender toes extended. These tracks are multiplied and interwoven near the subterraneous retreats of these little animals, and present a singular appearance that is not unpleasing.

I have just mentioned one of the principal characters of these lizards; they have, in fact, five toes on each foot, those of the hind feet being considerably longer than those of the fore ones, and all of them being armed with nails. Their eyes are very large in proportion to the size of the body; their tail is round, and terminates in a tapering point. The scales upon the top of the head are large, and of an irregular shape; those on the upper part of the body, the thighs, and legs, are semicircular, and very small: those on the inferior part of the body are oblong; those on the belly are of the form of lozenges placed horizontally: the tail is covered circularly

with bands of scales in the form of a mutilated cone. The tongue is broad, blackish, and forked at the tip.

The largest of these lizards which I measured was seven inches long, and the tail four inches four lines: their general size is from four to five inches. The top of the head is of a yellowish green, speckled with black spots; all the upper parts of the body and the legs are variegated with green and yellow, and brown sinuous lines, which form an agreeable contrast with the ground tint; the toes and nails are yellow; the tail on the upper part is green shaded with yellow, and marked with blackish spots, the colour of which is paler towards the point: all the inferior parts of the body and the inside of the legs are of a greenish gray, as well as the under part of the tail, which has a small mixture of red on the half of its length, and at its extremity: this red tint is more or less strongly marked in the different individuals. I also observed, that the spots on the head and back varied in form, and that the black is very shining in some of these reptiles, and very clear in others; differences which undoubtedly are merely those of age and sex.

To a handsome scaly covering, these little animals join great vivacity and agility in their motions. They quickly retreat into the numerous holes they make at the foot of the plants and of the few shrubs to be here found, which are of a very hardy appearance, and seem to partake of the barrenness of the soil where they grow. Here they never long remain, and the only way we could catch them was by watching at the mouth of their holes, and striking them, as they came out, with the butt end of our guns. I held a living one in my hand; it bit my finger with all its force, but did not hurt me; its jaws and teeth, which are very slender, being too weak to occasion any pain.

I found on the sands the species of *carabus*, without wings under the elytra or wing-cases, described by Citizen Olivier under the denomination

denomination of *carabe moucheté* *; and another species with wings under the elytra; its body is elongated and flattened to four lines and a half in length; has a broad and marginated corselet, with two small indentations in its posterior edge, the elytra bordered and lightly marked with longitudinal lines, and each of them with three spots; the top of the head and of the corselet, as well as the elytra, is of a beautiful gold colour and shining green; the elytra are bordered with a dazzling gold colour; all the upper part of the body is black; the antennæ, thighs, and legs are of a bright yellow; lastly, the feet are of a deep yellow.

I also saw here four other insects; one of them, four lines in length, was a *tenebrio*; its corselet was rounded, convex, and marginated; each elytrum convex; so that the place of their junction was indented, the body terminating in an obtuse point; the top of the head, of the corselet and of the elytra were dotted with very small points, more perceptible on the elytra than on the head and corselet. This insect is all over of a beautiful shining black †.

The second species was a cricket, *acrydium*. Its length was two inches two lines; its reticular eyes were striped with black and brown; its beautiful wings were gray, and covered with several spots, some yellow and others orange-colour: the rest of the insect was variegated with yellow and yellowish green.

These large crickets are very common in the sands which I tra-

* *Carabus apterus ater, thorace cordato, albo marginato, elytris maculis plurimis albis* — *Carabus multiguttatus*. Carabe moucheté. Olivier, Enc. Meth. Note. These carabi are the same insects which Geoffroi calls *buprestes*. Hist. des Insectes des Env. de Paris.

† It is possible that the insects I now describe may have been indicated by some authors; but the uncertainty which the indicative terms leave, have often stopped me; and I thought it would be better to describe them, than to lose my time in making searches for the greater or less probability of the applications.

verfed : they fly better and farther than the other infects of the fame kind, and it is not eafy to catch them.

The third infect which I found in the fame defert, on the brink of a fmall pond of rain-water, was a water-fcorpion, *nepa*. Its antennæ, if that name can be given to parts which have more the appearance of legs and arms, are fhaped like the claws of a crab ; they have but one articulation to each tarfus : the eyes are very large and black ; the abdomen, which is extremely flat, is terminated by two appendages in the form of a furcated tail. The wings are blackifh, and all the reft of the infect is yellow. Little elongated eggs, pointed and of a bright red, were attached by one of their extremities to the belly of this individual.

The fourth and laft fpecies was a *scarabæus*, eight lines in length. It had ftriated antennæ, and the head large and flattened in front, which forms a cafque projecting on its crown by two fmall points, and two other fmall prominent points at its interior border. The corfelet was broad, margined, and bright, for half its length, and the reft of it as dark as fhagreen ; a fhield between the elytra, which were ftreaked with fmall points fcarcely perceptible. The body was convex in the upper part, and almoft as thick as it was broad. The feet were fhort, the thighs large and thick ; thofe of the posterior pair of claws, in particular, were uncommonly big, and had the form of fmall balls a little flattened. The extraordinary thicknefs of the hind legs of this *scarabæus* gives it a very fingular appearance.

Its colours are eafily defcribed ; it is of a beautiful fhining black on the upper part ; a golden line marks the feparation of the head and corfelet ; the antennæ, the feet, and all the inferior parts of the body, are reddifh.

I had obferved in the fand a track drawn in a very regular manner, and which made me at firft think it was the impreffion of the folds of a ferpent. Defirous of knowing to what animal this track belonged, I followed it for a hundred yards, when I came up

with the beetle, which was slowly moving on with a steady pace. It must have taken a long time to traverse that distance. Its compact and round-made body, its feet short and astonishingly thick, indicate its strength, which it appears to exert in making its little journies in the desert.

We saw likewise a very small serpent shining with the most beautiful colours. We could not approach it before it had crept into a hole, concealed by the low branches of a shrub.

On returning to my lodgings at Rossetta, M. Forneti shewed me a letter he had received from the Jew drogueman at Aboukir, informing us, that just as he was shipping the little pyramid which I had purchased, he was prevented by the garrison of the castle. M. Forneti had immediately gone to wait upon the Aga of Rossetta, who was also commandant of Aboukir; and had obtained, though not without much difficulty, an order to allow the pyramid to be sent. This officer was already informed of the circumstance before it had been mentioned to him by M. Forneti. He alleged, that the people with whom we had bargained for the purchase of the marble had no right to sell it; and that it was to him alone we ought to have applied. The meaning of this was, that I must expect to pay for it twice over. The Aga added, that he had been assured the little pyramid was quite full of gold. In consequence of this idea, he desired that immediately on the arrival of the monument he should be apprized, in order that he might examine it, and see himself what gold it contained. He consented to sell it to us, in case none should be found.

The ignorant Aga was not satisfied with these precautions; he had privately brought to him the janizary who had accompanied us to Aboukir, in order to learn from him if there really was gold in this piece of marble. This janizary, who had for a long time been attached to the service of the French, and accustomed to attend them, knew that gold was not the object of their researches in Egypt: he did

every thing in his power to undeceive the Aga, but in vain ; the Malmalûk could not possibly conceive that we could set any value upon a stone ; and the questions he asked on this subject were extremely ridiculous.

At length the pyramid arrived from Aboukir. As soon as it was landed at the port of Rossetta it attracted a crowd of curious spectators. Exclamations on its beauty were heard on all sides. It was in their eyes a precious stone, in the strict sense of that expression, because it sparkled in the sun. They could not refrain from feeling a respect for the *Franks*, who had the sagacity to discover so admirable a stone.

There was every reason to believe that the stupid observations of so many ignorant admirers had reached the ears of the Aga, and confirmed his idea of a great treasure. M. Forneti and I agreed to let the marble remain on the wharf, and to appear to think no more about it. In the mean while the Aga, who had had time to ascertain that he had made all this stir about what was no more than a piece of stone, became surpris'd at the little anxiety we shewed to take it away. He sent for the janizary, in order to know the reason of an indifference which was only affected. The latter, who had his lesson, told the Aga, that after the claims he had set up respecting the stone, we had given up all idea of it ; but that, at the same time, we would still take it, if he did not put upon it too high a price. The janizary returned with an order to have it conveyed to my lodgings, and an assurance that the Aga would make a considerable abatement in his pretended demands ; and that he would settle the matter with M. Forneti. The result was, that it cost me only a present of no great value.

Circumstances having prevented me from taking away my little pyramid when I quitted Egypt, I left it in a storehouse belonging to the French house at Rossetta, and recommended it to the care of the consul. If any person should think they had a right to obtain

possession of it, as an article abandoned, I beg him to recollect, that its acquisition cost me considerable trouble, exertion, and even uneasiness; I say nothing of the money. I consider that I am entitled to reclaim it; and the motives for my claim will surely induce the possessor to restore this beautiful piece of antiquity; since I have no other wish than to present it to the national museum, in which it deserves to occupy a distinguished place.

The opinion that the researches of the Europeans had no other object than the discovery of treasures buried or concealed in the monuments of antiquity, was entertained by all the inhabitants of Egypt; and this was one of the greatest difficulties that travellers had to overcome. A Turk belonging to Rosetta had, at the door of his storehouse, a very beautiful piece of granite, on which were engraved hieroglyphics in perfect preservation. After I had caused a drawing to be made of it*, I asked the proprietor himself to sell me the granite; offering, besides, to have another stone placed in its stead at my own expense. The Turk would never listen to any proposal; he alleged as a motive of his refusal, that this granite was full of gold. The man was poor, and when I asked him why he did not break this stone, in order to get at riches that appeared so necessary to him, he answered, that it would be a wicked and dangerous action, because his stone was a talisman.

* This drawing is one of those which at different times I sent to France, and which have been lost. I regret that I had not preserved them, as they would have been interesting and proper to embellish this work.

CHAPTER XXII.

BANANA-TREE.—PAPAW-TREE.—ROUND-LEAVED PROSTRATE WHITE MALLOW.—MELOCHIA, OR GARDEN JEW'S MALLOW.—BAMIA, OR ESCULENT HIBISCUS.—ATLE.—BUFFALO.—WATER OF THE NILE.—THE PLAGUE.—CLIMATE OF EGYPT.—TREATMENT OF THE DEAD.—CEMETERIES.—DISEASES.—ELEPHANTIASIS.—DISORDERS OF THE EYES.

DURING the three winter months the yellow fruit of the banana-tree adorned the gardens of Rossetta: this was the season of its maturity. These trees, which are not natives of the soil of Egypt, were as yet only cultivated in the northern part of that country. They are commonly met with about Rossetta, and, as I was informed, near Damietta. Some also grow near Cairo; but none are to be seen beyond that city. They are even so scarce at Cairo, that a basket of their fruit is there esteemed a very acceptable present. It is oblong; its pulp is soft and mildly acid. It is the species the fruit of which is known in the French West India islands by the name of *figue banane*, and in the colony of Cayenne by that of *bacove* *. It is of a more agreeable and richer flavour than the fruit of the common plantain-tree †.

By the side of these exotics I observed another species which I had also seen in America, and the fruit of which is equally gratifying to

* *Musa spadice nutante, floribus abortientibus terminalibus deciduis*—*Musa sapientum*, L.—*Musa sapientum, spadice nutante, floribus masculis deciduis*—*Bacobe*. Aublet, Hist. des Pl. de la Guiane, tome ii. p. 930:—*Musa fructu cucumerino breviori*. Plum. Nov. Gen. 24.---*Ang.* Spotted musa or banana-tree.

† *Musa spadice nutante, floribus abortientibus persistentibus*—*Musa paradisiaca*, L. Aublet, place above quoted.—*Musa fructu cucumerino longiori*, Plum. Nov. Gen. 24.

the taste and smell. The papaw or custard-apple *, transplanted into these gardens, attains the height of a middling tree. The fruit is covered with papillary elevations somewhat similar to those of a fir-cone. When it is ripe, its colour is green, mixed with yellow. It is of the size of a large apple. (See the representation of it, Plate III. Fig. 3.) Its Arabic name is *kishta*, which signifies *cream*. Its soft pulp is, indeed, as white as cream. The seeds, which are numerous, are brown and oblong.

In the shade of the orchards are cultivated various plants, the roots of which are also refreshed by the water that is conveyed to them in every direction by little trenches; each enclosure having its well, or reservoir, from which the water is distributed by a wheel turned by oxen. Here also grows a great deal of mallow †, which is called *bobezè*. It is dressed with meat, and is one of those herbs in most general consumption in the kitchens of Lower Egypt. There is not much of it in Upper Egypt, nor is it there eaten.

Two other plants, as frequently used as food, are the garden Jew's mallow and the esculent hibiscus. The former, the Arabic name of which is *melochia* ‡, bears a great resemblance to the marsh-mallow; and when dressed, it yields, like it, a mucilaginous juice. Its flowers, in the shape of a rose, of a yellow colour mixed with red, and its general beautiful appearance, would make it worthy of attention, as an ornamental plant, even were it not of the number of those which nature has destined for the nourishment of men. The second, which also bears its Arabic name *bamia* §, is likewise very similar to the

* It is the species which Plumier has designated under the denomination of *guanabanus fructu cœruleo*, and Linnæus under that of *anona squamosa*. Forkal (Flora Egyptiaco-arabica) has described it, and called it *anona glabra, keshtha, foliis ellipticis, fructu globoso*.—*Ang.* Scaly-fruited anona, or sweet sop.

† *Malva rotundifolia*, L.—*Ang.* Round-leaved prostrate white mallow.

‡ *Corchorus olitorius*, L.—Forkal, Flora Egyptiaco-arabica, p. 101.

§ *Hibiscus esculentus*, L.—Forkal, Flora Egyptiaco-arabica, p. 125.

mallow. Its flowers are yellow. It is the *kalalou* of America*, and furnishes the most glutinous of all dishes.

These two latter plants, as well as the banana-tree and the *kishta*, are not natives of Egypt, although they are there very much propagated. But a tree which appears to be indigenous in that country, is the *atlè*, a species of large tamarisk † as yet little known. Linnaeus has not mentioned it; and if it is described in the thirteenth edition of his *Systema Naturæ*, in which the author had no hand, it is because Gmelin, the editor, has availed himself of the indication given of it by Forskal.

This *atlè*, which is different from the common tamarisk ‡ by its size, as well as its specific characters, upon which I shall quote a traveller perfectly versed in the science of botany §, attains the height and thickness of the oak. Its leaves are alternate, long, very narrow, and of a pale green. I will not dwell upon its description, having had a drawing made of the trunk and a branch of one of these trees. (See Plate III. Fig. 2.) I regret that at the time this drawing was made, there were neither flowers nor fruit upon the specimen which the artist had to portray. These trees are, in general, covered with galls, adhering to the branches. I have observed that before they were dried, these galls were filled with a liquor of a very beautiful deep scarlet, from which the arts may, perhaps, be able to derive considerable benefit; for the galls are exceedingly numerous, and the trees that bear them grow all over both Upper and Lower Egypt. I dwell the more upon this remark, because I have read in a manuscript catalogue of plants, which was in the possession of a companion

* The author has, in this instance, fallen into an error. The *hibiscus esculentus* is the *ochra*, not the *kalalou*, of America. T.

† *Tamarix orientalis*, Forskal, Flora Egyptiaco-arabica, p. 206.—Lin. 13th edit.

‡ *Tamarix gallica*, L.

§ *Differt à tamar. gallica, cujus rami squamati, squamis alternis, sessilibus lanceolatis; ramuli breves, imbricati; foliis lanceolatis, confertis.* Forskal, place before quoted.

of M. Tott, that *the atlè is a species of the tamarisk which grows in Upper Egypt, towards Sabil*. Now there is scarcely a single village in Lower Egypt, which, among the trees that surround it, has not several *atlès*.

The wood of this tree serves for various purposes; among others, for charcoal. It is the only wood that is common in Egypt, either for fuel, or for manufacturing; indeed it is a common proverb among the inhabitants, that, were the *atlè* to fail, the world would go ill.

Under the shade of the *atlè*, and near the husbandman's hut, is often seen the female of the buffalo, tied by the four feet, and feeding upon *barfim* with her young. She yields to her owner plenty of excellent milk, from which butter is made, and several kinds of cheese. The buffalo* is an acquisition of the modern Egyptians; with which their ancestors were unacquainted. It was brought from Persia into their country, where the species is at present universally spread and very much propagated. It is even more numerous than that of the ox, and it is there equally domestic, though but recently domesticated, as is easily distinguishable by the constantly uniform colour of the hair, and still more by a remnant of ferocity, and intractability of disposition, and a wild and lowering aspect, the characteristics of all half-tamed animals.

These buffaloes of Egypt, however, are not near so wild, nor so much to be feared as those of other countries; they there partake of the very remarkable gentleness of other domestic animals, and only retain a few sudden and occasional caprices. The sight of any thing red, which is said to make them fly into fits of ungovernable fury elsewhere, makes no impression on them in Egypt. The inhabitants of the country, besides their red turban, wear also, in general, another shawl of the same colour which envelops the neck and chest, and I never observed that the sight of either at all affected the buffaloes. I

* *Bos bubalus*, L.

happened to shoot at some birds, near a few female buffaloes surrounded by their young, the report of my gun threw them into a violent agitation; they appeared to be in a great rage, and would have given me some uneasiness, had they not been very securely tied. The owner reassured me, and said, that the impetuous motions of the animal were only the effect of fear; so that the buffaloes of Egypt are more terrific, from their wild look and furious gestures, than they are really dangerous. Persons unaccustomed to see these animals cannot easily divest themselves of all timidity. Hasselquitz relates that the buffaloes appeared, especially near Rossetta, to be incensed against him and his interpreter, because they wore red clothes, so that their janizary was obliged to drive them away with his stick*: upon this I must remark, that animals of the size and strength of buffaloes, which may be kept off with a stick, are not much to be dreaded.

I have already observed that the colour of the buffaloes of Egypt is invariably the same: their whole body is blackish, except the tuft of hair on the forehead, and that at the extremity of the tail, which are of a yellowish white. Among the great number of those which are kept there, I never saw but one that differed from the others, by its having the four legs, the under part, and the sides of the body of a beautiful white.

The Egyptians have not derived all the advantages that they might from the acquisition of buffaloes; they neither use them for tillage nor for any kind of labour. They rear the females for the sake of their milk, and the males to be slaughtered and eaten. The flesh is red, hard, and dry: it has, besides, a musky smell, rather unpleasent. The Mahometans of Egypt, Arabs as well as others, far from considering this meat as unclean†, introduce it at their meals as an excellent dish. They even quote upon this subject an aphorism of one of

* Travels to the Levant.

† Michaelis' 85th question.

their ancient physicians, who has affirmed that, after the flesh of the sheep, which he compares to *theriaca*, that of the buffalo is the most nutritive of aliments. Notwithstanding this authority, I shall have some difficulty in believing that it will ever become a favourite dish among Europeans; not that it is disgusting to the sight, or engenders vermin, as Bochart says*, but because it is generally very tough, and has a smell which is not usual in our ragouts. Niebuhr does not appear to have found it so bad, since he thinks he has eaten some without being aware of it †. However, it is hardly possible to mistake it; and when the same traveller adds, that persons of consequence, as well as the common people, and even the European merchants, eat a great many buffaloes in the countries where these animals abound, this must not be understood of the French merchants in Egypt, whose taste was too delicate to admit upon their tables so coarse a dish, which is banished even from those of the opulent Egyptians. The hides of buffaloes are, in Egypt, a considerable article of commerce; and various articles are manufactured from their horns, which are flattened and circularly striated.

There are no land animals that delight so much in water as the buffaloes. They are fond of lying down and staying in it a long time. I have seen some remain in it a whole day. It often happens that the water which is fetched from the Nile, near its banks, has contracted their musky smell. They also swim with the greatest facility, easily crossing the river, however rapid and swelled; and the peasants make use of them to pass from one bank to the other. Their weight causing them to sink deep in the water, the men who wish to use these living boats, must hold fast by the horns, to prevent their being carried away by the rapidity of the stream. In Upper Egypt, I saw a young lad whom the strength of the current washed from a buffalo, perish in the water.

* Hierozoïcon.

† Description de l'Arabie, p. 145.

The female buffalo never, or at least very seldom, produces more than one young one at a time; the accounts which make them commonly bear two, and that of Maillet, which allows them four, are exaggerations of credulity.

It is to the water of the Nile that were paid the honours of these imaginary wonders of fecundity; and this miraculous influence was not confined to animals alone; women also felt its effects. It has been asserted, that it was sufficient for them to bathe in the fresh waters of the river or to drink them, to become mothers*. The Provençal navigators were so thoroughly convinced of this prolific virtue, that if, during the course of their voyages up the Levant, they landed on the coast of Egypt, they never failed to fill a cask with the water of the Nile, and to carry it home to their wives, as the most certain means of obtaining a numerous progeny.

The ancients had already extolled the properties of the Nile water; the moderns have surpassed them. But if some have said so much in its favour, others have represented it as insalubrious. The Nile was thus, at the same time, the subject of panegyric and censure. This is the lot of celebrity, when its object is remote.

The author of the *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois* had taken upon himself to attack the water of the Nile; the only water that is drank in a country where there are no fountains, and where, with the exception of a bad sort of beer, more in use in the Saïd than to the north, it is the sole beverage of the inhabitants. He has collected all that travellers have related of its bad qualities, real or imaginary: he quotes Granger, Pococke, Hasselquitz; and from their testimonies he sees the source of a multitude of disorders issue from the Nile; as if, in all the countries of the earth, these same disorders did not afflict mankind as well as in Egypt, except the elephantiasis, which is rather uncommon in

* Voyages de Paul Lucas, tome ii. p. 83.

Lower, and altogether unknown in Upper Egypt, where also the Nile affords men the only means of quenching their thirst.

During the course of my travels in that country, neither I nor my companions had any other beverage than the pure water of the Nile; we drank it in all seasons, even in that when the inundation so loads it with slime, that it becomes thick, reddish, and truly disgusting to the sight, without any one of us having experienced the slightest indisposition, without there having resulted from it any inconvenience that we could reasonably attribute to its use. For my part, I drank it in immoderate quantities, having been always tormented with a burning thirst in hot countries, and never has it done me any harm; I perceived, on the contrary, that it passed off very quickly, and that, consequently, it was very salubrious. Persons who had lived in Egypt for a number of years, and who had never had any other drink than the water of the Nile, spoke very highly of it; and far from considering it as a source of disorder, it was, in their opinion, the cause of the good state of health they enjoyed. Such is also the generally received opinion in Egypt, where this water is reckoned not only very wholesome, but is also supposed to possess qualities truly miraculous.

One of the fables to which the Nile has given occasion, is that of its fermentation, which, according to the superstitious tradition of the Copts, adopted by some travellers *, begins at the time of its increase, that is, at the summer solstice. Some persons have gone so far as to fix the day and the hour of the first signs of its rise, indicated by the fall of a particular dew, that is known by the name of *goutte*, and falls about the dawn of the day on which the Copts celebrate the feast of St. Michael, answering to what we formerly called the 17th of June. To eyes fascinated by ignorance, this dew is nothing less than the archangel himself, sent by the Divinity, in

* See Vanleeb. *Nouv. Relation de l'Egypte*, p. 47, &c.

order to cause the river to ferment, deliver the country that it waters from the prevailing disorders, purify the air, and give new vigour to mankind. The time that these miracles were expected, was the season when the water of the Nile was considered as more particularly insalubrious, and engendering different diseases: a singular effect of the benediction of Heaven, and of the arrival of St. Michael. This corrupted state of the waters, which was to be followed by a general purification, sometimes lasted forty days, and during that period a person was at a loss to procure wherewithal to quench his thirst with safety. All this has been said and repeated, as well as many other things which I omit; but a fable, though it may have employed the pen of several men, is not the less a fable. It even appears to be forgotten in Egypt; for I have there seen the water of the Nile fetched and drank, in all seasons and at all hours, without persons seeming to apprehend from it the smallest danger.

The method employed in this country to purify the water of the Nile, when it is loaded with slime, is well known; Savary has given an account of it, and before him, Prosper Alpinus had described it more particularly. It consists in beating about in the water, contained in great jars, some sweet almonds slightly bruised, and in rubbing therewith the edges of the vase. At the expiration of a few hours, the impure particles settle at the bottom of the jar, and the water remains clear and limpid.

The water thus purified, is poured out for use, into little vessels made of dried but unbaked clay, which the Turks call *bardacks*, and the Arabs *kollett*. They are not varnished, either without, or within; so that on being exposed to the open air, the water gradually oozes through their pores; and it is perfectly cooled by the continual evaporation. Of these vessels, some are more or less elegantly formed; the most admired are procured from Suez, and those which are most commonly used come from *Kenne*, a small town in Upper Egypt. They at the same time serve for water-jugs and goblets:

at

at table, as well as during the day, every one drinks out of these common vessels. They have generally a cover made of rushes, and persons in easy circumstances burn in them Scio mastic, the very powerful smell of which being imbibed by the porous substance, is thus a long time preserved, and communicates to the water a perfume to which a stranger must be accustomed to find it agreeable.

If the use of the Nile water has been reckoned the primary cause of several complaints, the climate of Egypt has long been considered as the focus of the most terrible diseases. A multitude of writers, and particularly M. Pauw, the constant depreciator of Egypt, have asserted that this country was the cradle of the plague, that irresistible instrument of death, and the theatre of its most cruel ravages. This opinion has been successively repeated and propagated even to our days. So late as the year 1773, a physician of Paris affirmed, that Egypt was the cradle of the plague*. Dr. Samoïlovitz, a Russian physician, also wrote, much about the same time, that the plague habitually reigned in Asia, and especially in Egypt. It is only since the travels of Savary and of Citizen Volney that the public has been undeceived, and perhaps some partial doubts may still exist on the subject.

It is nevertheless very certain that the plague, which is endemical in several other countries of the East, is not so in Egypt, and that it never originates in that country. Whenever it makes its appearance, it has been brought thither, either from Constantinople, from some other part of Turkey, or from the interior of Africa. This latter kind, which is called *the Saïd plague*, because it comes from Upper Egypt, is exceedingly dreaded. It is, in fact, more destructive than that which is brought from other quarters.

And what proves that the climate of Egypt, far from producing the most fatal of contagions, appears, on the contrary, to oppose it,

* Expériences pour parvenir à déterminer la Nature du Venin pestilentiel, &c. par Mauduit, D. M. (Journal de Physique, du mois d'Août 1773).

is, that, at the period of my travels, it had not been felt there for upwards of twelve years, although the inhabitants took no precaution to secure themselves against its introduction. Ships from Constantinople, the real focus of a contagion incessantly existing, frequently touched at Alexandria; the caravans from Africa arrived at Cairo several times a year, and no pestilential symptom had been perceived. It was even known that, in 1780, a caravel belonging to the Grand Signior had entered the old port of Alexandria with the plague on board. A man who was standing near a chest that was opened, being struck with the pestiferous *miasmata* issuing from it, fell down dead upon the spot; nevertheless all the Turks belonging to this ship came on shore, and went into different parts of the town, without exciting the smallest anxiety; they even mixed with the inhabitants, and no bad consequence resulted from this intercourse.

We may, therefore, banish all uneasiness respecting the fate of our interesting countrymen, by whose exploits and labours Egypt is at present honoured, as it was formerly by its civilization and its monuments. This country is by no means the *cradle of the plague*; the Arabs and the Turks who inhabit it, are not the *authors of this epidemical disease*; they do not suffer it to *take birth, in a manner, under their feet**; and the most simple precautions will suffice to banish it from thence for ever. In the unfrequent instances in which it appeared there, it occasioned great ravages; and this circumstance is alone sufficient to prove that it is not habitual in the country. Its effects were propagated in a manner equally sudden and terrible; the Turks considered it far more destructive than that in the midst of which they lived. It was always in the month of April that it made its appearance, and what was very singular, is that the contagion never failed to cease at once at the summer solstice. This epoch was also the term of the precautions which the foreign

* Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. p. 91.

merchants took at Alexandria. The houses were then again opened, intercourse was resumed, even before inquiries were made respecting the state of the disease; so certain did they think themselves that the period of its rage was at an end. The Alexandrians express in *lingua Franca* the adage which their experience has made them adopt—*Saint-Jean venir, gandouf* andar* (Saint John is come, adieu to the plague).

It must nevertheless be admitted, that if the plague and the other diseases which originate from putrid *miasmata*, were so unfrequent, it was not that the then Egyptians did not do every thing in their power to render them common. They neglected the most ordinary precautions. Under the hand of these barbarians, not only the traces of the grandeur of ancient Egypt were almost all effaced, but such works as were the indispensable foundation of the fertility of the soil, and of the salubrity of the air, were daily disappearing. Marshes had usurped the place of useful lakes; some canals were choked up; others, upon the point of being so by the quantity of mud that was suffered to remain in them, were nothing more, during a part of the year, than sheets of stagnant water, diffusing afar a fatal effluvia. The bodies of dead animals infected the plains, and sometimes the interior of the cities; in short, it seemed as if the inhabitants made it their study to render their country unwholesome. And what opinion may not be conceived of the salubrity of a climate which, in spite of the efforts of the demon of destruction, in spite of the mischiefs of ignorant indifference, had not contracted any dangerous influence?

In fact, no epidemical diseases there prevail. The new comer is not attacked by those violent and inflammatory fevers which, in our West India colonies, compose the tribute of death; he is not there tormented by long intermittent fevers which, in those countries, are followed by numerous obstructions and dropsy. Frequent dis-

* Plague. In Arabic, *koubbè*.

cases come not to threaten the life of the stranger, or of the native. Of us four Frenchmen, two only experienced any indisposition. In Upper Egypt I was attacked by the ophthalmia in one of my eyes; and my draughtsman could not for a long time get rid of a cutaneous disorder which he had brought with him: the rest of the time we constantly enjoyed a good state of health. We saw Turks arrive from Constantinople, emaciated by debauchery and its attendant complaints, and after some stay, resume, at least, the appearance of health. No reasoning whatever can possibly overturn facts; and dissertations may be heaped upon dissertations, as has been done by M. Pauw, in order to prove that Egypt contains the seeds of an infinite number of diseases; experience, the clearest of all demonstrations, will attest the purity and salubrity of its atmosphere.

Some traces of the precautions taken by the ancient Egyptians in the burial of the dead, are still employed by the moderns. The art of embalming is unknown to them; but the care with which they arrange dead bodies, a care which is inculcated, it is true, by the precepts of the Mahometan religion, is still the vestige, or, at least, the shadow of an ancient and forgotten practice.

As soon as a person is dead, the Egyptians press the different parts of the body, in order to make it discharge all its impurities: they wash it repeatedly, shave it, pluck out all the hair, and stop all the apertures closely with cotton; they then pour upon them odoriferous waters, and the perfumes of Arabia penetrate into all the pores. After having lavished these attentions of cleanliness, and marks of respect, upon inanimate remains, they commit them to the earth, and deposit them in the bosom of eternity. A small stone pillar, crowned with a turban, is erected upon the spot where reposes the head of the deceased. Every Friday, at the foot of this sepulchral monument, they renew their mournful adieus. The women fail not to repair thither, and with devout enthusiasm, to express their sorrow and their hopes: the tears of the daughter bedew the face of

the mother ; while the groans of the mother, accompanied by painful recollections, prolong in her mind the existence of the children she has lost. I do not speak of the tears of husbands ; there are in this country none but masters and slaves.

The exercise of this piety towards the dead, so neglected in our western hemisphere, is a sacred duty among the people of the East ; and no where is it better fulfilled. The idea that in dying we must renounce every token of the affection of those who were dearest to us, appals the soul and drives it to despair ; but, when we are assured that regret and the marks of the most tender sentiments attend us to the grave ; that there exists an affecting and durable intercourse between the living and the dead ; that on closing our eyes to the light, we shall not be the less surrounded by the objects we loved, it seems that the enjoyments of the soul are about to be perpetuated, and that they will be more perfect, because they will be less subject to interruption ; and we boldly enter into this career of immortality, which sensibility prepares.

Whatever may be their respect for the dead, the Orientals think that they have no right to injure the health of the living. Besides, solitude and silence best suit the frequent and melancholy visits they receive. The last retreats of men are placed without the limits of any habitation. They are large, solitary, and silent enclosures : a thick layer of earth covers the bodies, and protects them from the derangement and confusion that the course of time might produce ; a delicate precaution which the most refined feelings alone can have suggested.

Coffins covered with some sort of cloth, the colour of which is optional, are employed in Egypt to convey the dead to the place of interment. A turban, the privileged head-dress of the Mussulmans, is placed upon the carpet above the head ; and that their customs may in no respect agree with those of Christians, the dead are carried with the head foremost. They are preceded by priests reciting passages

pages

sages of the Koran; and women screaming, crying, and moaning, for money, follow the coffin. It will readily be conjectured, that the better the pay, the more priests and hired female mourners swell the procession.

There being no places destined for the interment of the French at Rossetta, those who died there were conveyed to Alexandria, where they were buried in the convent of St. George. The corpse was accompanied by the vicar, a drogueman, and a janizary. These funeral journies being made by land, they were very expensive.

After having spoken of the cemeteries of Egypt, it is natural to say a word of the most common diseases that send men thither. Though neither frequent nor epidemical, putrid and inflammatory disorders there attack those whose constitution is bilious. Dysenteries occur in that country, though not so frequently as in Europe. Herniæ are by no means uncommon; but it is not the Nile water which occasions them, as some authors have supposed: they originate from the relaxation occasioned by the use of warm baths, from the exercise of riding without proper precaution, and, above all, from the extraordinary wideness of a part of the Egyptian dress. Cutaneous diseases are common, and would be still more prevalent but for the use of the bath. The leprosy, and that horrible malady the elephantiasis, sometimes make their appearance; but they do not seem to be very contagious, for persons afflicted by them are seldom met with.

This last species of leprosy, to which the ancient Egyptians also were subject, desiccates and hardens the epidermis of the legs, and makes them very big, rugous, and similar in appearance to those of the elephant. It is peculiar to the northern part of Egypt, seldom appearing at any distance above Cairo; a circumstance which the ancient Egyptians had likewise remarked*. Hillary, who had ob-

* *Est elephas morbus qui propter flumina Nili
Gignitur, Egypto in medio neque præterea usquam.*

LUCRET.

served this dry leprosy at Barbadoes, never saw both legs swelled at the same time*. The contrary is the case in Egypt, where they alike acquire a frightful and prodigious size. No remedy was there known for this disease: some will, doubtless, be discovered by the researches and talents of the French physicians, who will also have an opportunity of ascertaining the efficacy of the method employed by the Indian physicians in the cure of the elephantiasis, and which is very minutely described in the second volume of the Asiatic Researches, printed at Calcutta.

There is, perhaps, no country in the world where the diseases which corrupt the sources of generation are more widely spread than in Egypt. The ravages of the *syphilis*, although checked by the heat of the climate, abundant perspiration, and warm baths, are not the less dreadful; and no remedy being employed to stop its progress, it sometimes produces the most frightful effects.

But a malady truly endemical, is the ophthalmia, or inflammation of the eyes. Egypt is the country of the one-eyed and blind. Eyes perfectly sound, or which are not swelled or watery, are rarely to be seen. Misfortune has likewise its bodies corporate; and the corporation of the blind at Cairo has sometimes revolted, and carried matters so far as to make the government tremble.

If Hasselquitz † may be credited, the vapours which exhale from the stagnant waters are the principal cause of these complaints of the eyes. But the ancient Egyptians kept the canals in the highest order: they cleansed them, and never suffered the water to stagnate; they were, nevertheless, afflicted with the ophthalmia. On this principle, the same traveller accounts for the greater number of disorders of the eyes at Cairo, than in other parts of Egypt, by the exhalations of the canal which crosses that city. I have passed almost

* William Hillary on the Glandular Disease of Barbadoes. London 1759.

† Voyage dans le Levant.

whole days at the window of an apartment that overlooked this canal, in the month of August, that is to say, at the time when the most fetid vapours exhale from it; and excepting the offensive smell; I felt no sort of inconvenience. If there be more blind people at Cairo, it is because its population is very considerable, and besides; the poor flock thither from all parts, in hopes of finding more relief; But the diseases of the eyes are equally common in the rest of Egypt. I preserved my eyes found at Cairo, and had like to have lost one of them in the Saïd.

The excessive heat, the air impregnated with nitrous particles, the acrid and burning dust which the winds scatter in the atmosphere, are the principal causes of the disorders of this organ. When the wind was a little strong, I could not expose myself for a moment, in the middle of the day, on the terrace of the house in which I resided at Cairo, without experiencing a very violent inflammation in my eyes. These sharp pains I often felt for several days; and I succeeded in getting rid of them only by the use of cooling lotions.

Among the causes of the cecity so general at Cairo, and in all the great towns, may be reckoned the frequent watering of the streets and houses. In order to temper the heat, a great quantity of water is thrown about them several times in the course of the day. The ground, for the streets are not paved, being excessively heated, emits nitrous and fiery exhalations that are pernicious to the eyes. When I was cured of the ophthalmia with which I had been afflicted, my eyes were exceedingly weakened; and I observed, that whenever the ground, or the gallery in which I staid, was wetted, they became painful, and for some moments I lost my sight. This remark, I think, has not yet been made. It is certain that water, thrown abundantly and frequently upon a burning soil, containing a great many saline particles, produces acrid vapours, which may be considered as one of the principal causes of blindness.

There exist also some secondary causes that render the disorders in

the eyes more frequent than they were in the time of the ancient Egyptians, as the bad quality of the food on which the present inhabitants subsist, and which communicates to the humours an acrimony that necessarily occasions several complaints, and particularly those affecting the sight; and to these may be added the excessive propensity of the Egyptians to pleasures which are seldom those of love*.

* *Multiplicatio coitus est nocibilior res oculo.* Avicen. iii. cap. 5.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CIRCUMCISION OF THE WOMEN.—SECT OF THE SAADI, OR SERPENT-EATERS.

NO person is unacquainted with the nature of the circumcision of men; no person is ignorant that the Jews and Mussulmans are circumcised. Among the ancient Egyptians this practice was considered as indispensable. Whether it was really so in their climate, is a question which I will not at present undertake to resolve; although I am pretty well convinced that circumcision, if not altogether necessary, is at least of very great utility among a rude and slovenly people. It is likewise in use among the Copts, who, not thinking themselves sufficiently sure of admittance into paradise by virtue of the baptism they receive as Christians, reckon it also necessary to submit to circumcision, following, in this respect, as in several others, the precepts of the religion of the Mahometans among whom they live. How extraordinary is a religious practice which nature disavows, and which cannot be mentioned without modesty taking the alarm! The particulars of an operation, which is the same among all those who follow the religion of Mahomet, will find their place in my Travels in Turkey; but in Egypt, it is not peculiar to the men: the women also undergo one of a somewhat similar nature.

This latter sort of circumcision was likewise practised by the people of ancient Egypt. It has been transmitted to their descendants alone; for those women who have come from other countries to settle in this, have not undergone it, nor, indeed, have they occasion for the operation. I am sensible how difficult it is to treat subjects of this nature, without awaking other ideas than those which occupy the
naturalist

naturalist in his researches ; but this point of the natural history of man is too important to be passed over in silence ; and no traveller, before me, has investigated and determined it with precision. I shall confine myself to such terms as anatomy has adopted. If it be, in any case, allowable not to be very intelligible to the generality of readers, it is, no doubt, on so delicate a subject.

It was well known that Egyptian women submitted to circumcision ; but authors were not agreed as to the motive of this custom. The greater number of those who have written on this practice, have considered it as the retrenchment of a portion of the nymphæ, which grow, it is said, in these countries, to an extraordinary size. Others, among whom is to be distinguished that illustrious traveller James Bruce *, have imagined that it was nothing less than the amputation of the clitoris, the elongation of which is, according to the same authors, a disgusting deformity. Mr. Bruce calls it *excision*, an expression which his able translator has introduced into our language, and for which it is, in fact, not easy to find a proper substitute.

Before an opportunity occurred of my ascertaining the nature of the circumcision of the Egyptian women, I also imagined that it consisted in the amputation of the excrescence of the nymphæ or of the clitoris, according to circumstances, and according as those parts were more or less elongated. It is even very probable that these operations take place, not only in Egypt, but likewise in several other countries of the East, where the heat of the climate, and other causes, may produce too great an increase of these parts ; and I had the more reason to be of this opinion, from having consulted several Turks settled at Rosetta, respecting the circumcision of their women, as they gave me no other idea of it than that of a painful mutilation of this kind, the motives of which they also explained. Being, as has already been seen, great admirers of a smooth and polished

* Travels in Nubia and Abyssinia.

surface, every inequality, every protuberance, is, in their eyes, a forbidding defect. At the same time they alleged that, by one of these operations, the women lost, with the ardour of their constitution, the facility of procuring themselves illicit enjoyments. A barbarous refinement of tyranny, and the lowest degree of debasement of the one half of the human species, which, by cruel means, the other half moulds to its pleasures at the will of its jealous despotism!

M. Niebuhr relates that Forskal, and another of his fellow-travellers, having expressed to a man of consequence at Cairo, at whose villa they stopped, a very anxious desire to examine a circumcised girl, their complaisant host instantly ordered that a country girl of eighteen years of age should be brought in, and allowed them to examine every thing at their ease. Their painter made a drawing of the parts from nature, in the presence of several Turkish servants; but he worked with a trembling hand, on account of the consequences to be dreaded from the Mahometans*. M. Niebuhr has not published the drawing made with a trembling hand; nor does he give any other information concerning this circumcision; but, from what precedes, it is clear that this traveller considers it only as the amputation of the nymphæ and clitoris, the enormous excrescence of which is so displeasing to husbands in these countries.

I suspected that there must be something more than an excess in these parts, an inconvenience which, far from being met with in all women, could alone have given rise to an ancient and general practice. At length I resolved to leave no doubt upon this subject, and formed the design, which must appear sufficiently bold to any person acquainted with the inhabitants of Egypt, not of having a drawing made of a circumcised girl, but of having one circumcised in my own apartments. M. Forneti, whose intelligence and obliging disposition had so often been useful to me, had the goodness to

* Description de l'Arabie, par Niebuhr, tome i. p. 71.

assist me in this enterprise; and by the mediation of a Turk, who served as a broker to the French merchants at Rossetta, I succeede in getting to my room a woman, whose profession it was to perform circumcision, and two young girls, one of whom had been circumcised two years before, and the other who was now to undergo that operation. M. Forneti, the Turkish broker, the consul's janizary, and myself, were the only men present at the ceremony.

I first examined the young girl that was to be circumcised; she was about eight years old, and of Egyptian origin. I was very much surpris'd to see her with a thick, flabby, and fleshy excrescence, covered with skin. This excrescence grew from above the commissure of the labia, and hung down it about half an inch. A tolerably correct idea may be formed of its size, and even of its shape, by comparing it to the caruncle pendent from the bill of a turkey-cock.

The operatrix sat down upon the floor; made the little girl sit down before her; and, without any preparation, took out a bad razor, and cut off the singular excrescence which I have just described. The child did not shew any signs of suffering much pain. A pinch of ashes was the only topical application employed, although the wound discharged a considerable quantity of blood. The operatrix touched neither the nymphæ nor the clitoris; and those parts were not externally visible, either in this girl, or in the other older one, who had already been circumcised.

Such is the nature of the circumcision of Egyptian females, and it may easily be conceived that it is a necessary operation; for this sort of elongated caruncle increases in proportion to a girl's age, and if suffered to remain, it would entirely cover the os externum. The woman who performed the operation assured me, that at the age of five and twenty, the excrescence would be more than four inches in length. It is peculiar to the women of Egyptian origin; all others being exempt from it, though belonging to nations that are settled in the country, and, in a manner, naturalized.

In general, this circumcision is not deferred to the age of puberty, which takes place earlier in Egypt than in our northern climates; but the Egyptian girls are deprived of this troublesome superfluity at seven or eight years old. The women of the Saïd are those who are in the habits of performing this operation, which is attended with little difficulty, as the reader may have conceived. They go about the towns and villages, crying in the streets: *Circumcifer! Who wants a circumcifer?* A superstitious tradition has fixed the period in which circumcision is to be practised, at the commencement of the increase of the Nile. To find parents who would allow their daughter to be circumcised in a season so remote from that which is reckoned the most favourable, was one of the difficulties I had to surmount: it was then winter; but money removed this obstacle as well as the others.

Now, if we consider the nature of an excrescence, a distinguishing characteristic of the women indigenous in Egypt, we shall discover some conformity with that which is peculiar to the inhabitants of the other extremity of Africa. Buffon was unwilling to give credit to the testimony of the only traveller who has asserted, that the Egyptian women had a sort of hard skin growing above the os pubis, and hanging very low; but which they destroy by cauterization*. There was nevertheless some truth in the account of Thevenot, and much less exaggeration than in those of the Jesuit Tachard, and of Kolben, who, from imagination alone, had been led to describe the natural apron of the female Hottentots.

If this sort of natural veil be not what has been represented, it appears, at least, that its existence cannot absolutely be denied; and if it be not a general appendage to the women of the south of Africa, it cannot be contested that it is found among some of the nations inhabiting that country. A celebrated modern traveller had at first

* Hist. Nat. de l'Homme.

considered this conformation as fabulous, because he had not seen it in those parts which he visited; but he has since met with it among the savage Hottentots, at a great distance from the Cape of Good Hope. He has given a drawing of one of these Hottentot women: it seems to indicate an elongation of the fleshy substance which covers the os pubis; and which, in falling perpendicularly over the labia, is divided into two parts. However, Le Vaillant, who considers this singularity only as the effect of art, or rather a caprice of fashion, adds, that it is an elongation of the labia, the distension of which is first produced by rubbing and pulling them, and afterwards continued by the suspension of weights, till they sometimes attain the length of nine inches*. Had Le Vaillant bestowed a little more time in the pursuit of his observations, upon a point so interesting to the natural history of man, he would probably have discovered that this extraordinary extension, which was represented to him as the effect of art, was the work of Nature alone. It is, in fact, very difficult to conceive how the superior commissure of the labia can acquire any considerable length, whatever means may be supposed to be employed for that purpose. And when we reflect, that at the other extremity of the same continent, there exists a people whose women have a natural excrescence, which differs from that of the female Hottentots examined by Le Vaillant only in being single, and not bifurcated; when we are assured, that this excrescence is not the effect of any friction or pulling, or of any other factitious means; since the women are born with it, and are anxious to have it removed, we cannot avoid thinking that it is not confined to the Egyptian women alone, but extends from their country as far as the Cape of Good Hope, by a line which includes the tawny women only, and not the female negroes, who have no such characteristic. This conjecture acquires additional weight from the certainty we

* Voyage dans l'Interieur de l'Afrique, tome ii. p. 347, &c.

have, that the Abyſſinian women undergo circumciſion as well as the Egyptian; and though we have no poſitive information concerning the motive of this operation in Abyſſinia, it is more than probable that it is a conſequence of a ſimilar conformation in both; and we have the more reaſon to be of this opinion, as the women who make a trade of circumciſing girls in Egypt come from that part of the country which is immediately adjoining to Abyſſinia.

I alſo contrived to procure myſelf, in my own apartments, a ſight of another kind. Nature alone had provided the ſubject of the former; the latter was a remarkable inſtance of the folly of men. The race of the Pſilli, a people who were perſuaded that they poſſeſſed the power of ſetting ſerpents at defiance, of charming them, of making theſe reptiles follow them at their call, and of curing their bites, has been perpetuated in Egypt. There exiſts a ſect called *Saadis*, from the name of their founder, a ſaint highly venerated among the Mahometans of that country. This *Saadi* had an uncle, a great man in Syria. Having one day ſent him for ſome branches of the buſhes in the deſert, when the lad had cut the faggot, he was very much at a loſs to tie it. After a fruitleſs ſearch, he bethought himſelf of knotting together ſeveral ſerpents, and with this living cord he bound his faggot. The uncle, delighted with his nephew's acutenefs, ſaid to him: *Well, you may now make your way in the world, for you are more knowing than me.* Immediately on this the ingenious youth began travelling about the country, charming ſerpents by his wonderful and ſupernatural ſkill; and he had a great number of diſciples, to whom he communicated his art. His tomb is near Damafcus; it is filled with ſerpents and other venomous animals, among which a perſon may lie down and ſleep, without their doing him the ſmalleſt injury.

Such is the ſuperſtitious origin of a very numerous ſect in Egypt, each individual of which inherits the ſkill of its founder. Every year

they celebrate his festival in a manner analogous to the institution. They march in procession through the streets, each holding in his hand a living serpent, which he bites, gnaws, and swallows piecemeal, making, at the same time, frightful grimaces and contortions. But this festival, which I was desirous of seeing, was celebrated only in the summer; and I was extremely anxious to examine closely one of these serpent-eaters. On this occasion, M. Forneti and myself had recourse to the same means that we had employed respecting the circumcision; and a *Saadi* came to my apartments, accompanied by a priest of his sect. The latter carried in his bosom a large serpent, which he was continually handling. After having recited a prayer, he delivered it to the *Saadi*. I observed that the reptile's teeth had been drawn; however, it was very lively, and of a dusky green and copper colour.

The *Saadi*, with a muscular hand, seized the serpent, which entwined itself round his naked arm. He began to be agitated; his countenance changed; his eyes rolled; he uttered terrible cries; bit the animal in the head, and tore off a piece, which we saw him chew and swallow. At that moment his agitation became convulsive; his howlings redoubled; his limbs writhed; his aspect bore the marks of madness; and his mouth, distended by horrid grimaces, was covered with foam. From time to time he devoured fresh pieces of the reptile. Three men in vain exerted themselves to hold him; he dragged them all three round the room, throwing his arms violently about on all sides, and striking every thing within his reach. To avoid him, M. Forneti and myself were sometimes obliged to cling to the wall, to let him pass and escape his blows. We could have wished the maniac far enough off. At length the priest took the serpent from him; but his fury and his convulsions were not at first appeased; he bit his hands, and his passion continued. The priest clasped him in his arms, put his hand gently upon his back,
lifted

lifted him from the ground, and recited some prayers. His agitation gradually subsided, and he became completely exhausted, in which state he continued a few moments.

The Turks who were present at the absurd and disgusting ceremony, were fully convinced of the reality of this religious frenzy. It is certainly true that, whether reality or imposture, it was impossible to express the transports of fury and madness in a more striking manner, or to see a man in a more terrific situation.

The great number of these serpent-eaters had induced some authors, and particularly Dr. Shaw, to believe that they subsisted entirely upon these reptiles. According to this English traveller, there are at Cairo and in its environs, more than four thousand persons who live on nothing but serpents*. This, however, is a mistake; serpents are not a dish among the *Saadis*; and if in their ceremonies they gnaw a few raw and alive, they are far from making them an article of food. In Egypt these men are very much respected; but among the Turks of the other parts of the Ottoman empire they are only objects of laughter.

I had an opportunity of conversing with a sheick, or priest of this sect. He was of an open disposition; for, though he assured me that several of his fraternity had an extraordinary power over serpents, he confessed that he had not the smallest claim to it; but, on the contrary, was exceedingly afraid of these animals. By him I was informed of some particulars which I shall relate. In order to have serpents ready, upon every occasion, they keep them in their houses; but they previously take the precaution of extracting their teeth. If any person be bitten by a serpent, he runs directly to a *Saadi*, who mutters a few words over the wound, scarifies it with a razor; and, after having filled his mouth with lemon-juice, sucks the blood from it repeatedly. These men also cure the *serpent's*

* Shaw's Travels, vol. ii.

breath, an appellation given by them to inflammatory pustules which sometimes break out on those who sleep in the open air with any part of the body uncovered, and which they pretend are caused by the poisonous breath of a serpent. The remedy they employ is oil of sesamum mixed with ceruse, or white lead. With this liniment they rub the pustules, never failing, at the same time, to mutter a few words, without which every remedy would be perfectly ineffectual. Such is the lot of mankind, that there is no nation in the universe, of whose history many pages are not appropriated to superstition!

CHAPTER XXIV.

WINTER.—EEL OF THE NILE.—TURTLE.—BIRDS.—NIGHTINGALE.—A BIRD OF PREY.—LITTLE OWL.—WHITE WAGTAIL.—KING-FISHERS.—HERON.—SULTANA HEN, OR PORPHYRION.—SPUR-WINGED PLOVERS.—HOOPES, OR DUNG-BIRDS.—TENEBRIO.—ORANGE-TREES.—ONIONS.—GARLIC.—LETTUCE.—EGYPTIAN ARUM, OR COLOCASIA.—ICHNEUMON.—THALEB, OR JACKAL-ADIVE.—MANNER IN WHICH THE AFRICANS DESCRIBE MEN.—RATS AND MICE.—SHEEP.—GOAT.—PREPARATIONS FOR QUITTING ROSSETTA.—METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS.—GALES OF WIND FROM THE SOUTH.

IF any thing can console us for the crimes which torment mankind, and become so often their scourge, it is undoubtedly the contemplation of Nature. In frequently visiting the plains of Rossetta, I forgot the absurdities and the tyrannical evils of every society of men; and the gloomy shades of melancholy which oppressed my mind, were succeeded by the most agreeable ideas.

It was now the end of December, which, in this country, is the depth of winter. Violent winds agitated the atmosphere, and furrowed with waves the Nile, then retired within its bed. Rains, sometimes accompanied with thunder, inundated the land already moistened with the waters of the river, by which it had been recently covered. The roughness of the sea seldom allowed vessels to venture out. The sailors who were not kept in port by the impending danger, were exposed to certain hazard; and death was often the reward of their temerity. Of two *germs* which, notwithstanding the appearance of very bad weather, had quitted the tranquil shore of Rossetta to set sail for Alexandria, one was wrecked on the *Boghafs*; and the other, having escaped the dangers of the bar, could not withstand the fury of the sea, but was swallowed up by the roaring and tremendous waves. Besides their complement, these vessels carried each fifteen

or twenty *galliondgis*, or Turkish marines, belonging to a caravel at anchor in the old port of Alexandria; and of the whole number not a single person was saved. In the midst of this tumult of nature, shoals of porpoises playing about, rapidly crossed the mouth of the Nile, the scene of danger and death; and were, at this time, more frequently seen under the walls of Rossetta, than at any other period.

The branch of the river which passes by Rossetta, affords several kinds of fish which I shall have occasion to mention. One of the most common at this season is the eel of the Nile, which, according to Herodotus*, the Egyptians held sacred. The priests had stamped this fish with the seal of divinity, in order to prevent the people from eating its flesh; probably because they had discovered in it some unwholesome quality. Hence M. Pauw calls it *the pernicious eel of the Nile*†. At this day the Egyptians eat it without the smallest repugnance; the Europeans imitate their example, and neither of them have yet experienced any of its pernicious effects. The Turks, alone, refrain from it, on account of their aversion to an animal, which, they imagine, copulates with the serpent. Eels were very common at Rossetta: three might be purchased for twenty *sous*, each of them upwards of two feet long; and I found their flesh as delicate as the eel of Europe.

This eel, however, slightly differs from the European in some of its characters, and may constitute a species, or at least a variety. The principal traits of difference are, 1. the small beards of the upper jaw are more elongated than those of our eel: 2. the back fin terminates towards the head, while that of our eel scarcely extends beyond the middle of the body: 3. the different disposition of the teeth: 4. the little holes of the lower jaw, which are not perceptible in the ordinary species, are very apparent in the eel of the Nile: 5. lastly, their colours are not alike; the eel of the Nile being on

* Lib. ii. § 72.

† Recherch. Philos. sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. p. 154.

all the upper part of the head and body of a deep black, shining with copper-coloured tints; its sides of a brighter hue, and reflecting similar tints; the sides and inferior part of the head, as well as of the body, of a beautiful shining white; and lastly, the iris of the eyes yellow. The Egyptians call it in Arabic *anesch*, the generic name of the serpent.

The fishermen of this country make use of different kinds of nets, among which I observed one shaped like a pouch, and which are called in France *truble*, or *trouble*.

A turtle was brought to me which had been caught at the mouth of the Nile, just upon the *Boghafs*, by a bait fixed on a large hook. It was three feet and a half in length, measuring from the end of the beak to the point of the tail, which was only two inches long. The greatest breadth of the animal, including the shell, was two feet. It was easy to distinguish this to be one of the species which Forskal has described under the denomination of *three-clawed turtle* *. Its fin-formed feet are, in fact, each armed with three large projecting claws, of a dirty white. At the extremity of the upper jaw is an excrescence in which the nostrils are perforated, which gives its beak some resemblance to the snout of a hog. The shell is rounded, covered with asperities, and flattened and smooth on the edges. The inferior part of the body, that is to say, all that part which is not covered with the testaceous crust, is white; the upper part is of a greenish gray; lastly, the head is gray, but variegated with a whitish hue.

Is this a sea or fresh-water tortoise? Forskal appears to consider it as an animal peculiar to the Nile, as he says that it is rare in that river †. But, although a native of the Mediterranean, might it not also sometimes enter the river with the water of the sea, when, driven by the impetuous north winds, it mixes with that of the Nile, and

* *Testudo triunguis*. Thiersè. Forskal, Fauna Orient. p. ix.

† *In Nilo rarior*. Place above cited.

imparts to the latter, even as high as Rossetta, a brackishness which renders it disagreeable to drink? And as this circumstance does not frequently occur, it will follow that the tortoise also will be seen but rarely along the banks of the Nile. I know well that naturalists have agreed to assign this distinctive character to the sea tortoise, that it has, like the one under consideration, feet in the form of fins; and to the fresh-water tortoise, feet that are obtuse and strong. But the rules laid down by naturalists are not always those of nature: and we daily see her sport with and overturn them, as arrangements in which she was not consulted.

The place where this turtle was caught could not be better calculated to increase this uncertainty. It was taken on the most undetermined limits, on the very spot where the sea, enraged at being unable to extend farther its domain, and to mix its turbulent waves with the fresh and tranquil waters of a river, breaks against the natural barrier that stops its career. The people of the country who caught it, and who know the species, assured me that it was a sea tortoise. They call it *thirfè*, which, as I have already observed, is the name of tortoises in general, that of the whole genus, and does not serve to distinguish this amphibious race, like that of *tortue* in French. I may add, that the species in question is very good eating. This I was assured of by the fishermen who sold it to me, and I was perfectly of their opinion after I tasted it, having had the calipee dressed in the West-Indian fashion.

The bad weather had confined me to the house: thick clouds had for several days obscured the sun; but the first gleam of his rays was a signal for me to renew my excursions; and I hastened to the country, in search of new pleasures. I there found the numerous families of birds I had been accustomed to see. The smaller species, to which were added new ones, that I had not before observed, such as tit-mice, fauvettes, fig-peckers, wrens, &c. were in the most cheerful agitation. The heat of the sun, of which they had for
some

some time been deprived, diffused amongst them the most lively joy. They crossed each other, mingled together in their flight, and hopped from branch to branch, seeming to vie with one another in expressing their happiness. In the midst of these ecstatic emotions, some of them appeared to have forgotten their particular habits. The wagtails or bergeronnettes, desirous of partaking in the common festivity, and of mixing with the mirthful throng, like them perched on the surrounding bushes. I was careful not to interrupt them, or to disturb this holiday of nature, but directed my homage to the beneficent planet, whose charming influence these birds were celebrating with such rapturous ardour.

At some distance, a solitary and less lively bird glided into a thicket of strong reeds. The nightingale* is known to spend the season of our winter in Lower Egypt. I met with several in different parts of the Delta, where they frequent the most shady thickets in the vicinity of the water. They do not here display the art of Philomela, or exhibit that melodious voice, those brilliant modulations, which are loudly re-echoed in our forests and orchards; the only sound they utter is a raucous croaking, that kind of rattling in the throat, which with us succeeds their delightful warbling, after they have ceased to sing their loves.

It is then an erroneous assertion that there are no nightingales in Africa †; they are, at least, to be found in the most eastern countries of that part of the world. They arrive there in autumn, and depart in the spring, when these songsters of nature repair to our woods to celebrate its return. It appears that they are more frequently met with in Syria and in other parts of Asia. Haffelquitz, quoted by Guenau de Montbeillard, had already said, that these birds are found in the willow plots and olive groves of India. I cannot conceive why naturalists should affect to throw doubts on his assertion, but prefer

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 615. Fig. 2. *Motacilla lusiana*, L.

† Mauduit, Encycl. Méth. art. *Ressignol*.

repeating that they know not to what places the nightingales retire during the winter. There can no longer be any uncertainty on this subject. I have seen them in Egypt, where they are common; and I have since been, during the season of their passage, in the islands of the Archipelago, where they stop, probably on their way to Asia.

The scenes of gaiety and happiness which I had before me, were on the point of being disturbed and ensanguined. Some birds of prey which this delightful assemblage had attracted, hovered in the air, their piercing eyes having already marked out the victims of their voracity. Desirous of protecting and avenging these little societies, I declared war against the winged murderers. When I brought one down, I congratulated myself as the preserver of a thousand innocent beings, the delicate work of nature, and so grateful for her beneficence.

Several of these birds of prey were of a species I had never before remarked. No order of birds has been more difficult to class, nor more constantly baffled the arrangements established by naturalists. I shall therefore not attempt to assign to this species the place it should hold in this or that class, but content myself with describing it, being satisfied that this method is of more utility to natural history, than discussions, which frequently give no information. This bird, however, appeared to me to have more affinity to the falcon than to any other genus.

The most remarkable particulars in the formation of this bird are, a hooked bill, with a very thick membrane covering its base; in this membrane the nostrils are placed; the wings a little longer than the tail, and having the first feather serrated along the exterior vane; the legs short, and covered with feathers on the fore part, almost to the insertion of the toes; the talons crooked and sharp; lastly, the tail feathers nearly of equal length, for it is only when they are expanded that they perceptibly diminish as they approach the middle ones, which are somewhat shorter than the rest.

Dimensions.—Total length eleven inches and a half; the length of the

the bill twelve lines and a half; the legs seventeen lines; the tail four inches eight lines; the wings ten lines and a half; when folded, they extend beyond the tail eight lines.

The front, all the under part of the body and of the tail, as well as the greater wing coverts, are of the most beautiful white. The upper part and anterior angle of the eye are covered with small, slender, black feathers. The body, the crown of the head, and the lesser wing coverts, are cinereous; the wing quills are cinereous, lightly tipped with gray; the indentations of the first exterior feather are white; the tail and the two middle feathers, white mixed with ash-coloured gray, and the rest white on the interior, and of a light gray on the exterior side. The iris of the eye is of a bright orange-colour. The cere and legs are yellow; the bill and claws black.

The bird from which I took the preceding description was a male. The right testicle was considerably larger than the left. The intestinal tube was seventeen inches long; there was a gall-bladder, but I did not perceive any *cæcum*. The *trachea arteria* was very hard, and nearly osseous as far as the bifurcation; it then became cartilaginous and soft. The stomach was perfectly empty. The bird, however, had not been in the habit of fasting, for it was very fat.

Birds of prey of this species are frequently seen in the country, and particularly hovering over fields in which rice had been growing, and near the banks of the Nile. They are solitary birds, and continue long in the air without changing their position, merely moving their wings to support themselves. With their eyes fixed upon the ground they try to discover their prey; and if they perceive nothing, they fly a little farther to take a new station; here they remain suspended in the air, until they descry some of the animals they are accustomed to devour, when they dart upon them with the rapidity of a shot. I have never seen any of these birds alight upon the ground; they sometimes perch upon the date-trees, and easily allow themselves to be approached.

A species

A species of birds still less wild is the little owl *. Although I fired several shots in order to procure a couple, they were not so frightened as to be induced to fly to any distance; they did no more than remove from tree to tree. In general they are seen in pairs, at least in this season; and on a comparison which I made between the male and female, I found no perceptible difference either in size or colour.

Among the great number of wagtails spread over the cultivated lands in Lower Egypt, I distinguished one, the plumage of which was entirely white †; except a light tint of gray that extended along the upper part of the head and body, and described underneath the figure of a semicircle. All the rest of the bird was of a dazzling white.

Near the water were to be seen flocks of birds, collected thither by the facility with which abundance of food was to be obtained. King-fishers ‡ skimmed with the rapidity of an arrow on the surface of the water; while others, resting upon their long legs, waited for their prey as it passed. Among these birds was the patient and unfortunate heron, who is rendered very suspicious by his habitual state of misery, and flies away the moment he discovers the fowler. So true it is, that the habit of suffering does not always produce an aversion to life: it oppresses only those who being unaccustomed to misfortune, are suddenly overwhelmed by it, and have not learned that existence is even an enjoyment to the wretched.

Near the pools of water are to be seen numerous flocks of curlews; and among the tall reeds, growing upon the banks, lies concealed the water-hen. This too is the retreat of that charming bird, of the most beautiful glossy blue plumage, and with a purple bill and feet, the natural and living ornament of the temples and palaces of the

* See page 203.

† Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 652. *Motacilla alba*, L.

‡ There are two species of that bird in this country; the king-fisher, properly so called (*alcedo bispidata*, L.), and the pied king-fisher of Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 116. *Alcedo rudis*, L. the 24th species of Buffon.

ancient Romans. Its noble aspect and brilliant colours have obtained it the name of the *sultana ben**. It delights in the rice plantations, whence it has also been called the *rice-ben*. I kept several of these beautiful birds at Rossetta. Having been taken when adult, it was not easy to accustom them to the privation of liberty. Restless and agitated, they incessantly tormented themselves to escape from the aviary in which they were confined. At the commencement of their captivity they were wild and vicious, and bit severely the fingers of any person that offered to touch them. The cry which they uttered from time to time, was not unlike the laugh of a person masked, and assuming a feigned voice. It occasionally became somewhat plaintive, and it was then shorter, and not interrupted like the former. They feed upon rice in the straw, separating the grain from the husk; and often employ their feet to carry it to their bill and bruise it. After every grain of rice, they run to their water-trough, and seem to grind or masticate it, when in the act of drinking †.

The most numerous, and most widely dispersed of all these aquatic birds were spur-winged plovers ‡; noisy birds, which might be also called *courtiers*, from their having a quick and almost continual motion, suddenly raising their head and neck, and again bending it forward, as if they were making hasty and repeated bows.

To complete the enumeration of these feathered tribes of the beautiful districts of Egypt, I shall observe that there are scarcely to be found any sandy spots, however small, if in the vicinity of culti-

* *Poule sultane, ou le porphyriion*. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 810.—*Fulica porphyrio*, L.

† The ancient naturalists made the same remark: *Solus morfu bibit*. Plin. lib. x. § 63. lib. xi. § 79.

‡ See page 219.

vated lands, where hoopoes are not seen scratching the sands with their feet, and pecking into them with their long bill.

These sands are, in fact, the retreat of a multitude of insects, which penetrate into them with ease. I found in a hole they had there digged, an immense number of tenebrios, real insects of tenebrosity, for they are entirely of a dull black. This is the species which Geoffroi has described under the appellation of *tenebrion cannelé* *. Those I saw were, however, larger, some of them being above fifteen lines in length.

In the midst of this profusion of animated nature, vegetation unfolds her most brilliant riches. Almost all sorts of fruits were then in maturity. Besides those which I have already mentioned, the delightful groves afforded in abundance, oranges, lemons, limes, citrons, and shaddock. Which of our finest springs would we not consent to exchange for such a winter ?

Who has not heard of the onions of Egypt ? Who is ignorant in what high estimation they were held among the ancient Egyptians ? Who does not know how much the Israelites regretted the loss of them when forced to quit Egypt † ? This sort of vegetable is still extremely common in that country : it is the ordinary food of the people, and almost the only sustenance of the poorest class. The expense of the support of a day-labourer in the country was a medine, about five French *liards* ; with this moderate allowance he purchased as much bread and onions as he could eat, and had remaining some *bourdes*, a small copper coin, eight of which make a medine. Onions are sold in the streets and markets for a mere trifle, both raw and dressed. The Egyptians eat them raw with their meat, to

* Hist. Nat. des Inf. des Env. de Paris.—*Tenebrio muricata*, L.

† “ We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely ; the cucumbers, “ and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic.” Numbers, chap. xi. ver. 5.

which they serve for seasoning. I was fond of them in this state, when they were young, green, and tender. These onions are sweet: they have not the pungency of those of Europe; neither are they disagreeably sharp in the mouth, nor do they make the eyes water on their being cut. However, as they still are onions, and differ from ours only in having a less pungent taste or acrid flavour, there can be no doubt but the excessive use of them in Egypt contributes to increase the disposition of the inhabitants to disorders of the eyes.

Leeks are also eaten in Egypt, but in less quantity than onions; but they had no garlic, or, to speak more correctly, they had no longer any; for this plant appears to me to have been cultivated by the ancient Egyptians. It is to be found among the list of those which the Israelites so much regretted*; and Dioscorides, whom M. Pauw seems to accuse of error, also ranked garlic among the number of the plants of Egypt†. However this may be, it is no longer to be found in the kitchen-gardens of Rosetta, and I was assured by the Egyptians that, from time immemorial, the soil has been unfavourable to its culture. In some parts of South America the inhabitants have not been unsuccessful in every attempt to cultivate onions. They import them from France; and I have seen at Cayenne a plate of onions considered as a great delicacy. I know not whether the same attempts have been made in Egypt with regard to garlic. It is possible that the people being ignorant, and slaves to old customs, the present cultivators have pretended that this plant will not thrive in their soil, merely because their forefathers did not plant it; and this reason, which in their eyes would be a certain demonstration, might be sufficient to prevent every idea of their making new attempts. Not but that there is at this day a considerable quantity

* See the note in the preceding page.

† Recherch. Philos. sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. p. 133, note.

of garlic consumed in Egypt; but it is imported from Syria, and sold under the name of *seeds of Damascus*.

Almost all the species of European vegetables abound in the gardens of Rossetta; but horticulture not being there brought to perfection, the inhabitants have not acquired the numerous varieties which adorn our kitchen-gardens and tables. On the other hand, some sorts are there great objects of culture: the Roman lettuce, for instance, covers their plains. It is eaten raw; and from its seeds is made very good oil. Here are likewise cultivated other plants for the food of man, which are not used in Europe, such as the *colocasia**, a species of *arum* well known in ancient Egypt, the roots of which, when dressed, have the taste of our potatoes.

The Delta forming an island, it was easy to clear it of wild beasts. Although bounded upon one side by the borders of the desert, the cultivated plains of Rossetta are no longer disturbed by their presence; they are kept at a distance by the operations and the effect of culture, and are banished to the sands of the desert, or the solitude of the forests. But those whose nature it is to destroy the poultry kept by man, willingly remain, being certain of hunting their prey with more success there than any where else. The *nems*, or ichneumon, is frequently seen, and the *thaleb* † partakes in its depredations.

The *thaleb* is an animal which has some resemblance to the jackal, but, at the same time, differs from it in some striking features, and particularly in its habits. Buffon has given a very good drawing of this animal in *Le Supplément à l'Histoire Naturelle des Quadrupèdes* under the name of *chacal-adive*. If the jackal is, according to the common people of Egypt, *father of Soliman*, the *thaleb* is to them, in like manner, *father of Hussein* ‡. I was not able to discover

* *Arum colocasia*, L.

† *Canis aureus*, L.—*Canis vulpes*, Forskal, Fauna Egypt.-arab. p. 4. N. B. The *thaleb* differs from the fox.

‡ See page 93.

the origin of these two singular denominations. I may, however, observe, on this subject, that when the Egyptians are struck with a remarkable feature or attribute in any person, it is their custom to give him the appellation of father of such feature or attribute. Thus my large nose frequently procured me the name of *father of the nose*; and one of my companions, who wore very bushy whiskers, was known by no other appellation, in the course of our travels, than that of *Abou schenapp, father of the whiskers*. A manner equally whimsical of distinguishing people without having occasion to inquire their names, appears to be general in Africa, in a similar style of pleasantry. The negroes at Cape Verd gave the name of *father of the arm* to a clerk of the African Company who had but one arm; and the Jalofs distinguish the governor of Goree by no other title but that of *Borombir, father of the belly*, because the rock forming that small island has, in their opinion, a resemblance to a big belly.

There is every reason to presume, that all that has been asserted, both by the ancients and moderns, respecting the fox of Egypt, must be understood to apply to the *thaleb*, who has, in fact, several features similar to those of the fox. His hair is of a bright fawn colour, deeper on the upper than the under part of the body. He is particularly remarkable for his large tail, striped transversely with black and gray. His eyes are as lively as his motions: his countenance is that of cunning and craft; and while the jackals, merely ferocious, frighten away their prey by their howlings and numbers, while their nocturnal excursions are often unsuccessful, and they are sometimes compelled to appease their hunger with food the most disgusting and repugnant to their appetite, the more fortunate *thaleb*, surpassing them in address, does not associate with others, but goes alone; in the height of day approaches the habitations of men;

* See page 93.

establishing near them his subterraneous abode, which he carefully conceals under thick bushes, thence creeps out without noise, surprises the poultry, carries off the eggs, and leaves no other traces of the havoc he has made than the havoc itself. In hunting birds, he displays all possible agility and artifice; and scarcely any of them can escape him. One of the handsomest of quadrupeds, he would be; perhaps, one of the most amiable, if his tricks and his talents for depredation did not bear too strong an impression of knavery and falsehood. Taking one day a contemplative walk in a garden, I stopped near a hedge: a *thaleb*, who heard no noise, was coming towards me through the hedge, and, on his getting out, he found himself close at my feet. On seeing me, he was so struck with astonishment, that he did not even attempt to escape, but, fixing his eyes upon me, remained motionless for some seconds. His embarrassment was painted in his countenance, in a manner of which I could not have conceived him susceptible, and which indicated a very delicate instinct. For my part, I was afraid to make any motion that might disturb this situation, which afforded me considerable pleasure. At length, after taking a few steps from one side to the other, as if not knowing which way to fly, still keeping his eyes turned towards me, he made off, not running, but stretching himself out, or rather creeping away, placing his feet alternately with singular precaution. He was so much afraid of letting himself be heard in his flight, that he held his large tail almost in a horizontal position, that it might neither drag on the ground nor brush against the plants. On the other side of the hedge I found the remains of his meal: it was a bird of prey, which he had nearly devoured.

To conclude this subject, I believe that the thalebs and the jackals take care to cover their excrements with earth or sand, like the cats, having found several of these concealments both in the sands and the cultivated ground, which could be only the work of those animals.

This

This cleanliness would render the thaleb still more interesting, were he not so knavish.

Animals much more noxious, and, at the same time, exceedingly numerous, are rats and mice. They would be a scourge that would render Egypt uninhabitable, had they not a multiplicity of enemies : of quadrupeds, the cat, the ichneumon, the thaleb, &c. ; of birds, the ibis, the stork, the vulture, and different species of birds of prey, hunt them, and constantly feed upon them : with the same view, man himself becomes their enemy ; for there are several villages in the neighbourhood of Rossetta, the inhabitants of which catch rats in order to eat them as soon as the waters of the Nile have retired from the plains. A still greater number are destroyed by the inundation of the river ; but their fecundity is so prodigious, that notwithstanding these multiplied means of destruction, they are yet so numerous, that they appear to propagate in perfect freedom, and to breed in the very bosom of the obstacles which oppose their excessive reproduction. As soon as the Nile, after having fertilized the lands, leaves them accessible to cultivation, there are seen innumerable multitudes of rats and mice, issuing, in succession, from the moistened soil. This has made the Egyptians believe that these animals were produced by the earth itself. Some of them who passed for the most intelligent, assured me, and, notwithstanding all I could say, insisted with the utmost effrontery, that they had themselves observed mice at the moment of their pretended formation, and when the one half of their body was of flesh and the other half of mud. This absurdity is not peculiar to the inhabitants of Egypt ; some authors even have unblushingly disgraced their works by such an assertion*.

All the animals that were hostile to mice and rats were held sacred by the ancient Egyptians ; they were under the protection of laws both civil and religious ; nor do even the modern nations who inhabit

* Macrobius, Porta, &c. &c..

the same country, barbarous as they are, destroy them, but preserve for them some degree of the ancient veneration. The French will readily see the importance of adopting the same forbearance, and abstaining from a sport which would be so generally detrimental; and on which the prosperity of the colony in a great measure depends.

If from noxious animals we pass to those that are the most useful, we shall find two sorts of them, which, being very numerous in Egypt, are extremely valuable to its inhabitants, the sheep and the goat. Of all the domestic animals the ewe and the ram are the most common: their wool is an important article of commerce; and their flesh is almost the only kind here used, that of the ox being scarce, and buffalo's flesh being exceedingly bad.

The Oriental nations, in general, do not castrate their rams. This operation was by law forbidden among the Hebrews; and it is equally in disuse among the present Egyptians. This, however, would be the means of rendering their flesh more tender and juicy, and depriving it of a slight taste of the fat and the fleece, which injures its flavour. The race propagated in Lower Egypt is that of the *broad-tailed or Barbary sheep**. If its flesh is in general not so delicate as our mutton, the ewes are here more prolific. They always year twice a year, and generally have two lambs at a time.

The species of *goat* spread through Lower Egypt is the *Syrian* †. It has also been called the *Mambrina goat*, because it is common in the mountain of that name, situated in the southern part of Palestine, in the neighbourhood of *Hebron*. It is almost constantly of a bright reddish colour; its horns are small, its body slender, and its hair short; its head is longer, and rounder in front than that of any of the other species, which gives this goat a more lively, but, at the

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Ovis laticaudata*, L.

† *Chèvre de Syrie*, Brisson, Règne animal, p. 72.—*Chèvre mambrine, ou chèvre du Levant*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, art. Chamois.—*Capra mambrica*, L.

same time, a somewhat foolish aspect. One character by which it can be easily distinguished at first sight, is its extremely large and pendulous ears, an unequivocal mark of its having been long a domesticated animal*.

In the moist plains of Lower Egypt, the kids of this species are not very good eating; and we may even presume that their flesh is far from being wholesome, with the more reason, that the dietetic system of the ancients forbade its use in the *Nome* of Mendes and its environs, that is to say, in the district most inundated, while it was permitted in the mountainous countries of Thebais, where the flesh of the sheep was in its turn prohibited, for what reason is not clearly ascertained. Although of considerable size, these goats cannot be used as beasts of burden, or for the saddle, as has been asserted by Bochart. They afford abundance of excellent milk, of which there is a great consumption. Every morning they are driven in small flocks through the different quarters of the city of Cairo, and every one sees taken from them the milk that he wants.

The same writers who have exaggerated the fecundity of the cow, and the female buffalo, have spoken of the Egyptian goats in the same strain.

According to Maillet, they bear six or seven kids at a time; and as they have young twice in the year, it is by no means extraordinary to see one goat followed by fourteen kids, all of which she has produced in the course of six or seven months †. It is true that the goats, as well as the ewes, bring forth twice a year; but it is also true, that they have each time only two or three, and rarely four kids.

I had now been upwards of two months at Rossetta, and the trou-

* Some authors have asserted, that their ears are so long that they drag upon the ground, and that the Orientals cut off one of them to suffer the animal to graze: but this is an error; the ears do not hang down to the ground, nor are they cut off.

† Description de l'Égypte, partie ii. p. 5.

bles of Egypt, instead of subsiding, seemed to increase. A Bey, named Ismael, had succeeded in expelling from Cairo Murad and Ibrahim, two other Beys who were at the head of the government. These took refuge in the Saïd, whence, aided by some chiefs, they menaced Ismael. The latter was raising an army, in order to take the field against them. The particular commandants, or *Kiaschefs*, had quitted the districts of their command, and followed their master. The Bedouins, profiting by their absence, infested all the roads, and set no bounds to their depredations. The villages made war on each other, and sent forth robbers still more dangerous and cruel than the Bedouins. At length the most complete devastation desolated the face of the country, and every attempt to travel was considered an act of temerity. But I was tired of remaining in a state of inaction, and was hurt at the loss of my time, as well as at the expenditure of the very inadequate allowance I received from government, without attaining the object I had in view, namely, of travelling through Egypt. These considerations prevailed over the suggestions of prudence, and even those of friendship; and as it was impossible to penetrate into Upper Egypt, filled with undisciplined combatants and unbridled banditti, I resolved to visit that part of the desert of Lybia called the desert of Nitria, or of Saint Macarius.

I had written to Cairo, in order to obtain from Ismael Bey, then, and for a very short time, governor general, or *sheick-el-belled*, orders to his subalterns to protect me, and the strongest recommendations to all those through whose territories I had to travel. It is well known that the practice of medicine is in high estimation among the Orientals; it is a stronger shield than all the recommendations of authority. I therefore assumed the character of a physician; and that nothing might be wanting to complete my disguise, or rather the precautions, without which it would be in vain to attempt to travel in that country, I took the name of *Yousef* (Joseph). According to circumstances, and to the persons with whom I had to deal, I was

Mallim, master, *Kavoudji*, merchant, or even *Sidi*, fir. Neither was I afraid to adorn myself with the red turban, which, joined to my dress, and that of my three companions, who were habited as soldiers of the Beys, made me pass more than once for a *Kiaschef*, or officer of the Mamlûks, commanding some district.

Before I leave Rossetta, I shall give the meteorological observations I made during my residence there, in the months of November and December, adding thereto those of a part of the month of February, which I made on my return. The mercurial thermometer which I used for these observations was made by Assier Perica of Paris, a skilful mechanic in the construction of instruments of this kind.

I made my observations three times a day; at eight o'clock in the morning, at noon, and at six in the evening, as will be seen by the following tables.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

MADE AT ROSSETTA DURING THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER, 1777.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Reaum. Therm.	Wind.	OBSERVATIONS.
6	8 morn.	18°	N. N. W.	At 3 o'clock in the morning there was a heavy shower of rain, the first that has fallen this year. At 7 there also fell a little rain; a rainbow; at 9 there was another shower, which lasted 10 minutes, the wind having shifted to the north. Cloudy weather. Strong breeze at the approach of the squalls, and falling as soon as the rain was over.
	Noon	19	N. N. E.	Cloudy weather. High wind. At 1 o'clock a shower of small rain, which lasted four or five minutes.
7	6 even.	18	N. N. E.	High wind. A great many clouds.
	8 morn.	18½	E. N. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	19	N. E.	Light breeze. A great many flying clouds.
8	6 even.	18	N. E.	Very light airs. The sky rather overcast.
	8 morn.	17½	N. E.	Almost calm. A clear sky.
	Noon	18	N. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
9	6 even.	18	N. E.	Light breeze. A clear sky.
	8 morn.	17½	Calm	Very thick fog.
	Noon	18	N. E.	Light breeze. Weather a little cloudy.
10	6 even.	18	N. E.	Very light breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	18	E. S. E.	Almost calm. Fog.
	Noon	18½	E. S. E.	Light breeze. Foggy weather. After noon, the wind shifted to the east, and shortly after to N. N. E.
11	6 even.	18	N. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	17½	E. S. E.	Light breeze. Fog.
	Noon	20	E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	6 even.	19½	N. N. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
12	}	-	-	<i>Absent.</i>
13				
14				
15	8 morn.	17½	N.	High wind. Fine weather.
	Noon	18	N.	High wind. Weather a little cloudy.
	6 even.	17½	N.	Clear weather.
16	8 morn.	17½	N. N. W.	Light breeze. Sky cloudy in the eastern quarter.
	Noon	18	N. by W.	High wind. Cloudy weather.
	6 even.	17½	N. N. W.	High wind. Very cloudy weather.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Reaum. Therm.	Wind.	OBSERVATIONS.
17	8 morn.	18 ^o	—	Calm.
	Noon	19 ^¼	N.	Very light breeze.
	6 even.	19 ^½	N.	Very light breeze. Fine weather during the whole day.
18	8 morn.	19	W.	Wind rather high. Fine weather.
	Noon	20	W.	High wind. Weather stormy in appearance.
	6 even.	19 ^½	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
19	8 morn.	17 ^½	W.	Light breeze. Thick fog.
	Noon	20	W.	Light breeze. A dappled sky.
	6 even.	19 ^½	W.	Light breeze. Cloudy sky. During the whole evening lightning in the eastern quarter, but no thunder.
20	8 morn.	18	W.	Almost calm. Cloudy sky.
	Noon	19	W.	Wind rather high, and blowing in hard squalls. Gloomy and cloudy weather.
	6 even.	18 ^½	W.	Light breeze. Rain.
21	8 morn.	18 ^½	Calm	It rained the greatest part of last night. In the morning cloudy weather.
	Noon	19	N. E.	High wind. Cloudy weather. After noon the wind veered round to the S. S. W. and it rained till 5 o'clock in the evening.
	6 even.	18 ^½	Calm	A great deal of lightning in the eastern quarter, but unaccompanied by thunder. Rain almost the whole of the night.
22	8 morn.	17	S. W.	High wind. Very cloudy weather. Rain at intervals.
	Noon	17 ^½	S. W.	Very high wind.
	6 even.	17	S. W.	High wind. Frequent showers of rain during the course of the day.
N. B. Till this day inclusively, I had kept my thermometer near the window of my room, the doors and windows of which were constantly open, except in the night-time; but on the 23d I removed it to a covered place, but continually exposed to the air; this is what occasioned the great differences that will now be seen.				
23	8 morn.	11 ^¼	S. S. W.	Wind very boisterous, which has lasted since midnight. Some flying clouds.
	Noon	14	S. S. W.	Wind very boisterous. The air darkened by the quantity of sand that is drifted by the wind.
	6 even.	13 ^½	S. S. W.	Wind still very boisterous. I have seldom seen any wind so violent, or of such long duration, as this. It has abated a little after sun-set, but it yet blows very hard. The air is still darkened by the sand.

TRAVELS IN UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Reaum. Therm.	Wind.	OBSERVATIONS.
24	8 morn.	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ^o	W.	Before daylight the wind shifted to W. and blew strong. The whole morning was showery.
	Noon	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. N. W.	High wind. Cloudy weather.
	6 even.	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. N. W.	High wind. The whole sky covered with flying clouds. A shower of rain at 9 o'clock in the evening.
25	8 morn.	10	W.	High wind. Weather tolerably fine.
	Noon	14	W. S. W.	High wind. Fine weather.
	6 even.	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
26	8 morn.	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	S. by W.	High wind. Fine weather. At 6 o'clock in the morning, the wind very sharp, and the cold very perceptible. The thermometer, however, indicated only 9 $\frac{1}{2}$.
	Noon	15	W.	Wind very boisterous. The sky scattered over with small clouds. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon a shower of rain, accompanied by a very violent gale of wind and a rainbow. At 8 o'clock another shower heavier than the first.
	6 even.	14	W. by S.	Strong wind and rain, both of which lasted the whole night.
27	8 morn.	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	High wind. Rain.
	Noon	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	High wind. Rain.
	6 even.	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	High wind. Rain, which lasted almost the whole night.
28	8 morn.	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	High wind. Rain till 9 o'clock in the morning.
	Noon	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	High wind. Tolerably fine weather, which did not last, for it was showery in the afternoon.
	6 even.	11	N. N. W.	Very high wind. Cloudy weather. Very frequent showers of rain during the night.
29	8 morn.	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. by N.	Light breeze. Rain all the morning.
	Noon	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Light breeze. Rain. After noon, the weather cleared up a little.
	6 even.	11	W.	Cloudy weather without rain. Light breeze.
30	8 morn.	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	W.	Light breeze. Small drizzling rain for a few minutes. Cloudy weather.
	Noon	15 $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	6 even.	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.

Remarks

Remarks on the preceding Table.

THE first days of this month were the beginning of winter at Rossetta, Alexandria, and upon all the coast of Egypt. The first rain that fell this year was on the 6th; and the bad weather continued almost the whole month. From the 1st till the 6th, the day when it was first in my power to make any regular observations, the wind was to the N. or N. N. E.; and every morning there was a thick fog, which sometimes lasted till 10 o'clock.

The wind varied considerably in the course of this month; however, it remained longer to the westward than in any other quarter. It frequently blew strong; but the most violent gale was on the 22d at S.W. and continued till the 23d, when it was at its greatest height at S.S.W. It seldom occurs that so hard a gale lasts two days blowing with the same violence. These are those southerly gales, so dangerous and so fatal to the caravans and travellers who happen to be at that time crossing the sands of Egypt; for they run a risk of being suffocated by the burning blast, or by the mountains of sand which it raises. Notwithstanding there are no large tracts of sand in the environs of Rossetta, on the 23d the air in the town was absolutely darkened by a sand so subtle, that it penetrated into the apartments, though all the windows and doors were closely shut. This extraordinary quantity of sand was brought by the wind from the desert of St. Macarius and its environs.

Since I exposed my thermometer to the open air, that is to say, in the course of eight days, the highest degree of heat it indicated was 15° on the 30th at noon, and it never fell lower than 10° : the cold, however, was very perceptible, chiefly in the morning.

I remarked two rainbows; the one on the morning of the 6th, which was followed by fine weather; and the other on the evening of the 26th, after which the weather became exceedingly bad. This in some degree confirms the vulgar opinion, that in the morning this phenomenon is a sign of fair weather, and in the evening its appearance indicates the reverse.

Month

Month of December, 1777.

Day of the Month	Hour.	Reaum. Therm.	Wind.	OBSERVATIONS.
1	8 morn.	11°	S. S. W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	14	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	6 even.	13	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
2	8 morn.	11½	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	15¼	N. W.	Light breeze. The sky scattered over with some blackish clouds.
3	6 even.	14	N. W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	11½	N. W.	Light breeze. Fine weather. Since sun-rise there has been a slight fog.
	Noon	15	N. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
4	6 even.	14	N. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	12½	E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	16	E. N. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather. Some large dark clouds.
5	6 even.	15	E. N. E.	High wind. Cloudy weather.
	8 morn.	11	Calm.	Fine weather.
	Noon	14	N.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
6	6 even.	13	N.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	13	Calm.	Fog.
	Noon	17½	N.	Very light airs. Weather rather cloudy.
7	6 even.	14	N.	Very light airs. Weather less cloudy than at noon. A mist.
	8 morn.	12½	N. N. W.	Almost calm. A slight fog. A dappled sky.
	Noon	16	N.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
8	6 even.	13½	N.	Very light breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	15	N. N. E.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather.
	Noon	16	N. N. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
9	6 even.	14	E. N. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	14½	N. N. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	16	N. N. E.	High wind. Several small flying clouds.
10	6 even.	14	N. N. E.	Very light breeze. Scarce a cloud to be seen.
	8 morn.	15	N. N. E.	High wind. A great many clouds.
	Noon	17	N. E.	High wind. Scarce a cloud to be seen.
11	6 even.	15½	N. E.	High wind. Clear sky.
	8 morn.	14¾	E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	17	N. E.	High wind. Fine weather.
12	6 even.	16	N. N. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	13	N.	Almost calm. Cloudy weather.
	Noon	16	N. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Cloudy weather.
	6 even.	14½	N. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Cloudy weather. The wind afterwards increased, and the sky became clear. During the whole night the wind was very high.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Reaum. Therm.	Wind.	OBSERVATIONS.
13	8 morn.	12°	N.W.	A strong gale. Weather cloudy, and threatening rain. The Nile was very much increased by the strength of the gale, which also raised in it a heavy swell. Towards noon, a small shower of drizzling rain, which was very rapidly dispelled by the violence of the wind.
	Noon	9	N.W.	A very strong gale. Cloudy weather. In the afternoon, small rain for some moments.
	6 even.	9	N.W.	Cloudy weather. The strength of the wind has a little abated.
14	8 morn.	12	W.	High wind. Cloudy weather. Small rain.
	Noon	14	W.	High wind. Now and then a little small rain.
	6 even.	12½	W.	High wind. Cloudy weather. Some showers of rain in the evening and during the night.
15	8 morn.	13	N.W.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather.
	Noon	15¼	W.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather.
	6 even.	14	W. N.W.	Very light breeze. Cloudy weather.
16	8 morn.	11	S.	Very light breeze. A few small white clouds.
	Noon	13	S.	A light breeze. The horizon cloudy to the southward.
	6 even.	12½	S.	High wind. Weather cloudy and threatening a storm.
17	8 morn.	11½	S. E.	Light breeze. Weather a little cloudy. About 10 o'clock the weather cleared up, and it was very fine the rest of the day.
18	8 morn.	13	W.	Light breeze. A fog which ascended, and the sky became covered with clouds.
	Noon	16	W.	Fresh breeze. Cloudy weather.
	6 even.	15	W.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather.
19	8 morn.	13	W.	Fresh breeze. The sky cloudy and very menacing in the northern quarter.
	Noon	16	W.	High wind. Clear sky.
	6 even.	13½	W.	The horizon cloudy to the westward. At 9 o'clock in the evening a little rain.
20	8 morn.	11½	S. S.W.	Very light breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	16½	N.W.	Very light breeze. Fine weather.
	6 even.	15	N.	Very light breeze. The horizon cloudy to the N.W.
21	8 morn.	11¼	Calm	Fog.
	Noon	15½	E.	Almost calm. The sky interspersed with flying clouds.
	6 even.	14½	N. E.	Very light breeze. Weather cloudy, and very black to the northward.

TRAVELS IN UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Reaum. Therm.	Wind.	OBSERVATIONS.
22	8 morn.	11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ^o	S. S. E.	Fresh breeze. Cloudy weather.
	Noon	15	S. E.	Very fresh breeze. Cloudy weather. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon there fell a little rain, which lasted only a few minutes.
23	6 even.	13	S. E.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather.
	8 morn.	13	W. S.W	Light breeze. Very cloudy weather. Small drizzling rain during the whole morning.
	Noon	15	S.W.	Fresh breeze. Very cloudy weather. Small drizzling rain.
	6 even.	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	S.W.	High wind. Very cloudy weather. Small drizzling rain.
24	8 morn.	12	W.	Very fresh breeze. The clouds, which entirely covered the sky, are breaking.
	Noon	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	S.W.	Fresh breeze. The clouds are more scattered than in the morning.
	6 even.	11	S.W.	Fresh breeze.
25	8 morn.	9	S.W.	High wind. Since sun-rise there has been a considerable fall of rain, which lasted till 11 o'clock.
	Noon	14	W. S.W.	High wind. The horizon cloudy and very black. In the afternoon some showers of rain.
	6 even.	12	S.W.	The sky almost entirely clear. The horizon cloudy in the southern quarter.
26	8 morn.	11	S.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather.
	Noon	15	S. S. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	6 even.	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	S. S. E.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
27	8 morn.	12	W. S.W.	Almost calm. A slight fog. Dull weather. At 9 o'clock small drizzling rain, which lasted till near noon.
	Noon	15	S.W.	Light breeze. Cloudy and dull weather.
	6 even.	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S.W.	Very light breeze. Cloudy and dull weather.
28	8 morn.	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S.W.	Fine weather. Light breeze.
	Noon	12 $\frac{1}{5}$	W.	Clear sky. Very fine weather.
	6 even.	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Light breeze. Very fine weather.
29	—	—	—	Left Rosetta. Very fine weather.

Remarks

Remarks on the preceding Table.

THE month of December was, in general, finer than the month of November; the wind, till the 15th, was almost constantly from the northward, and the rest of the month from the southward: there was only one north-west gale (the 13th), which was less violent and of shorter duration than that of the month of October.

The thermometer, on the hottest day, the 6th, was at $17\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$; what little wind there was, was northerly; it was foggy in the morning, and the weather was a little cloudy during the whole day.

The coolest day was the 13th: the thermometer, after having been in the morning at 12° , fell to 9° : before noon it blew a strong gale from the N.W.; the weather was very cloudy, and there was a fall of rain.

The difference, therefore, between the hottest and the coolest day this month was 8° , and the mean term $13\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$.

Month of February, 1778.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Reaum. Therm.	Wind.	OBSERVATIONS.
1	8 morn.	13°	W. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Large black and thick clouds. At half past 11 o'clock some small rain, which lasted a quarter of an hour.
	Noon	14	W. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Several large flying clouds.
2	6 even.	14	W. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Clear sky.
	8 morn.	11½	S. E.	Light breeze. Foggy sky, with some flying clouds. At 9 o'clock a small shower of rain.
3	Noon	16	N. W. by N.	Light breeze. The horizon covered with thick vapours.
	6 even.	14	N.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	8 morn.	13	N. N. W.	High wind. From midnight till 9 o'clock there fell some heavy rain with a high wind from the N. N. W.
4	Noon	13	N. W.	A very strong gale. Several large flying clouds.
	6 even.	11½	N. W.	A very strong gale. The horizon covered with black clouds. At seven o'clock the rain began, and lasted part of the night.
	8 morn.	11	N. W.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather. At 9 o'clock the wind shifted to the W. and some rain fell.
5	Noon	11½	W.	Light breeze. Rain.
	6 even.	11	W.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather. At 8 o'clock heavy rain, which lasted the whole night.
5	8 morn.	11¾	N. W.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather. At 9 o'clock rain, which lasted all the morning.
	Noon	11	N. W.	Light breeze. Heavy showers of rain during the whole day and night, accompanied by violent gales of wind.
6	8 morn.	8½	W.	High wind. Rain.
	Noon	10½	W.	High wind and heavy rain during the rest of the day and part of the night.
7	8 morn.	10½	N. N. W.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather. Rain in the morning.
	Noon	15	N. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Weather less cloudy than in the morning, and the sun shewing itself from time to time.
	6 even.	12	N. N. W.	Light breeze. Weather less cloudy till noon.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Reaum. Therm.	Wind.	OBSERVATIONS.
8	8 morn.	11°	S. S. W.	Light breeze. Clear sky. Fine weather.
	Noon	14	S.	Light breeze. Very fine weather.
	6 even.	11½	N. N. W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
9	8 morn.	10½	S. S. E.	Fresh breeze. Weather very thick and misty.
	Noon	15	S. E.	Fresh breeze. Cloudy weather.
	6 even.	12½	E.	High wind. Weather less cloudy than at noon.
10	8 morn.	10½	S.	Almost calm. Fine weather.
	Noon	16	W.	High wind. Fine weather.
	6 even.	13	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
11	8 morn.	10	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	15	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
	6 even.	13	Calm.	Very fine weather.
12	8 morn.	10½	S. W.	Light breeze. Very fine weather.
	Noon	15	W.	Light breeze. Very fine weather.
	6 even.	11	W. N. W.	Almost calm. Very fine weather.
13	8 morn.	12	N. W.	Light breeze. A few flying clouds.
	Noon	15½	N. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Some clouds.
	6 even.	13	N. by W.	Almost calm. A great many clouds.
14	8 morn.	13	N. N. W.	Almost calm. Cloudy weather.
	Noon	16	N. by W.	Light breeze. Cloudy weather.
	6 even.	13	N.	Almost calm. Cloudy weather.
15	8 morn.	10½	S. S. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon	17½	S. E.	High wind. Fine weather.
	6 even.	13½	S. S. E.	High wind. Weather very thick and misty.
16	8 morn.	10¼	S.	High wind. Fine weather.
	Noon	17½	W.	High wind. Fine weather.
	6 even.	13	W.	Light breeze. Fine weather.
17	8 morn.	10½	S.	Light breeze. Very thick fog. <i>Left Raffetta.</i>

Remarks

Remarks upon the preceding Table.

DURING the first seventeen days of the month of February, the 15th was the hottest day, and the 6th the coolest. On the first, the thermometer, at noon, was at $17\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, and on the second $10\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, at the same hour, after having been at $8\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ in the morning. It blew a strong gale at W. and it had not ceased raining for two days. On the 19th, the hottest day, the wind was at S. S. E. and S. E. and the weather was very fine. The difference of these two days is 7° , and the mean term of the heat 14° .

The wind was very variable during these seventeen days; however, it came more frequently from the western quarter than from any other. The weather was very bad, with almost continual rain, accompanied with strong gales of wind. During this bad weather the wind was westerly.

It must also be observed, that whenever the wind was at S. E. or S. S. E. and blowing fresh, the weather was thick and foggy; and this is a general remark which I made upon the weather at Rossetta; for in the month of December the wind was three times at S. E. and S. S. E. and the weather was cloudy. Likewise, in the month of November, the wind was at E. and S. E. for two successive days; and the atmosphere, in the morning, was loaded with a heavy fog.

CHAPTER XXV.

DEPARTURE FROM ROSSETTA.—BEDOUINS.—AGREEMENT WITH THE ARABS.—RIOT AT ABOUKIR.—COAST BETWEEN ABOUKIR AND ALEXANDRIA.—WILD OXEN.—CONSEQUENCE OF THE RIOT AT ABOUKIR.—INSCRIPTION.—CAMP OF BEDOUINS.—CAMELS.—ALARM IN THE CAMP.—HOSPITALITY AND MANNERS OF THE BEDOUINS.—OPINION PECULIAR TO THEM.—ANTIQUE CUBE.

MY departure was fixed for the 29th of December. We had mules, the beasts usually employed to ride on upon the Alexandria road, and a camel to carry our baggage, which was contained in two great *caffafs*, a handsome sort of large covered pannier, that is fastened on each side of the camel. The consul insisted that his janizary should accompany me to Aboukir, where I was in hopes of finding means to reach the desert of Nitria; and we accordingly set off at nine o'clock in the morning.

On this occasion we found, at the lake of *Maadiè*, a commodious decked boat. Half a league beyond this ancient mouth of the Nile there was a small encampment of Bedouins, who, according to custom, offered us water, and, in the most pressing manner, invited us to pass the night under their tents. A few days before, some European merchants, coming from Alexandria with their wives, and being detained at the ferry for want of a boat, had been obliged to sleep in the camp of these Bedouins, and were extremely well satisfied with their behaviour. I felt no hesitation in placing a confidence in them, and hired some of them to escort the camel, whose slow pace had considerably retarded our progress; while we took the lead with the janizary and our mules, and arrived at Aboukir about eight o'clock in the evening. We alighted at the house of the Jew

drogueman, who received us with every mark of honest hospitality.

When he was informed of the object of my journey, and I entreated him to procure me camels for traversing the desert, the good Jew exclaimed against the rashness of the enterprise, representing it to me as extremely dangerous, and even as bordering upon madness; and he concluded by declaring that he would take no concern in the business, as he would not be instrumental to my destruction, which he considered as certain. He contested the point till he found that I grew angry, and assured him that I would at all events set out on the journey; nothing being able to make me change my determination. A *sheick*, or chief of Bedouin Arabs, was encamped at no great distance from Aboukir; he was a brave man, well known, and entrusted with guarding the road from Alexandria to Rossetta. The drogueman, still lamenting my obstinacy, sent for him, and he arrived at midnight. The terms of our agreement were instantly settled. The Arab was to find me a horse and four camels, and to accompany me, for four patackes * a day, without my being obliged to provide food, either for him or his animals. At daybreak, a writer of the country drew up our agreement in Arabic, the conditions of which had been minuted down by the Jew drogueman. Like all those of his nation who live in this country, he wrote in Spanish, but with Hebrew characters, in the same manner as the German Jews employ these characters when writing in German. The contract was attested by witnesses, a formality at which I inwardly smiled; for before what tribunal should I have summoned a Bedouin Arab, had

* *Patacke* is the name used in the Egyptian trade to designate a Hungarian silver coin, which is worth five livres ten *sous* of our money. This name is corrupted from that of *aboutaka* (father of the window), which the Arabs have given to this piece, because they take the shield of the arms for a window. In the same manner they call the Dutch dollar *aboukelb* (father of the dog), on account of the awkward figure of a lion which is represented upon it, and which appears to them to be a dog.

he not fulfilled his engagements? The "high-contracting parties," the writer, the witnesses, the Jew, the janizary, and my companions, were all seated in a circle on the ground; and when the agreement was signed, each stretching out his hands, offered up a short prayer to God and to Mahomet, and finished it by taking hold of his beard, or his chin, with the right hand, a manner of swearing to fulfil a promise, and which guarantees the performance of every contract, written or verbal.

During these arrangements, the people of Aboukir, who had found the pyramidal stone which I had purchased on my former journey, and which had been the subject of such a number of difficulties, assembled together on being informed of my return, and raised their countrymen, under the pretence that I had carried off a treasure from their territory, and was hiring camels to convey away others of still greater value. They once more demanded of me the price of the immense riches of which I had deprived them. The riot was becoming general; the *barber-governor* was willing also to have his share of the loads of gold I had taken, as well as of those of which I was also preparing to rob him. He made his shop re-echo with imprecations against the *Franks* in general, and me in particular. The Jew drogueman trembled; the janizary harangued the mob, in order to undeceive them: my companions were exceedingly alarmed, and I myself was not quite at my ease; but I concealed my fears, and affected indifference and contempt for all this uproar, which, in truth, might have been attended with the most serious consequences. To remove every suspicion of my apprehensions, I kept the mules belonging to Rossetta, and resolved to travel over the range of coast which lies between Aboukir and Alexandria.

I set out at eight o'clock in the morning, and passed through a small village to the westward, very near Aboukir, which bears the name of *Kasr Dsjami*, or *Castle of the Mosque*. There is, in fact, a temple in the village. Beyond it, and as far as Alexandria, I met

with nothing but several large houses, standing singly, though at no great distance from each other. They are inhabited by cultivators, and are tolerably well built. Some pieces of granite, the remains of ancient edifices, have been employed in their construction, which is entirely modern. Each of these houses is called *kafir*, or castle, to which some particular designation is added. Although enclosed by walls, they are not secure against the attacks of the Bedouins, who sometimes make breaches in these outworks in order to commit their depredations. I looked in vain for the *Castle of the Cæsars*, *Kafir Kiaffera*, mentioned by Danville in his *Ancient Geography* *, and laid down upon his map of Egypt, as if still existing under its Arabic denomination. I interrogated the inhabitants of the coast, and they all assured me that they had never heard of *Kafir Kiaffera*. Besides, this Castle of the Cæsars was probably a dependency of *Taposiris*, of which Strabo makes mention † (*Taposiris parva*, in order to distinguish it from another town of the same name). It was thither that Antony frequently repaired, to forget the greatness of the Roman name in the bosom of pleasure, and exchange his glory for the charms of the beautiful and voluptuous Cleopatra.

All this coast is formed of hillocks of sand, behind which a low and often inundated country affords a few spots capable of cultivation.

After having taken a little refreshment under the shade of some date-trees, within two gun-shots of Alexandria, I returned towards Aboukir. In my way I passed before two or three tents of Bedouins: they kept a few wild oxen, which, having been caught very young, were as tame as those of the common species. With the exception of a

* “A peu de distance d’Alexandrie, et sur le rivage, un lieu dont le nom, *Nicopolis*, perpétuoit la mémoire d’un avantage remporté sur Antoine par Auguste, est appelé aujourd’hui *Kafir Kiaffera*, Chateau des Cæsars.” *Géographie Ancienne*, par Danville, tome i. p. 11.

† Lib. xvii.

few shades of colour, they greatly resemble the zebu, or dwarf ox, described by Buffon*.

On my return to Aboukir, I found the people still more riotous than at my departure. Some impudent informers, atrocious villains, such as are to be found in the midst of all disturbances, had attested that they had repeatedly seen me come by night into their neighbourhood, load my beasts with gold, and immediately depart. This was enough to induce the mob to carry their fury to the highest pitch. They resolved to let us load their riches on the camels that the Bedouins were to bring me, then to attack and murder us, in order to recover the treasures of which we should be in possession. This project, which greatly alarmed my companions, gave me no uneasiness. Besides, I was fully determined not to suffer myself to be attacked with impunity. The next day the Bedouins came for me with their camels. The stupid and unbridled populace surrounded us; but seeing that I betrayed no signs of fear; perceiving, above all, the camels carried nothing but men, and the panniers we had brought with us, they let us set off quietly, except venting a few threats, to which I paid little regard.

On taking leave of the Jew drogueman, he renewed his entreaties to induce me to relinquish my design, which, he said, he was well convinced would cost me my life. He urged me to think seriously of the risk I should run in districts where I had no hopes of protection, after what had just passed in a place, where the habit of seeing Europeans and their ships had not prevented my being exposed to danger. I thanked him for his sollicitude. The janizary took the road to Rosetta, while we directed our route to the south-east.

I had given the janizary a letter for M. Forneti, informing him of the riot at Aboukir, of which I had been the occasion, and almost the victim. He communicated its contents to the Aga of Ros-

* Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.

fetta, who flew into a violent passion with the inhabitants of Aboukir, calling them *dogs*, and thus putting them on a footing with Europeans. He proposed to M. Forneti to have them punished; an offer which, as may well be supposed, was not accepted. Finally he added, that when I again wished to make the same journey, he would order me to be accompanied by one of his people, before whom all Aboukir would tremble; a mode of governing, in every respect worthy of the men subject to such rulers.

We crossed an uncultivated, sandy plain, entirely destitute of inhabitants. A numerous herd of antelopes* appeared at a distance. On the road we met with the tomb of a Mussulman saint. These tombs are generally enclosed within a little chapel, which the pious Mahometans never fail to enter, and there offer up their prayers. I went into this without any ceremony with my Bedouin sheick, whose name was *Husscin*. I there saw a piece of beautiful white marble, upon which was engraved a Greek inscription. Half of the first line was effaced; the remainder was in good preservation; but the characters were rather badly formed. No sooner did I express a wish to have this marble, than Husscin, like a profane reprobate, pulled it up from the pavement to which it belonged, and tendered it to me for sale. It was twenty-two inches long, sixteen broad, and rather more than four inches thick. It was among a great number of other curiosities that have been stolen from me, as well as from the national establishments for which I intended them; and I can neither accuse the Arabs, nor any other Orientals, of so shameful a breach of trust. I here insert the inscription with a translation, for which, and likewise for the notes that accompany it, I am indebted to Citizen Gail, the learned professor of Greek in the college of France.

* *Pafan*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Antilope oryx*, L.—*Capra gazella*, Forskal, Fauna Egypt.-arab. p. iv.—*Ang*. The bezoar antelope, or pafan.

.....ΦΛΕΥΤΟΛ
 ΤΟΣΕΠΑΡΧΤΟΥΙΘ·
 ΑΙΓΥΠΤΙΑΚΗΣΔΙΟΙ
 ΑΓΑΙΑΠΟΘΕΜΕΛΙ
 ΒΑΘΟΥΣΠΗΧ'ΔΕΚΛ
 ΑΜΗΚΟΝΣΠΗΧ'ΔΙ·
 Π'ΑΡΡ'·ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ
 ΤΟΥΤΑΓΜΑΤΟΣΚΑΙ
 ΓΥΠΤΙΑΚΗΣΔΙΟΙ

. EUTOLTUS,
 GOVERNOR OF THE NINETEENTH (*nome* or *department*),
 IN HONOUR OF EGYPTIAN JUPITER.
 THE FOUNDATION OF THIS (*monument*) IS TEN CUBITS:
 ITS PERPENDICULAR ELEVATION IS FORTY
 CUBITS. THE HEIGHT OF ITS SIDES IS A HUNDRED CUBITS.
 IN HONOUR OF ALEXANDER,
 OF HIS ARMY,
 AND OF EGYPTIAN JUPITER.

“ This inscription, which, at first sight, appeared to me easy to
 “ be explained, is, on the contrary, very difficult to be understood.

“ I shall not endeavour to divine the meaning of the first two let-
 “ ters φ, λ, as the points which precede them indicate an hiatus.
 “ The stroke after επαρχ' denotes an abbreviation, which I was as
 “ much at a loss to fill up as to guess at the ellipsis of the word
 “ *nome*, or *department*. As for the third line, it appeared to me
 “ susceptible of two significations : αιγυπτιακης Διοι may mean, either
 “ in honour of the Jupiter of the land of Egypt, (*χωρας* being un-
 “ derstood after αιγυπτιακης), or in honour of the Egyptian Jupiter,
 “ that

“ that is to say, probably Isis, the same as the moon. (On the subject of Isis, see *l'Origine des Cultes* of my celebrated colleague, Dupuis, the mythologist.)

“ At the word $\Delta\iota\omicron\iota$, a grammarian might possibly stop me. I shall observe that it is the genitive of $Z\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma$; $Z\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma$ having $\Delta\iota\omicron\varsigma$ in the genitive case, for which $\Delta\iota\omicron\iota$ is ionically substituted. Let me remark, by the way, that the modern, and probably also the ancient Greeks, pronounced the diphthong $\omicron\iota$ like the French *i*, whence the Latins seem to me to have derived their genitives and nominatives in *i*.

“ $\Theta\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\iota$ is, I think, an abbreviation for $\theta\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\iota\omega\nu$, governed by $\alpha\pi\omicron$.

“ $\Pi\eta\chi'$ for $\pi\eta\chi\epsilon\epsilon\varsigma$, the nominative plural of $\pi\eta\chi\upsilon\varsigma$, $\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$.

“ *Its perpendicular elevation is forty cubits.* In Greek it is expressed $\Delta\iota$, which signifies either four and ten, that is to say fourteen, or perhaps four multiplied by ten, that is forty. The first number appearing to me too small, and the second being merely conjectural, I should rather suppose that the Δ was included in a large Π , in this manner $\overline{\Pi\Delta}$; and as the Δ inserted in the Π implies a number five times greater, I should have fifty-one for the result. I shall, however, resume this calculation when I speak of the arithmetic of the Greeks, which I intend to investigate.

“ $\Pi'\Lambda\text{PP}'$. These first three letters being never connected in Grecian arithmetic, I suspect that some error has been here committed by the artist who engraved the inscription. Instead of $\Pi'\Lambda\text{PP}'$, I would propose to read $\Pi\Lambda\text{P}'$ by abbreviation for $\pi\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\alpha$, which signifies *hides*. As for the second P, it will stand for *a hundred*.

“ *In honour of Alexander.* Does this mean Alexander Severus, or Alexander the Great? The investigation of this question, and of two others which I asked myself on reading the inscription a second time, might be the subject of an important dissertation, which my present engagements will not permit me to undertake.”

At five o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at an encampment of Arabs: it was Houssein's camp. We had set out from Aboukir at nine o'clock in the morning, and I estimate the distance we this day travelled to be about seven leagues.

These Bedouins having been apprized of our visit, Houssein's tent was prepared for my reception. The women had spread out some carpets of their own manufacture, and a few faggots, covered with these carpets, served as seats. The animals, which are accustomed to partake of the shelter of the Bedouin, had been driven out, excepting only a young ox. These tents of the Bedouins are all of the same shape, and differ only in size; those of the Arabs, who lead a more wandering life, are smaller, for the facility of conveyance. Houssein and the Arabs of his tribe were both wanderers and cultivators, and their tents were more spacious. They are all low, of much greater length than breadth, and entirely open on one of their long sides, that sheltered from the wind; and as the northerly winds prevail most in this country, it is generally the north side that is closed. The stuff of which they are made is wove from camel's hair. I had a drawing made of Sheick Houssein's tent. (*See Plate VII.*) It was distinguished from the others only by a large plume of black ostrich feathers placed upon its top.

This drawing may serve as an answer to Michaëlis, who asked the travellers, sent to the East by the king of Denmark, what was the shape of the tents of these people*? As for the second part of the same question, namely, whether the Bedouins have preserved the custom of placing their tents so as to be shaded by a tree, I shall observe that, in general, those of Egypt encamp in spots destitute of trees; and when any happen to be there, it is no consideration with them in the pitching of their tents.

* Voyageurs favans et curieux, Quest. 9. tome i. p. 20.

The camp was situated about a hundred yards from the canal of Alexandria. Its waters, turned off by the labour of the Bedouins, diffused fertility through an extensive piece of ground. Various kinds of food for animals were here cultivated, and horses, camels, sheep, and a few oxen were seen at pasture.

In following the distinction made by Pliny and Aristotle, and adopted by Buffon *, between two species of animals which nature herself has discriminated by a uniform and very remarkable character, no camels will be found in Egypt. In fact, there are in that country no animals of the kind that has two bunches upon the back †: all those which are met with there have only one bunch, and are consequently of the species of the dromedary. But the generic name of camel is so much used to indicate even this latter species with one bunch on the back, and that of dromedary is so generally applied to a particular race of these animals, that I should probably not be clearly understood, were I to adopt a distinction necessary to the precision of science, but which might cause some confusion in my narrative. The Arabic word *dsjammel*, which answers to that of *camel*, is likewise the only one that the inhabitants employ to designate the most common and most useful race; that of the greatest size and strength, of the slowest pace, and which is intended for the conveyance of heavy burdens ‡. On the contrary, that species which is not so tall nor so strong, and which is extremely active, is called the *dromedary* by the Europeans, and by the Arabs, the *badjin* §, because it is the beast on which the *badjins* or pilgrims generally ride.

Besides these two races of camels, there is also in Egypt a third, much less known. I saw a few individuals of this species among

* Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, art. du *Chameau*.

† *Chameau*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Camelus bactrianus*, L.

‡ *Dromadaire*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Camelus dromedarius*, L.
—*Camelus vulgaris*, Forskål, Fauna Egyptiaco-arabica, p. iv.

§ *Camelus dromedarius*, Forskål, place above cited.

the Bedouins. They are of a shorter make, their body is rounder, their hair is longer and thicker, and of a fawn colour, inclining to brown.

On covering the soil of these burning regions with deserts, nature gave man the camel to cross them; and formed it to endure fatigue, hunger, thirst, and all the inconveniences of heat and aridity. Without this animal, vast plains of sand and flints, barren mountains covered with rugged rocks, would have been to man an insurmountable barrier; with the camel, numerous troops traverse the moving sands, and offer a wonderful spectacle to the observer, astonished to see men in places which seem to repulse every animated being; with him circulate all the riches of the East; with him, in short, the isolated traveller fears not to commit himself to the immense void that separates one nation from another.

With qualities of so general utility, these valuable animals possess likewise a superior degree of instinct and intelligence. They are even reckoned very sensible of injustice and bad treatment. The Arabs assert that a person who strikes them without reason finds some difficulty in escaping from their vengeance, and that by a remarkable conformity between their disposition and that of their masters, they treasure up the remembrance of the injury till they have an opportunity of gratifying their resentment. In the rutting season particularly, they are easily provoked. They then most frequently utter a sort of hoarse lowing, a strong rattling in the throat, and push out of their mouth a reddish vesicle, of a disgusting appearance, and as large as a hog's bladder. It is said that in their fits of passion they sometimes lift up a man with their teeth, throw him on the ground, and tread him under their feet. Eager to be revenged, they lose all animosity as soon as they have satisfied, or even think they have satisfied, their vengeance. Indeed, when an Arab happens to have excited the anger of a camel, he puts his clothes in the place where the animal is to pass, and arranges them

in such a manner that they seem to cover a man lying down. The camel recollects the garments of him by whom he has been unjustly treated; seizes them with his teeth; shakes them with violence, and tramples upon them with fury. When his rage is over, he quits them; the owner of the clothes may then shew himself without fear, and conduct and load at his pleasure the animal, who, with astonishing docility, submits to the will of a man that a moment before it was his intention to destroy.

I have sometimes seen *badjins* or dromedaries, weary of the impatience of their riders, stop short, turn their long neck to bite them, and utter cries of rage. On these occasions, the rider must not on any account alight, for he would inevitably be torn to pieces; he should also avoid striking the animal, as that would only increase his fury. There is no other remedy than patience; and when he has succeeded in appeasing the dromedary by patting him with his hand, which frequently requires some time, the beast will, of his own accord, proceed, resuming his usual step. The pace of these dromedaries is a very long trot, during which they carry the head high, and the tail stiff and extended in a horizontal position. The saddle, or rather pack-saddle, on which the rider sits, is hollow in the middle, and has on each side of the head, a round piece of wood placed vertically, which he grasps firmly with his hands, to keep himself in his seat. Some of these saddles are flatter, not so well stuffed, nor so convenient as those of the Arabs, and the handles are placed horizontally. The latter are brought from Senaar, the capital of Nubia. Long pockets hanging on each side, and containing some provision for the rider and his beast, a skin full of water for the man alone, the dromedary being able to travel a week without drinking, a thong of leather in the hand to whip the animal, form the whole of the equipage of the traveller; and thus accoutred; he can cross the deserts, and go fifty, and even as much as eighty leagues a day. This manner of travelling is excessively

cessively fatiguing : the loins suffer very much from the rough and quick jolts of the dromedary ; the hands soon become swelled and extremely painful ; and the fiery atmosphere through which the rider rapidly passes, checks the breath so as almost to induce suffocation. The most extraordinary journey of this kind that I ever heard of, was performed by a Bedouin, who was frequently pointed out to me at Cairo. In five days he travelled from thence to Mecca, that is to say, more than four hundred leagues, a journey in which the caravan of the pilgrims employs upwards of thirty.

When the traveller is not in great haste, or accompanies the caravans, that always proceed very slowly, on account of the camels of burden, there is fixed upon one of these animals a sort of covered litter, which is tolerably commodious, and in which he may, if he chooses, lie down. The women generally travel in this manner ; and sometimes there are five or six of them together in one of these litters.

Pliny has related, after Xenophon, that camels, and under this generic name are comprised dromedaries, could not bear horses. Other authors have said that they had an equal aversion for mules and asses : but the truth is, that all these animals, at least in Egypt and Turkey, live and travel together, and there is most commonly an ass at the head of a string of loaded camels, which he leads ; and the first of which being tied to the ass, follows him step by step. Others again have agreed in the assertion, that camels must not be struck to make them go on, and that to sing or whistle is sufficient to make them quicken their pace. Indeed they must not be beaten too much, nor undeservedly, otherwise, they would soon become restive ; but the drivers of the loaded camels have a switch with which they strike them, and a long leather strap is employed to whip those used for the saddle. Both are urged on by a clicking of the tongue, much the same as is practised by our coachmen to encourage their horses. It is likewise proper to remark upon this subject,

that the Bedouins never whistle ; and that they even feel hurt when a traveller, ignorant of their customs, whistles in their company. I am also of opinion, that when they sing, they have no other view than to beguile the tediousness of their route.

The Hebrews were forbidden to eat the flesh of the camel * ; but the Arabs, and all the inhabitants of Egypt, except the Christians, consider it as a delicacy, and esteem it very wholesome food ; for, in the towns where fanaticism is at the highest pitch, as at Cairo and Alexandria, they prohibited this kind of meat to be profaned by its being sold to the *Franks*, who, however, by no means regret the privation ; because, though not being bad-tasted, it is dry and tough. In Barbary, camels tongues are cured and smoked, to be sent to Italy and other countries, and they are very good eating.

The camel, though an animal so admirably framed for these countries of the East, where it constitutes the chief wealth of those nations, who venerate it as a gift of Heaven, was not among the animals held sacred in ancient Egypt. Under a government whose sole aim was to keep the people isolated, and to attach them wholly to agriculture, every thing not immediately tending to that object was regarded with indifference ; and every thing that could militate against it, became subject to odium. In this point of view, the horse, the camel, and the ass, animals necessary to commercial nations, were, by the Egyptians, held in contempt.

The present inhabitants of Egypt keep a great number of camels, which are bred and sold to them by the Arabs. They nevertheless fetch a pretty high price. At Cairo they are worth from four to five hundred livres apiece ; they were not so dear in Upper Egypt, where their price varied from two to three hundred livres. In

* “ Ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof, as the camel ; because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof : he is unclean unto you.” Leviticus, chap. xi. ver. 4.

Barbary they are equally numerous; but the species becomes more scarce in proceeding along the west coast of Africa, and it appears not to extend much beyond Cape Verd; for I never saw more than one or two camels in the possession of some of the chiefs in the country of the Jalofs.

Besides the two highly useful properties of carrying the traveller and conveying merchandize, the camel possesses other qualities not less valuable. Its hair is an important article of commerce, and also serves for the fabrication of the tents and carpets of the Arabs: its dung mixed with chopped straw, and afterwards dried in the sun, is the common fuel in those countries where wood is extremely scarce; sal-ammoniac is likewise obtained from the same substance; and the milk of the females is one of the simple and salutary articles of nourishment of the Bedouins.

We had not been an hour with Houssein's Bedouins, when an alarm was spread through the camp, at the sight of a troop of hostile and predatory Arabs, which was discovered in the plain. Every body was instantly in motion; the women shrieked with fear; the men ran to their arms; some mounting the first horses that came within their reach; others on foot set out in pursuit of the banditti. In the midst of this unexpected bustle, we remained perfectly quiet with the old men and the women to guard the camp. But reflecting on the sudden appearance of this hostile troop, the idea occurred to me that we were the object of its pursuit, and that its march was occasioned by the riot at Aboukir, and by the opinion there propagated concerning the immense treasures we had carried away. I did not choose to make my companions uneasy by communicating to them my suspicions, but the sequel proved how well they were founded.

Tranquillity being re-established, hospitality, whose duties are sacred among these nations, resumed her rights, the exercise of which nothing less than the immediate necessity of self-defence could

could for a moment have suspended. A live sheep, intended for the supper of my little party, was brought to me in Hufflein's tent, which was now become mine, and of which the young ox had only a share, my companions being dispersed in different tents. But, when it was perceived that I was desirous of sparing the life of this poor animal, we were presented with some delicious milk, and various sorts of little cakes that were crisp and very good, Hufflein's women asking me every moment if I would have any thing to eat.

It is in the midst of these societies of the desert, that we must look for that frank cordiality which instantaneously converts a host into a friend and brother. Here that deceitful politeness, those false expressions of kindness which persons reciprocally lavish upon each other in our fashionable circles in Europe, and by which they mutually agree not to be deceived, are entirely unknown. Here simple and natural offers are made only of articles equally simple, to refuse which would excite real pain in the mind of those who make them; while, by accepting these hospitable presents, a stranger is sure to inspire gratitude, and runs no risk of being thought troublesome.

Neither is jealousy, that daughter of pride, here the tyrant of the women. Luxury and factitious pleasures, bringing immorality in their train, have made no attempt to fix their abode on those parched and barren sands. The manners of these people are preserved pure, simple, and such as are described in their ancient histories. The women are not, like those of the other nations of Egypt, afraid to shew their face uncovered, nor to converse freely with a stranger, and display that natural and pleasing gaiety which is the companion of virtue, and the enemy of remorse. I have already said, that when young, these women might be reckoned not destitute of beauty, although they have a tawny hue, and the eyes of an European cannot easily be reconciled to the indelible compartments which they painfully mark, on the lower part of the face, with a needle and black dye. This

fantastical ornament is common to several people, chiefly Africans; it is even introduced at Malta, where the inhabitants make similar impressions, not on their face, but on other parts of their body. The Provençal sailors who landed on that island, in general, never failed to employ those men whose trade it is to trace upon the hands and arms figures of every sort, and particularly objects of devotion. The grenadier of marines that I had with me, had also been so foolish as to have himself marked, and on his arm was represented a large crucifix, which reached from the elbow to the wrist. I did not observe it till our arrival at Cairo, that is, when it was too late to dismiss him; for a crucifix was certainly a strange recommendation in a country where Mahometan fanaticism is carried to the highest pitch.

The Bedouins are, in general, very handsome men. A simple and uniform mode of life, uninjured by excess, prolongs their existence to the period fixed by nature. They live to be very old, and, at an advanced age, they are remarkable for their venerable and truly patriarchal physiognomy. There is nevertheless a part of this nation, that misery, continual excursions, and the hardships of a toilsome and restless life, have, in a manner, perverted from their natural state. These, ever wandering, predatory, and wretched, are, for the most part, of a slender make and mean appearance, and it is difficult to discover among them any traces of the beauty of their original race.

I found that my entertainers held a singular opinion, which tradition had rendered sacred among them. They assert that their ancestors were Europeans and Christians, one of whose ships having been wrecked upon the coast of Egypt, the crew had been plundered, and reduced to the necessity of living in the desert. All they have retained of the supposed christianity of their forefathers, was the sign of the cross, which they traced with their fingers upon the sand. I cannot say how far this account is deserving of credit; but it was certainly related to me at different times by several men
belonging

belonging to the camp, without any opening being given to them, and I never heard it repeated in any other tribe.

I did not sleep the whole night, being tormented by a prodigious number of fleas, which did not suffer me to get a moment's rest. They are attracted by the animals and the fire kept in the tents; the ground and the carpets were covered with them, and I could not help envying the insensibility of the Bedouins, who sleep soundly in the midst of these insects.

A Bedouin had found a small antique bronze cube, which I procured from him. Its sides measured nine lines in length. (*See a representation of it* Plate IX. Fig. 5.) The two letters LV, which are engraved upon it, are probably the Roman numerals 55.

CHAPTER XXVI.

JOURNEY ACROSS BAHIRA.—BEDOUINS.—STARLINGS.—BEANS.—DAMANHOUR.—REPORTS CIRCULATED RESPECTING THE AUTHOR'S JOURNEY.—COTTON.—COURTESANS.—CONTINUATION OF THE AUTHOR'S ROUTE TO THE DESERT.—WRETCHED STATE OF THE PEASANTS.—BEAUTIFUL PLAINS.—THE DESERT.—HARES.—BIRDS.—WILD OXEN.—ANTELOPES.—TIGER.—OSTRICHES.

AFTER having presented some trifles to Huffein's women, we fet out on the 1st of January, 1778, at eight in the morning. I rode a fine horse, that would have carried me on quickly, had not the camels, of the small species, on which my companions were mounted, by their extremely slow pace, retarded my career. Upon a height, and at a league from the camp, towards the north-west, stands a village named *Karioum*. We continued to follow the canal of Alexandria, which takes a south-east direction. On this side we saw some very small spots in cultivation; the rest was an entire plain of sand, less parched, however, than that we had crossed the preceding evening in our way from Aboukir; a difference which indicates that a shocking despotism, and the barbarity of the inhabitants, had occasioned the present sterility of the land on this side of the river. The opposite bank presented a less dismal prospect. We there saw, at some distance, a line of villages running parallel to the canal.

Having rode on before, I arrived at a village called *Bersik*, on the side of which were encamped some Bedouins of the same tribe as Huffein. The *sheick*, without knowing who I was, conducted me to his tent. I informed him that I was a Frenchman, whereupon I was immediately surrounded by a crowd of Bedouins: they stared at me, examined me, felt me, as if I had been an extraordinary being.

Like those I had just left, they made the sign of the cross with their fingers, or traced it upon the sand. The women were equally eager to see me; but they accompanied their curiosity with a present of some excellent milk. The Bedouins pressed upon me on every side, till, at length, the arrival of my party released me from a very well meaning, but rather importunate set.

After leaving *Bersik*, the dry plains of sand were succeeded by fertile fields, in which were a prodigious number of larks, flying in large flocks.

We arrived about noon at a village, or rather at three villages, adjoining each other, and which all three bear the name of *Sentaw*. In the vicinity of this place I saw, amongst a herd of cows, a numerous flock of starlings*; they were the first I had seen in Egypt, where they come to pass the winter.

Huffein conducted us to the house of the *sheick el belled* (chief of the country), to whom I presented the letter or order of Ismael Bey. He could not read, but was well acquainted with the seal of the commander in chief, somewhat as the savages of Guiana obeyed the bearer of the signet of the governor of Cayenne. A dinner was served up, very disgusting in itself, and still more so by the filthy manner in which the Bedouins and peasants fell upon the dishes.

At two o'clock we continued our journey, across plains every where embellished with culture, and bounded only by the horizon. They were covered with beans†, the blossoms of which diffused through the air a sweet and agreeable fragrance. The wind passing over these beds of flowers, became impregnated with their scent, and conveyed to the towns a delightful perfume. Among the ancient Egyptians this plant was held in abhorrence; the inhabitants not

* *Etourneau*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 75.—*Sturnus vulgaris*, L.

† *Vicia faba*, L.—*Ang.* The cultivated garden bean,

only abstained from eating beans, but they were also forbidden to sow them; and even the sight of them could not be endured by the priests. At present, extensive fields are covered with them, and this pulse is one of the principal articles of food for sheep and beasts of burden. No plain that I ever saw can be compared with that which we were now crossing: some hillocks seem to have been placed there on purpose to form a contrast with the uniform brilliancy of the flowers; while the ruins of several deserted habitations rendered the prospect still more picturesque.

In the evening we arrived at *Guebil*, a village situated on the west bank of the canal of Alexandria, and, like all the rest which I had seen, built of mud. The *sheick el belled*, of whom I inquired if there were in his village, or its environs, any remains of antiquity, told me, that there was a very fine figure to be seen in the mosque. I requested to view it, and found this famous figure to be the half of a lion's head, certainly antique, which the inhabitants of the place had enchased in a wall of their temple.

On the 2d of January, at daybreak, I perceived a considerable flock of cranes* passing over the village. We crossed the canal of Alexandria, then quite dry, opposite to *Guebil*, and arrived at *Damanbour* at ten o'clock in the morning. The road which we travelled between these two places ran through fields covered with trefoil and beans in blossom. This extent of cultivated land makes part of the province of *Babira*, of which *Damanbour* is the capital; and it is certainly one of the finest countries in the world.

I stopped at the entrance of the town, in order to learn if certain dealers in cotton, who carried on a regular correspondence with our merchants at Rosetta, were at home; my friends at that place having promised to apprise them of my journey, and to recommend me to their notice. Although no letters had reached them from Rosetta,

* *Grue*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 769.—*Ardea grus*, L.

they nevertheless sent one of their sons to conduct me to their house, where I was very well received. But, next day, finding that I said nothing of the purchase of cotton, which they took for granted was the purpose of my journey, I could perceive a certain coolness in their behaviour; I therefore took leave of my too mercantile-minded entertainers, and established my quarters in a kind of dark and dirty apartment in a caravanfary. I had scarcely taken possession of my new lodgings, when I received an express from Rossetta, with a letter of recommendation to the cotton-merchants. On its being communicated to them, they came and requested me to return to the apartment in their house, which I had quitted: I thanked them, but declined their offer.

M. Forneti wrote to me, that it was the opinion at Rossetta that the roads were not safe, and that I ought to be upon my guard; he also advised me, for my personal security, to give up all research after objects of antiquity. "The stone," said he, "which you have carried to Damanhour, has made here a great deal of noise; and I assure you that I am not without uneasiness; for I have been informed by several persons, that a stranger, accompanied by some Arabs, was travelling from village to village, in search of treasures, and had found one near Damanhour."

How quickly circulate such reports, the fruit of barbarous ignorance! They had preceded me at Damanhour; and the gold that I had collected, and which the Bedouin's camels were intended to carry away, was there the general subject of conversation. A merchant of the country, full of this idea, came to see me privately, and made me a proposal of a partnership. He would, he said, take upon himself all the expense of my journey to every place at which there were ruins, and of digging to discover them, &c. on condition that I would share with him the treasures that I should find under ground. I contented myself with laughing in the fool's face; but he was so angry at my refusal, that he did every thing in his power to increase

my difficulties, and to accredit the silly reports that were spread. Nothing in the world could convince these people, that this opinion which they had entertained respecting travellers was erroneous: they could form no conception of a man quitting his own country, expending sums of money, and exposing himself to a thousand dangers, merely for the sake of making a few drawings, of examining animals and plants, and of collecting pieces of stone. Pursuits like these were altogether beyond their comprehension; and they chose rather to believe, that the Europeans possessed an art that they called *the art of writing well*, by the practice of which each of us has the faculty of attracting treasures to the surface of the earth, however deep they may be buried. I passed, in their opinion, for an *adept* in this *supernatural art of writing well*. Finding that it was impossible to undeceive them, I finally resolved not to make myself uneasy on the subject, but, whatever might be the consequence, persevere in the plan of my journey, as well as in the prosecution of my researches.

However, my conductor Houssein, on whose mind these reports had made a greater impression, started some difficulties respecting the continuation of the journey. I could perceive that, notwithstanding the written agreement, the witnesses, and all the ceremony which had passed at Aboukir, he had no desire to fulfil the conditions of his bargain. Not wishing him to suppose that I could not do without him, I discharged him; but he soon returned, and earnestly solicited me to take him again into my service. He expressed the greatest satisfaction when I consented to renew our engagement; and I must say, that, from that period, I had every reason to be pleased with this Arab's behaviour.

The city of Damanhour is large, but ill built, most of the houses being of earth or bad brick. It is the residence of the Bey, or governor of *Babira*, and of a *Kiaschef*, or particular commandant. The former was with the army, and the latter had gone out of town:

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the evening before my arrival, in pursuit of some Bedouins who were plundering in the neighbourhood. But what is more interesting, Damanhour is the centre of the trade of the cotton that is gathered in the extensive and beautiful plains by which it is surrounded. It is there picked from the bushes, beaten, carded, and spun; and in these different operations consists the chief employment of the greater part of the inhabitants.

These important agricultural and commercial occupations appeared not to prevent the progress of depravation of manners; the town being infested by a great number of courtesans, who, having laid aside all sort of modesty, had the effrontery to expose their face among a people who consider the display of it as the height of indecorum. They lived near the principal coffee-house, where they had small tents, into which they conducted their admirers. Some of these girls were very pretty, and all of them understood the same means of seduction as are practised in our great towns; as if Nature, when she implanted in the minds of all mankind her propensities and precepts, indicated also to them the same means to counteract them.

A small bronze idol, pierced with holes, probably in order that it might be worn as an amulet, was the only piece of antiquity that fell into my hands at Damanhour: it was two inches three lines in length. (*See Plate IX. Fig. 3.*)

On the 4th, at nine o'clock in the morning, we set out from Damanhour, to proceed on our journey towards the desert. I observed that the city was almost entirely surrounded with water. In a pool I saw some pied king-fishers*. At a little distance from Damanhour, towards the south-east, stands a small village, the name of which I have forgotten. From thence we directed our route to the southward for a league and a half, when we reached the village of *Gragues*, after first passing through another called *Sanes*. Near the former,

* See page 280.

the banks of a large pool of water were covered with a number of little egrets, or criel herons, spur-winged plovers, green sandpipers, and a species of lapwing or plover; for I could not get near enough to distinguish them: their plumage was white, their wings were gray, and their legs red.

On one side of *Graguefs*, about a quarter of a league to the westward of it, is a village, opposite to which, and on the east side of the road, is situated another: between the two, and also a little to the eastward of the road, is to be seen the tomb of a Mussulman faint. From *Graguefs* we proceeded south-south-east for half a league, to the village of *Dentschell* (probably the *Donchal* in Danville's map), which signifies *a jar carried off*. The villagers relate, that their ancestors having once found in this place a large vase, filled with pieces of gold, they deferred till next day the division of the treasure, but when they returned, they found neither gold nor jar. To this anecdote, whether true or false, the village, according to their account, owes its name. Immediately adjoining *Dentschell*, and hardly separated from it, stands another village, which is called *Lavoischi* (*travers*), meaning *across*, on account of its transversal situation in respect to *Dentschell*; and opposite to it, on the other side of the road, are to be seen the ruins of a large village of mud-walled houses, which had been built on an eminence. We heard in the neighbourhood the cry of some quails.

The road led us south by east, a quarter of a league, to *Schambre-noum* and *Farefs*, two places standing contiguous. Between them I discovered a *thaleb* lying in a field of corn; when he saw me approaching, he rose and stole off, stretching out his body and legs, and raising his tail horizontally. The gait of this animal much resembles that of the fox.

We saw two Bedouins on horseback, who set off like lightning as soon as they perceived us. Their appearance predicted no good; for it was probable that their only object was to discover our route..

From *Schambrenoum* we proceeded south by east, about half a league, and arrived at *Nagresch*, where we passed the night. At our approach the inhabitants ran into their houses and shut their doors, under the persuasion that we were either the *kiaschef's* people, or Bedouins, who came to plunder them. We had the utmost difficulty to persuade them to give us admission; and when we had obtained it, I could not conceive the reason of their fear of being pillaged, as they all appeared plunged in the most dreadful misery, not excepting the *scheick el belled*, at whose house we lodged, according to the custom adopted by *Huffein*. The inhabitants were at war with those of a larger village in the neighbourhood; and dreading an attack, they passed the night in a state of anxiety and alarm, in which we were obliged to participate. Not an hour passed without the women coming to take refuge at our door, setting up loud cries, and telling us that the banditti were approaching. No person, however, appeared, but we were not the less deprived of our night's rest.

Nagresch was surrounded by water. On its banks we found the same kinds of aquatic birds as at *Damanbour*, besides some ducks and snipes; and several trees in the neighbourhood were covered with turtle-doves.

We quitted this place at eight o'clock in the morning. Soon after we set out I discovered three Bedouins, and galloped towards them; but *Huffein* sent after me, and begged me not to molest these men, as they were his friends, acknowledging at the same time that they were robbers.

Having travelled to the south-west near a quarter of a league, I met a Mamalûk officer, who, taking me for a Turk, saluted me with *Salam aleikum*, a salute paid only to Mahometans, and turned aside his horse, in order to make way for me. The road led south for a quarter of a league, and afterwards south-east for half a league, till it reached *Ramsès*, built upon the bank of a large canal. Before we arrived at this place, we saw, at a distance, about two hundred persons,

persons, some on foot, and some on horseback. Taking them for Bedouin robbers, we prepared for battle ; but when they approached, we found that it was a funeral procession.

By the road's side was a flock of lapwings, which suffered us to get near enough for me to shoot one of them. It was of the species of the common lapwing *. This bird is called by the Arabs *goud-guatt*.

After travelling south for a quarter of a league we passed through *Kadoufs* and *Abouamer*, and then striking off to the south-west, in half an hour we arrived at *Biban*, a town which is the residence of a *kiaschef*. Every Monday there was here held a very considerable fair for camels and other cattle. We happened to reach this place upon the day of this fair, which was kept in the open fields ; and we found no small difficulty in passing, from the great assemblage of men and beasts. Proceeding to the south-south-east, we came to *Herbetè*, in about a quarter of an hour ; and soon after reached two villages to the southward, situated about a hundred yards from each other, both of which bore the name of *Honèze*. Here our conductor had meant that we should sleep, but the inhabitants were not of the same way of thinking : they all ran away, and shut up their houses ; and we were under the necessity of having recourse to threats, in order to procure a little shelter. Constantly exposed to pillage, they know not which most to dread, the plunder of professed robbers, or the oppression of those in whose hands authority, instead of being a protection, was only a more certain engine of tyranny and extortion, and from which they were not even always exempted by their poverty and wretchedness. How ought this miserable people to bless the generous and powerful hand that comes to deliver them from the galling and iniquitous yoke which they have so long been doomed to

* *Vanneau*, première espèce, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 242.—
Tringa vanellus, L.

bear! With what transports ought they not to welcome their French deliverers, in the certainty of at length enjoying the abundance afforded by their soil, in which fertility, astonished at finding herself where liberty was unknown, had, nevertheless, established her domain! But, slaves, equally stupid and savage, they have espoused the cause of their tyrants, and by a strange and detestable effect of superstition and fervility, have united the partial efforts of ignoble cruelty, and of barbarous perfidy, to the impotent arms of the most odious of rulers. Slavery, then, is the lowest degree of the abasement of man, since it so effectually destroys and effaces the moral and intellectual faculties, as to make its victims not even regret their situation.

At a league to the eastward of *Honèze* is a small town called *Saffranè*, under the command of a *kiaschef*.

The districts through which our route was directed, favoured by nature, displayed the luxury of flight and easy culture; they formed domains which plenty seems to have made her favourite abode; and to men capable of enjoying the gifts of nature, presented the most interesting, as well as the most magnificent spectacle. But we were now upon the borders of these privileged plains, and had reached the desert. The village of *Honèze* marked the boundary between the most brilliant vegetation and the most complete aridity, between a land fertilized by the overflow of the Nile, and sands moistened in vain by copious dews.

On the morning of the 6th of January, we entered one of the depopulated parts of the globe, one of the vast divisions between habitable countries, the abode of perpetual sterility and burning drought, and which, like the liquid plains of the ocean, are exposed to pirates and their wrecks. The immense desert of Libya opened upon us: here no road, no path of any kind, can guide the traveller's steps; here tracks, which hardly leave an impression, are immediately effaced; and men are often swallowed up in waves of

sand, raised by the impetuous winds. The Arab, habituated to these solitudes, is able, without roads, as well as without a compass, to traverse them in all directions, and, guided by the stars, he never misses his way. Hufferin had much experience in journies of this sort. I fancy I still see him, seldom upon his camel, but almost always on foot, with his hands behind his back, walking over these naked plains, where there was nothing to direct the steps, with as much indifference as if he had been in the straightest avenue.

The Arabic name of these barren regions, in which there is not a single particle of vegetable earth, but all is sand and stone, is *Dsjebel*, which signifies mountain. In fact, the ground rises by an easy ascent, which forms, at first, acclivities, then hills, and in the end, mountains.

We ascended, imperceptibly, for two or three leagues, a thick bed of fine and moving sand, in which both men and beasts sink as they walk. We then entered plains covered with pebbles. These spaces were at first few, but increased in size; and the fine sand disappeared in proportion as we reached the more elevated land. At length, on the summit of the hills, we found no more of this small and moving sand; the sandy stratum became solid, and interspersed with pebbles in different forms, and of a variety of colours, with that species of jasper known by the name of *Egyptian pebbles*, which takes a very beautiful polish, and the inside of which is variegated with different colours, and figures of animals and plants, formed more by the imagination than by the pencil of nature; and lastly, of pieces of petrified wood, if this other sort of jasper be ever produced by the transmutation of wood into stone. There are also to be seen here, but more rarely, small spots, full of vitrifiable stones, of a reddish gray, and strongly fixed in the ground, above which their sharp points appear. These stones, as well as the *Egyptian pebbles*, and petrified wood, are to be met with only on the hills; elsewhere there are none but common flints to be found.

All these substances, the slow but inanimate productions of aged nature, are only appendages to a scene of aridity and horror. On these rugged and desolate spaces, no plant relieves with its verdure the wearied eye; no tree offers its shade, under which the traveller can take breath. It is only in the less elevated situations, in the gorges which divide the hills, where the finer sand is sufficiently separated to retain a portion of the refreshing dews, or where the deep strata are not weighed down by a great quantity of stones, that a few hardy and slender plants, or a few shrubs very bare of foliage, and which, for the most part, produce as many thorns as leaves, creep along and barely vegetate. These shrubs, although in general at a distance from each other, sometimes grow in patches in the less ungrateful spots, and form dismal warrens, in which hares feed and make their forms, and antelopes and other wild animals find retreat and pasture.

Hares are pretty numerous in the desert; although exposed to the pursuit of carnivorous quadrupeds and birds, at least their tranquillity is seldom interrupted by their most cruel enemies; for, except in the plains of the Pyramids, and of Saccara, where the Europeans resident at Cairo sometimes, though very rarely, take the amusement of hunting, these animals have nothing to dread from man, who has, in our countries, declared against them a war of extermination. The inhabitants of Egypt never disturb them; their flesh is forbidden by the Mahometan, as it was by the Jewish law; neither is it eaten by the Copts, who have adopted several of the customs of the Jews. The difference of climate has produced a trifling difference in the quality of the hair in the animals of this species that inhabit the burning and sandy plains of Africa: they are there nearly gray, which colour changes and grows darker in proportion as the temperature becomes less sultry. Those I have seen at Cape Verd were of a somewhat lighter gray than those of Egypt; the latter have no shade, more or less deep, of fawn colour, or rufous, which gives the

hares of Greece a greater resemblance to those of the more northern countries. Aristotle had formerly remarked, that they are also smaller in the south than towards the north. In other respects, the hares of these very hot climates are far from being so good eating as ours, and this gives additional weight to the general observation which I made when speaking of the oxen of Egypt. In fact, their flesh, as well as that of most of the animals of these southern countries, is less firm and savoury than in the north of Europe; it is also not so high coloured, and, like every species of game in the torrid zone, wants that particular flavour which is its principal recommendation. Perhaps it is from this difference in the flesh of the hare that it has been considered unwholesome, and that its use has been forbidden in the East.

Lizards, of the species described in page 238, also make their holes at the foot of these shrubs. I saw likewise, in this neighbourhood, some birds of a cinereous colour, and of the shape and genus of the blackbird. Solitary as their place of abode, they do not go in flocks, but remain isolated; they never perch; run nimbly with little hasty steps; fly little; and if they be obliged to take wing, they soon alight, and again trip along.

I observed, near one of these blackbirds, another sort of tripping bird; its plumage was rufous, but I was not able to distinguish its shape. These two species of birds feed on gnats and other insects; and it is to be presumed that they never drink, or at least very seldom, as they pass their life in plains where a drop of water is a phenomenon.

We travelled all day towards the south-west. At six in the evening we halted, and lying upon the sand, in this manner passed the night. From midnight we were as completely wetted by a copious dew as if we had been exposed to a heavy shower of rain. We suffered greatly from the cold, but did not choose to light a fire, for fear of being discovered. At five in the morning we continued our journey, and as

soon

soon as the fog was dispersed, we perceived on all sides herds of antelopes and wild oxen. These groups of animated beings presented moving scenes, the only ones that could excite interest in the midst of an immense void; and this concourse of living creatures rendered the desert less naked, less hideous, and, in a word, less a desert.

I have already had occasion to speak of wild oxen, having, among the Bedouins encamped between Aboukir and Alexandria, met with several individuals which had been domesticated*. From what I then observed, and from what I could see of them, at the great distance at which they frequently appeared to us in the deserts; from the very name of *bakkar el ouesch*, or wild ox, which the Arabs give to this species, I am the more confirmed in the conjecture, that this is a particular race in the genus of the ox, and nearly approaches that of the zebu, if it be not precisely the same. The axis, an animal of a different genus, allied both to the stag and fallow deer †, bears the same name of *bakkar el ouesch* in Barbary, according to the account of Dr. Shaw ‡; but the wild ox of the Arabs of Egypt is altogether of a distinct genus from the axis, and, as I have already remarked, is a species of that of the ox §.

I have generally seen these oxen in herds of from eight to ten; they almost constantly follow each other in a line; sometimes they stop to play or fight with their horns. The moment they perceive a traveller they make their escape. The Arabs hunt them on horseback, and sometimes conceal themselves behind the thickets of shrubs, in order to take them unawares and shoot them. Their flesh is good, and their hide in great estimation, on account of its strength and thickness.

* See page 306.

† *Axis*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quad.—*Cervus axis*, L.

‡ Shaw's Travels.

§ *Bakar wasch*, *Bos sylvestris*, Forskal, Fauna Egypt.-arab. p. iv. N. B. Forskal has classed this animal in the section appropriated to those of an uncertain genus, *generis incerti*, and which he had never seen.

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That beautiful species of quadruped, whose eyes are reckoned in the East the model of fine eyes, the antelopes, travel in numerous herds, and nimbly scour over the hills and plains. They are as shy as the wild oxen; and on the approach of any strange object they immediately disappear. Their lightness and speed are unexampled. Nature has given them long, slender, and tendinous legs, which, while they secure their liberty, seem yet to be an obstacle to the desire they have to make use of them: these legs being, in fact, so small, and at the same time so brittle, that they break in the conveyance of the animals from place to place; and even when the antelopes are kept in a paved enclosure, or where the floor is so smooth as to become slippery. The Arab, however, mounted on his courser, is able to overtake these swift-footed creatures, and to throw a stick at them, in which their legs are entangled, and most frequently broken: indeed, it is not common to procure them alive, without their being so maimed that they cannot possibly be preserved.

But an enemy still more dangerous to this numerous race of light and elegantly formed animals, is the tiger, under which generic name I comprehend all the African quadrupeds having spotted skins, as the panther, the ounce, the leopard, &c. I except the striped tiger, which, as is well ascertained, inhabits only the East Indies. This whole genus is known in Egypt under the Arabic name of *mémoura*. I did not learn whether the inhabitants make use of any particular denominations to distinguish the several species of which it consists. The tigers, ranging with excessive ferociousness over a soil of burning aridity, analogous to their disposition, surprize wild oxen, and, instigated by their thirst for blood, dart upon the timid and innocent antelopes.

I frequently observed recent tracks of ostriches*. The pursuit of

* *Autruche*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 457.—*Struthio camelus*, L.

these animals is one of the exercises in which the Arab displays the greatest address, and his horse the greatest speed. Huffein, who was an experienced sportsman, in order to give an idea of the length of this kind of chase, informed me, that if it was begun at eight o'clock in the morning, the hunters could not stop the ostrich, by throwing a stick between his legs, as at the antelope, till about four in the afternoon. With greyhounds the chase is much shorter. Some sportsmen, more patient, keep concealed behind the bushes, and watch until an ostrich pass within gun-shot. But no person eats them; their pursuers, when they kill them, contenting themselves with plucking their fine feathers, in order to make plumes, and taking their fat, which they employ in cookery. A great many ostrich's eggs are likewise brought into the towns; they are very good eating, and so large, that one of them is sufficient for a person's meal. These eggs, suspended from the roofs, form one of the most common ornaments of the mosques of the Mahometans, as well as of the churches of the Greeks and Copts.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LAKES OF NATRON.—CONVENT OF COPTS IN THE DESERT.—WE MEET WITH A TROOP OF ARAB ROBBERS.—SINGULAR SCENES TO WHICH THIS MEETING GAVE RISE.—DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING ADMITTANCE INTO THE MONASTERY.—WILD BOARS.

AFTER having travelled about thirteen or fourteen leagues from *Honèze*, riding constantly over a plain with a gradual ascent, we arrived at the summit of a hill, or rather a chain of hills, extending to the north-north-west. At three or four leagues distance is another chain, parallel to the first; they form between them a deep valley, furrowed with narrow and still deeper gorges. The sides of this valley are perpendicular from the top of the hills to more than half of their height. The remaining part is an easy declivity of fine loose sand. In the bottom of the valley, and at the foot of the easternmost hill, are the lakes of natron, which captivate the attention of the traveller fatigued with the frightful monotony of the desert. A vast sheet of water, the number of shrubs which overshadow its banks; the reeds and other aquatic plants which display their verdure on its surface; the herds of deer that assemble there to quench their thirst; birds, in the midst of which the beautiful flamingo* is distinguishable by the splendour of its plumage, present on this spot the picture of smiling Nature, while every thing around exhibits her only in an inanimate state.

It is not possible to ascertain the extent of the lakes in which the natron is formed, as it varies according to the seasons. When there is most water, the two lakes are united into one, which is much

* *Flamant, ou phénicoptère*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 63.—*Phœnicopterus ruber*, L.

longer than it is broad, and occupies a space of several leagues; at other times they are only ponds of no great extent.

If Pliny, when he asserted that the Nile acts on the falterns of Nitria as the sea does on salt-water pools, meant that the inundation of the river extended as far as the lakes, he was assuredly mistaken, as has been observed by Father Siccard *. But if he meant no more than that there is a sort of conformity between the Nile and the lakes, he indicates only a singular, but certain fact, with which the missionary had been unacquainted, but which the people of the country have observed, and which they erroneously attribute to a communication that cannot exist between the waters of the Nile and the natron lakes. The rise of the latter is in an inverse proportion to that of the former; so that when the Nile begins to overflow, the lakes diminish so much as to appear only like small ponds, at the time when the river has attained its greatest height. The waters, on the contrary, seem to return, when those of the Nile diminish, and inundate a long extent of the valley, while those of the river are at the lowest.

Struck with this regular difference between the periods of the rise and fall of the waters of the Nile, and of the lakes of natron, the Egyptians also imagine, that the river acts upon the body of water in the desert, as if that action, supposing it to exist, would not produce an effect altogether the reverse of what really happens; for then the overflow of the Nile and of the lakes, as well as their decrease, would take place nearly at the same time. But, when it is considered that the rise of the Nile, occasioned by the rains in Abyssinia, begins at the summer solstice, that is to say, in the hottest and driest season in Egypt; and that at the time when the river has retired, or during the winter, the rains, nevertheless, fall very abundantly in the northern part of that country, it will be obvious,

* *Mémoires des Missions du Levant*, vol. vii. p. 61.

that the season when the Nile increases must also be that in which the waters spread over the sands, dry up, and diminish; and that, on the other hand, the local rains, which can in no respect influence the overflow of the Nile, are sufficient to increase the springs that supply this body of water.

When the two lakes separate, and their waters retire, the ground which they have inundated, and now leave exposed to view, is covered with a sediment that is crystallized and hardened by the sun: this is the *natron*. The thickness of this layer of salt varies according to the longer or shorter continuance of the waters on the ground. In those spots which have been moistened only for a very short time, the natron exhibits but a slight efflorescence, resembling flakes of snow. I was informed, that at certain seasons the waters likewise were covered by this substance. Granger relates, that at the end of August the salt of the lake was congealed on their surface, and of a sufficient thickness for his camels to pass over it*; but at the time I saw them they were clear and limpid. Perhaps they are the most diuretic of all waters; a property to be ascribed to the great quantity of saline particles they contain; and medicine, which ceases to be a conjectural art only when it is guided by philosophy, will probably find, in their use, a simple and natural cure for obstructions of the viscera, as well as for some other diseases common in Egypt.

This natron is procured principally in the month of August; it is found likewise, but in smaller quantity, during the rest of the year. It is disengaged from the ground by iron instruments, and carried on the backs of camels as far as *Terané*, where it is shipped on the Nile to be conveyed to Cairo, or to the storehouses at Rossetta. The quantity annually collected amounts to near twenty-five thousand quintals, and a great deal more might be obtained: it

* Relation d'un Voyage en Egypte, p. 169.

is usually sold at from fifteen to eighteen medines the quintal, delivered in either of these two towns.

On this side of the lakes there stands, upon the declivity of the hill, a small house, in which the Copts say there was born a saint, whom they particularly honour, called by them *Maximous*, probably the Saint Maximus, or Saint Maximinus, of the Catholic legend.

I stopped some time near the lakes, and traversed their banks; at length we continued our route still in a south-west direction. After travelling over a sand entirely covered with hardened natron, that rendered our progress extremely fatiguing, both to us and our beasts, we arrived within a small distance of a large square building, in which some Coptic monks live secluded from the world. I do not believe that there is upon earth a situation so horrible or forbidding as this sort of monastery. Built in the middle of the desert, its walls, although very high, when they are seen at any considerable distance cannot be distinguished from the sands, having the same reddish colour and naked aspect. There is no apparent entrance. Not a tree, not a plant of any size, surrounds it; no road leads to it; no trace of men is to be observed near it; or, if some footsteps are there imprinted, they are soon covered by the sands, or effaced by the feet of wild and ferocious animals, the proper inhabitants of these frightful solitudes. Such is the harsh and repulsive appearance of this retreat of men, as useless as their habitation.

When we had come within five or six hundred yards of the convent, Hussein went on before, in order to procure us admittance, which it is very difficult to obtain. I was at some distance, and the rest of our party had lagged a considerable way behind. A troop of Bedouins on horseback suddenly darted out from behind the walls. I did not at first distinguish them in the midst of the cloud of dust which they raised; but as soon as they were discernible, I perceived the

the

the quality and number of the people with whom we had to deal. I instantly turned about, and, mounted upon an excellent horse, with which I was in no danger of being overtaken, I quickly rejoined my companions, who, from the back of their camels, had also perceived the horsemen. I found them on foot, and drawn up in a close body. I dismounted instantly, and encouraged them to make a vigorous defence. Our whole number was six, and on three only of these could any dependance be placed. Two natives of the country could afford no great assistance; and the draughtsman, who was young and inexperienced, did not know how to discharge a musket.

The firmness of a handful of men, alone in the midst of a sandy desert, and wholly unprotected, overawed a squadron, amounting to near a hundred Bedouin Arabs. Hence a judgment may be formed, how little is to be dreaded from such enemies, whose courage goes no farther than to unite in numerous bodies, in order to commit, with impunity, every kind of depredation, and thus carry on a cowardly war of pillage. Although they rode up to us at full gallop, they halted suddenly at the distance of an hundred yards, and called out to us not to fire: I answered by desiring them not to advance. They remained for some moments, as if doubtful how to act; during which time we could observe they were holding a consultation. They then divided themselves into four bodies, three of which set off at full speed, and stationed themselves on our flanks and in our rear. This manœuvre, which it was not possible for us to prevent, disconcerted my two soldiers; and, in spite of all my entreaties, I could not prevail upon them to stand on their defence. We had good guns, and a considerable number of cartridges. I knew that the moment the Bedouins saw one of their party fall, they would betake themselves to flight; and I was certain that our first discharge would bring several of them to the ground. I did not reflect, it is true, that we were in the midst of an immense desert; and that, if our enemies fled, it would be only to return again soon, in order to

overpower us by thousands, and, by massacring us all, to revenge the death of their comrades. I threw down my gun, in vexation at being compelled to submit to such a banditti. They immediately came upon us, and without even taking the trouble of dismounting, they stripped us in an instant. Money, arms, clothes, provisions; all our property, in short, was taken. They left me my long under waistcoat and my breeches: my companions were stripped to their shirts. My turban having also been taken, my head, bare and shaved, was exposed to the burning heat of the sun, and pained me excessively; and although I covered it as well as I could with both my hands, this precaution afforded me no relief. The booty was spread out upon the sand. A score of Arabs on foot, whom we had not before perceived, from their having been concealed behind a heap of stones, now joined the others; and the whole party, not without noisy quarrels, began to divide the spoil.

This scene would have furnished a skilful artist with a striking subject for a picture. On one side he might have represented the gang of robbers covered with dust, of a black or tawny complexion, their countenances parched as the sands which their robberies render still more dreadful, quarrelling about the booty: in the midst of them my old servant endeavouring, with great *sang-froid*, to seize upon some of the articles of which we had been plundered, and occasionally making snatches at them: in the fore-ground the grenadier, motionless and confounded: the two Egyptians, stupidly gazing at one another: myself in the back-ground, biting my nails, with a look of anger and indignation: and lastly, the draughtsman, weeping aloud, and answering me with sobs, when I asked him if he had met with any ill usage: *No, Sir; but what can we now get to eat?*

Tired of being the spectator of a scene in which it was unnecessary for me to exhibit myself, I was proceeding towards the monastery, in hopes of finding Houssein, who had repaired thither; when I

heard myself called, and immediately found myself laid hold of by the arm. It was the chief of the robbers, an Arab of the deserts of Nubia, for his face was as black as a negro's. Without saying a word, he carried me back into the midst of his troop. I took it for granted that he was displeas'd that I had any of my clothes left, or that, upon consideration, he had resolv'd to take away my life. How great was my astonishment when I saw this chief carefully inquiring after the clothes and property which belonged particularly to me; and after having been a rather too active valet-de-chambre in undressing me, once more perform that office, but with more civility, in assisting me to put on the different parts of my dress, at the same time returning me my purse, and restoring my arms. In the meanwhile, other Bedouins rendered the same service to my companions, equally astonished at an adventure as singular as it was unexpected.

This was effected by the spirited conduct of Huffein. While he was near the walls of the convent, whither he had repaired, his gun hanging over his shoulder, some Arabs had been detached to detain him, and had seized his piece; but Huffein, after a long contest, succeeded in leaping on horseback behind a Bedouin, and reaching the place where most of the band of robbers was collected, "Arabs," said he, addressing himself to their chiefs, "you have stripp'd a man entrusted to my protection, and for whose safety I will stake my life; a man with whom I have eaten, who has slept in my tent, and has become my brother! Never again can I enter that tent; never again dare I return to my camp: I must henceforth renounce all hopes of the pleasure of embracing my wife and children: Arabs, take my life, or restore to my brother every article of his property." This harangue, accompanied with the most determin'd look, and delivered in the most resolute tone, made an impresson upon the Bedouins. Huffein had snatch'd his gun from the person who held it, and while they were consulting together, levelled it at the principal chief of the banditti, resolv'd to shoot

shoot him in case of refusal, and thus expose himself to be butchered, rather than consent that we should receive the smallest injury. Our conductor was well known: the Arabs were convinced from his decided character, that he would put his threats in execution; and partly from fear, and partly from deference, the black chief consented to restore every thing they had taken from me; and this was performed with a fidelity truly admirable. Indeed, when any thing considered valuable by the person who had stolen it was mentioned, it was necessary to urge the claim; but no sooner did the chief insist upon its restitution, than the article was instantly forthcoming. This discipline among such a people, and in a place where we could not expect to have found an instance of it, appeared to me extremely astonishing. The chief asked me what part of my property was still missing; on my naming an article, he ascended a small eminence, and cried out: *Arabs, such a thing is not restored, let it be produced.* If his orders were not immediately obeyed, he added: *Come, Arabs, be quick;* and the article claimed was delivered to me in an instant. The chief then mentioned another part of the property stolen, and it was restored to me in the same manner.

Two hours elapsed before this sort of inventory of my effects was completed: every thing was given back to me, except my money, of which I received but a very small part; but this was not the fault of the two *shiecks*. Hussein, in particular, required that I should count in his presence the sequins that had been returned. The Arabs, in whose eyes my purse appeared a valuable prize, and who had divided most of its contents, anxiously waited the result of this reckoning, and their embarrassment ceased when they heard me declare that I had received all my money. Thinking myself fortunate to get off so well, I readily made a sacrifice of two thirds of what I possessed, rather than incur the hatred and vengeance of the honest thieves by whom I was surrounded. I did not forget that I was still in the desert, and had every thing to dread,

should I fall a second time into their hands, or meet with another troop of robbers, to whom they might give information of our route, and who might possibly treat us with less complaisance.

It was not enough for these banditti to appear just, they must also shew themselves polite. The chief brought me his horse, and insisted upon my mounting it, to ride the short distance from the place where we were, to the monastery, while he followed me on foot. Some of the other Arabs paid the same compliment to my companions, each of them walking in like manner by the side of his horse. When we approached the walls, we saw coming down by a rope, baskets of bread, and wooden platters filled with lentils. Forming a circle on the sands, we partook of these provisions with people who a moment before appeared as our enemies. After the repast, some of them approached me with frankness and even with a kind of cordiality, thanking Heaven that I had met with no injury; and with a degree of interest, blamed me for my temerity in undertaking a journey into the desert, which they acknowledged was the resort only of thieves and banditti. They did not fail to offer up their prayers with great devotion, after having covered their arms and legs with sand, for want of the water necessary for the ablutions prescribed by their law. Mahomet, himself an Arab, foresaw how very frequently his followers might have occasion to traverse the deserts, and directed that whenever water could not be procured, sand might be used as a substitute.

The *sheick* of the robbers applied to me for a gratification, observing, that he had kept none of my money, and that he had, besides, taken a great deal of trouble to have my property restored. I meant to have given him the sequins I had left; but Houssein, seeing this, flew into a violent passion, and protested that he would not suffer me to give him a single medine. And, in fact, although I endeavoured to deceive his vigilance, I could find no opportunity of making my present to the other *sheick*.

Huffein's obstinacy, which doubtless was dictated by the most generous motives, irritated our new friends, and had like to have made them once more our enemies. They, however, contented themselves with warning me to be upon my guard; for that another time they would behave in a very different manner, and begin by putting Huffein to death. But Huffein laughed at their threats, and still persisted in his refusal. Had he known that these people were then possessed of a great part of my money, he would not have let them had a moment's peace till the whole was restored.

Lastly, that nothing might be wanting to complete the succession of these extraordinary scenes, the *sheick Abdalla*, for that was the name of the Bedouin chief, desired that I would write him a certificate, stating that I had met with him in the desert, and that he had taken nothing from me, but that, on the contrary, I was satisfied with his conduct. He caused one of the monks of the convent to descend by the same rope by which the plates and baskets had been let down: the certificate was written in Arabic, and presented to me to sign. Having most assuredly no desire to attest the good conduct of such banditti, I assumed a name which had some analogy to our adventure, and subscribed it *La Déroute*. Abdalla carefully pocketed this *valuable paper*, and left us, after having wished me a very good journey, and once more cautioned me to be on my guard. His advice was unnecessary: I had fully resolved to use every precaution in my power, that I might not again be taken by surprise.

I learned that these Arabs were apprized of our journey, and from its commencement had followed our route. They had been lurking under the walls of the monastery since three o'clock in the morning, and had informed the monks that some *Franks* would arrive there that very day. Till the moment when they perceived us, they had been concerting the manner in which they might attack us with the smallest risk; for they were not free from apprehension, knowing that we were well armed. For some time they had resolved not

to shew themselves, but to let us approach so near that they could easily shoot us : at the entreaty of the Copts, however, they consented to drop this plan of assassination.

Having got rid of these dangerous people, I was obliged to enter into a long altercation with the monks. Having been spectators of what had passed in the morning on the plain, they could have no doubt of our being Europeans ; they pretended, however, not to believe it, and required that one of us should demonstrate to a father sent on purpose as an examiner, that we had not undergone any religious mutilation. This obstacle being removed, a fresh difficulty was started. They insisted upon drawing us up by the rope, as the only mode of admission. Their convent, the walls of which are very high, is enclosed on all sides, with the exception of a small door, or iron wicket, and I desired to be admitted by this *natural* entrance. The Copts asserted that the door was not opened but on particular occasions, when they received their provisions, and never when Arabs were roving about in the neighbourhood ; they therefore entreated me to fasten myself to the rope. In order to shew us the convenience of this method of travelling in the air, the monk who was with us suspended himself to the rope, and he was immediately, by means of a pulley, drawn up like the bucket of a well. Two or three of my party, thinking that they saw the Bedouins still at their heels, suffered themselves to be hoisted up in the same manner. Their example had no effect upon me ; and as there was a gate, I insisted that it should be opened. I was seconded by Houssein, who swore that if the monks did not afford shelter to his camels, he would return in a few days, and exterminate every soul in the convent. His threats were more efficacious than my solicitations, and the wicket was opened to us, not without extraordinary precaution. But as it was much too low to allow the camels to enter, Houssein made them lie down upon a mat, and, to prevent them from rising, tied one of their legs, by a cord passed round their back. By the

joint exertions of several men, the camels, having their heads held down, were, one after another, dragged in upon the mat. I was at a loss which to admire most, the ingenuity of the Arab in making a large animal go through a small wicket, or the patience of the camel in suffering itself to be tied, jerked, and dragged in this extraordinary manner.

It was quite dark before we and our beasts were all got into the convent. The monks conducted the whole party, except Hufflein, to their chapel. We there attended a very long service, which was followed by a rather scanty supper, consisting only of plain boiled rice.

The moon spread her silver rays over the surrounding desert, and by her mild light softened its dreary aspect. Around us reigned the most profound silence. We were in the midst of an immense solitude, in which there was no object to interrupt the view. At length Hufflein perceived a large animal, and he fired at it just as it passed the foot of the walls, but did not bring it to the ground. It was a wild boar, which the Arabs call *banzire*, a name they give likewise to the domestic hog. We had before seen two of them, but at a distance, in the course of our journey through the desert.

It does not appear to me probable, that the wild boars of Egypt are the same with those in Europe. The great difference of climate, and the still greater difference of situation, must have occasioned at least some varieties in the species of these animals. More multiplied in temperate or cold countries, which appear more suitable to their nature, they inhabit the thick recesses of the forest, where they can find abundance of food. They never leave the woods but to go from one to another, or to ravage the growing crops; and these predatory excursions are undertaken only by night. In general, they retire to the closest and darkest places at the rising of the sun, the brightness and heat of which they seem to dread. The wild boar of Egypt, on the contrary, has no shelter. Continually exposed to the rays of a
burning

burning sun, he roams over the hottest sands, where he with difficulty finds a few scattered shrubs, which afford him a scanty subsistence, and scarcely any shade. He is also frequently seen in the desert of Nitria, which is the resort of a greater number of animals than any other part of the deserts, on account of the sheets of water it contains, and of the plants that grow upon their banks.

These boars are solitary, though a general want of food sometimes drives them in herds to the environs of the lakes of natron. The two that I saw were by themselves; they carried their head low; and their gait is a sort of trot.

As the Mahometans and Copts do not eat the flesh of the wild boar more than that of the hog, and hold both these animals in equal abhorrence, it was impossible to procure a wild boar in Egypt, at least without going for it in person to the desert. Houssein's ball having missed the one at which he fired, I lost the opportunity of verifying my conjectures respecting the race of these wild boars; but I cannot conceive them to be the same as those of Europe. It is perhaps in this sense only that we must understand the passages of Aristotle* and Pliny †, who have asserted that there are no wild boars in Africa.

The travellers who have preceded me, have not been more fortunate than myself; or if some of them have had an opportunity of examining a *banzire*, they have done it in a very superficial manner. What information, for instance, can be obtained from this passage of Maillet? “ *A few wild boars are to be met with in Egypt; they are more gentle than our domestic hogs; it would even be very difficult to discover any difference between them ‡.*” “ Wild boars,” says Buffon, “ are as common in Asia and Africa as in Europe §.”

* Hist. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 24.

‡ Description de l’Egypte, p. 31.

† Hist. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 33.

§ Hist. Nat. du Cochon.

But this passage has left us in the same uncertainty as to the species of these animals in Africa; it is afterwards apparently removed, Buffon having given an account and a drawing of an *African wild boar**, which is remarkable for several particular characters; hence there is reason to believe that the *banzire* of Egypt is the same animal as the *wild boar of Africa*.

* Suppl. à l'Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DEPARTURE OF HUSSEIN.—COPTIC MONKS.—THEIR CONVENT; THEIR CHURCH; THEIR SERVICE; THEIR RITES; THEIR FOOD; THEIR DRESS; THEIR GARDEN.—FULFUL BELADI.—GYPSUM.—SAL-GEM.—OTHER CONVENTS IN THE DESERT.—SEA WITHOUT WATER.—BEDOUINS.—VILE BEHAVIOUR OF THE MONKS.—FOGS AND RAIN.

THE day after our arrival at the monastery, Hufflein reminded me of what had passed the preceding evening, and of the trouble he had had to extricate me from so perilous a situation. He observed, that another time he could not possibly hope for the same success, and concluded by declaring candidly, that it was out of his power to answer for what might happen, as the Arabs of the desert would not fail to kill him, if they should again find us together. He added, that for his own safety he was going to return immediately, and offered to conduct me back by the same route we had come; but that I must instantly decide. My determination was as prompt as he could desire. I had not undertaken this journey to finish it so abruptly; dangers of which I was well aware before I set out, did not appear sufficient to deter me; and, as I had reached the middle of these deserts, I wished, at least, not to leave them without making some observations. Hufflein, vexed at my resolution, set off immediately, but not before he had embraced me in a kind and affecting manner; and he left me shut up within four walls, without either of us knowing how I should get out.

This retreat was formerly inhabited by Greek monks. They were succeeded by Copts, or natives of Egypt, who, having embraced Christianity, had seen spring from their bosom some of those communities which mankind have agreed to call religious, but which, in general,

general, have been the sinks of vice and laziness. Here barbarism and gross ignorance had still fixed their abode. These monks still perpetuated the memory of the ancient anchorites, who, thinking themselves born for no useful end, retired in the prime of life to seclude themselves from society, and bury themselves in these dismal solitudes. A Saint Macarius, in particular, had made himself very famous, and his name was given to the desert that, in ancient times, was distinguished by the appellation of *Nitria*, an appellation it will, no doubt, retain, as there will always be found here the *natron*, or nitre of the ancients, and as the designations made from nature have a character of grandeur and immutability much beyond those which originate in the caprices of man.

The present habitation of the Coptic cenobites is called *Zäidi el Baramous*, and by the Arabs, *Käfr Zäidi*. It is an enclosure of high walls without any gate, for that name cannot be given to a little wicket which is opened only twice or thrice in the course of a year. Persons coming in and going out are hoisted up and lowered down by means of a strong rope and a pulley. The building is entirely constructed of soft calcareous stones, several of which contain fossil shells. Within the walls there is a sort of small fort, surrounded by ditches, over which is built a drawbridge. Here the monks retire, when the Arabs succeed in forcing the outer wall. Ten years before, they had been obliged to take refuge here against Houssein, who, having made a breach in the great walls, had pillaged and sacked the convent. The Copts, who related to me this event, added, that the same Houssein, my faithful companion, my brave and trusty friend, was then the most formidable of Bedouins, the most determined of robbers; but that for some years he had led a peaceable and honest life. He must have been a dangerous enemy; for to extraordinary courage he added uncommon dexterity. I have frequently seen him shoot at small birds at a great distance with a single ball, and he seldom missed his mark.

In the little fort are a church, a cistern, provisions; every thing, in short, to enable the monks to sustain a long siege. Here they also keep their books, written in the Coptic language, which is compounded of the Greek and the remains of the ancient Egyptian. They are not to be prevailed upon to part with any of them, although they never read them, but suffer them to lie about on the ground, eaten by vermin, and covered with dust.

Zaidi el Baramous being a place so remarkable in the history of my travels, I had a drawing of it made. (*See Plate VIII.*) The view was taken from the north-east. The great gate, the appearance of which is to be seen in the front, is entirely walled up, and the little wicket is the only entrance left. It is also proper to mention, that in order to give some idea of the lakes of natron, the draughtsman has delineated a part of them in a false situation: they are at a much greater distance, and lie in front of the convent.

The cells of the monks are vaulted and very low: they are level with the ground in the court; dens suitable to the slothful and ignorant wretches by whom they are inhabited.

The church is simple, and without any other ornament than a few ostrich's eggs, and some bad pictures of saints. In countries where paintings are in a manner proscribed, these pass for masterpieces; and the monks, who took a pleasure in shewing them to me, appeared astonished at my viewing them with an air of disdain. The service is performed in Arabic and modern Coptic, that is to say, in Greek Coptic, for the literal Coptic, or the language of the Pharaohs, is unknown to the present Copts*. The Gospel is read in Arabic, in order that it may be understood by the natives. Although the

* Vansleb (*Nouv. Relation de l'Egypte*, p. 363.) relates that he had the satisfaction to see at *Siout*, in 1763, the last Copt who understood his language, and with whom it was to die. This man being eighty years old, and deaf, Vansleb could get from him very little information.

prayers are said in modern Coptic, which most of the monks understand, yet none of them can speak that language, and they make use only of the Arabic. In short, it is impossible to give an idea of the confusion that sometimes prevails in their church: they often know not what they are to sing; one would have a particular anthem or psalm, and another a different one; they then dispute and come to blows: in the mean time a third chants a prayer, which is followed by the choir, and thus the quarrel is terminated. Their singing consists of Turkish and Arabic airs, accompanied by cymbals, the noise of which, mixed with their squalling voices, and their discordant music, makes the church re-echo with a medley of jarring sounds.

Want of occupation had made us devout; we seldom missed attending church. The monks had imagined that it would be highly agreeable to us to be present at their night mass; and the superior himself took the trouble to call us in the middle of the first night that we passed there; but I gave him to understand, that we would in future dispense with this superfluous mark of his attention. It was quite enough to witness their extravagancies during the day. In other respects, we followed the same ceremonies as the Copts. I observed the monk next to me, and imitated all he did; each of my people did the same; and there sometimes occurred ridiculous situations and comic scenes, at which, to the great offence of the community, my companions laughed aloud.

During service the monks neither kneel, sit, nor stand upright: they remain upon their feet, keeping their rump against the wall, with their body bent forward, and supporting themselves on a kind of crutch or stick, in the form of the letter T. The chancel is separate and kept shut, as in the Greek churches. The priest celebrates mass with water. Their sacred vases are nothing more than a kind of glass plates, like those which at our tables are used to set off the dessert. They consecrate common bread: the priest cuts it in pieces
and

and mixes it with water, which is likewise consecrated. This makes a kind of soup, of which he eats a few spoonfuls; and afterwards administers the sacrament, also with a spoon, to all those that are present. After the communion, the officiating priest washes his hands, places himself at the door of the chancel, with his wet hands extended; and every person goes in procession to present his face to be stroked with them, so that the faces of the congregation serve instead of a towel. During the mass, the priest also blesses little round loaves, which are not half baked: these he distributes at the conclusion of the service, though this distribution is not made without some quarrels. The priest who celebrates mass, is dressed in a kind of white shirt, made with a cowl, and covered with little crosses. During the other prayers, he wears only a large fillet of white linen, with similar little crosses, half twisted round his head in the form of a turban, and the two ends hanging down before and behind.

These Copts are fond of the bustle of rites and ceremonies, which rapidly succeed each other: they are always in motion during the time of service. The officiating monk, in particular, is in constant exercise: he is every moment scattering incense over the saints, the pictures, the books, &c. At every one of these operations he kisses his left hand. After having made frequent use of his censer, he runs up to each of the persons present, applies his hand to their forehead, and again seizes hold of his censer. When all his rounds are finished, he gives his benediction with a small cross, on the top of which he first sticks a little bit of wax taper. When the whole service is over, every one of the congregation goes and kisses a little cushion, covered with a greasy cloth, then a cross, and afterwards the shrine of the saints, on which he rubs and rolls his head.

The Arabs, like true reprobates, thinking that religious knavery is common to all countries, allege, that the shrine, which is very large, contains only bones of camels and asses that have died in the desert, and been collected from all quarters by the monks. The

latter, on the contrary, pretend, that it is the repository of the bodies of seven saints, among whom they most particularly revere two, *Saint Maximous* and *Saint Domadius*. Indeed, except the Virgin and Saint George, whom they also hold in great veneration, these are the only saints represented in their pictures.

In this convent there were only three priests and some friars ; but the Coptic cultivators came here from time to time to do penance ; yet in the exercise of their devotion, they do not forget to bring the monks the means of subsistence. There were in all, at this time, twenty-three persons in the monastery. They eat in common in a refectory ; and one of them reads during the meals, which could not possibly be worse. Their whole fare consists of bread, or rather biscuit, made of flour of lentils, and rice boiled in salt and water, without any sort of seasoning, detestable cheese, and now and then a little honey ; but what was most disagreeable to me, was the very brackish and ill-tasted water which is their only beverage. Their provisions are the fruit of their mendicatory collections, chiefly the alms of the rich Copts at Cairo : these supplies are conveyed to them twice or thrice a year by caravans of camels ; and the Arabs suffer them to pass freely, considering them as their own stock. In fact, those that travel through the desert are sure of finding necessaries for themselves and their horses in these Coptic monasteries. They have only to ring a small bell, the cord of which hangs down on the outside ; and when they are observed from the top of the walls, they immediately receive what they want. It was not enough for the monks of the deserts to form societies that were useless, they must also render them prejudicial and dangerous. Without the assistance which the Bedouins here find, they could not subsist long in the environs, nor infest, with their continual depredations, the country bordering upon the deserts. Under a government that had any idea of an efficient police, such retreats, the attraction
and

and rendezvous of robbers, would not have been long suffered to exist.

The dress of these men, who passed for religious, a title they little deserved, perfectly accorded with the sort of caverns in which they dwell, as well as with the coarse simplicity of their food. A kind of robe, and a long shirt of black linen, is the whole of their clothing; and the dismal colour of this singular dress, differing only a shade from the dark complexion of their broad face, their short stature, their mean look, characters transmitted to the Copts by the ancient Egyptians, render them the most ugly of mankind; and they are, at the same time, the most filthy and disgusting.

In the middle of the enclosure they have spread a little earth, on a small spot which they had cultivated; and this they call a garden. They have raised in it a few *atlès*, which thrive pretty well, and a small number of plants, forming, in these barren plains, rather an object of curiosity than of useful cultivation. Among these plants there is one which struck me, and which I never saw in any other place in Egypt: it appears to have been brought from the more southern climates. It is called *fulful béladi*, that is, *pepper of the country*; it is, in fact, aromatic. Its stalks, eaten raw, or dressed with meat, serve for seasoning. As it had neither flowers nor fruit when I saw it, I could not ascertain to what genus it belongs; but certainly it has no affinity to that of the peppers. No botanist has mentioned it, nor was it at all known by those to whom I have shewn the drawing. It may therefore be considered as a new plant. (*See the drawing of it, Plate XIV. Fig. 1.*) Its numerous stalks, which rise only to the height of about two feet, are green, and the tops are yellow.

By the side of the monastery are some ruins, which I was informed were the remains of the ancient edifice. There is still to be seen there a very deep well, to which there is a descent by a flight of steps: its water is as brackish as that of the well which supplies
the

the present convent. In front of the gate, the monks had collected some stones for the construction of new cells; and I remarked that almost all of them were only natron grown extremely hard. In the vicinity there is likewise found a quantity of the common gypsum, called, in Arabic, *guips* *, and of laminated gypsum or *lapis specularis* †.

In the vicinity of the lakes of natron there are some thick and solid strata of sal-gem or rock-salt ‡, which are broken into large masses. The outside of this salt is of a dazzling whiteness, and the inside of a rosy hue. In some places there is also found, but much more rarely, another sort of sal-gem, crystallized in small pieces, which are hard, solid, whitish, pellucid, and of nearly a pyramidal form: it is called *melbe macktoun*, or *marked salt*, because these little pyramids have upon their base a mark which appears to be artificial, and which has probably been imprinted by the Coptic monks, in order to add to the marvellous origin that they have contrived to attach to this production of nature. They appeared very much astonished at the doubts which I expressed on this subject, and had not sufficient effrontery to persist in their imposition. They alone assume the task of collecting the marked salt, which they detach from the ground by small iron crows; and those who are as stupidly credulous as the persons to whom the lies of the monks are so many oracles, are led to believe that this saline crystallization takes place only on the night of the fall of the dew called in Egypt *goutte*, the pretended precursor of the commencement of the rise of the Nile, and that on the following day no vestiges of it are to be seen. This monkish imposture turned, as usual, to the profit of its propagators; for, if the monks of *Zaïdi el Baramous* were the only persons who collected this sal-gem, they were likewise the only persons who sold it; and the appearance of the marvellous which

* *Gypsum vulgare.*† *Gypsum lamellosum.*‡ *Sal gemmæ.*

they had given it, occasioned it to be in great request. Its properties were considered almost miraculous; but that respecting which the smallest doubt was not to be entertained, because it is attested by the monks, is its virtue of rendering women fruitful, and being an infallible remedy for barrenness. I was also informed that the goldsmiths of the country make use of it in their business.

Besides these different species of salt, the lakes of the deserts of Nitria produce likewise a great quantity of reeds, which are made a considerable article of trade. The Egyptians gather them, in order to make mats of their leaves, and pipe-shanks of their stalks.

The monastery of *Zaïdi el Baramous* was not the only one existing in this desolate country. Some others, built in the same valley, but at a distance from this, marked the site of the ancient retreats of a number of anchorites anticipating death by a useless and savage life, making it their sole study to counteract the laws of nature, and, having abjured the quality of men, endeavouring to form a barren colony for heaven. From *Zaïdi el Baramous* I took with a compass the bearings of the building which could be seen from the top of the walls. The small uninhabited house of *Saint Maximous* lay to the east-south-east; another monastery, called *Zaïdi Sourian*, at about two leagues distance to the south-south-east; near the latter a second to the south by east; lastly, on the other side of the lakes of natron, and to the north by east, a small deserted building, which had been erected by a *kiaschef*, appointed to repress and keep off the Bedouins. It now served as a place of shelter to the people who came to collect the natron.

At the distance of a day's journey to the west, is the sea without water, *babr bela ma*, formerly the bed of a communication between the lakes Mœris and Mareotis. The rocks, of different forms, with which this dry canal abounds, have been supposed to be petrified pieces of boats; some persons have even gone so far as to say, that they saw there men and animals in a similar state of petrification.

Ætitæ,

Ætiteæ, or eagle-stones, are very common in the environs. Farther on, in the same direction, that is, to the west, beyond the sea without water, in the desert of Libya, are to be found fertile districts, covered with date-trees, and several other plants, but without a single inhabitant; at least, this was the account I obtained from the monks and Arabs of the desert.

A Coptic peasant from *Terané* came to the convent, and brought us tidings of our Bedouin robbers. Not supposing that I should remain several days in so wretched and desolate a place, they had waited for me behind the Syrian monastery, *Zâidi Sourian*; till, at length, tired at not seeing me, they thought I had taken another route. But in order that they might not have to regret the time lost for pillage, they had proceeded to the environs of *Terané*, where they had carried off the camels, and seized the provisions of a party of peasants who were coming to collect natron. The person who gave us this information had met them leading away the camels they had taken.

The day after the arrival of this man, I discovered in the morning, near the walls, the recent tracks of a horse, and I doubted not but we should soon see some Arabs. In fact, a few hours after, there was a violent ringing of the bell at the gate. It was a party of seven Bedouins, who manifested much anxiety and distrust, and were afraid of coming very near, because they said there were strangers in the convent. The monks endeavoured to banish their apprehensions, and lowered them down some provisions. While they were eating, I dressed myself in the robe and cowl of a monk, and went up to the gallery to examine them at my ease. They were conversing with the Copts, in the middle of whom I took my station. Having learned that the *sheick* Hussein had come there with camels, they wished to know the reason. One of them had rode round the monastery the evening before, and had seen on the walls a person with a red turban. They talked of *Franks* in search of treasures,

fures, with whom they seemed very anxious to meet. The Copts endeavoured to mislead them by telling them a thousand stories, to which they did not seem to give credit. Having thrown off the monk's dirty robe, and joined my two companions, on whom I could most depend, I desired the Copts to open the wicket. The opportunity was most favourable: the banditti were sitting round the provisions that had been given them; their guns were lying upon the sands, a good way off; and their horses, under the shade of a wall, were at a still greater distance. Thunderstruck at our *fortie*, not one of the robbers would have escaped, and their horses would have served to convey us out of a district whence it was not very easy to make our retreat. But all my solicitations, and even threats, were of no avail. The Copts opposed my plan, under the apprehension, that if a single Bedouin should escape, he would collect numbers of his comrades, and return to sack the convent. Not having been able to carry my design into execution, the Arabs remained ignorant of what was passing between us, and departed after they had finished their meal, taking the road of *Zaidi Sourian*, doubtless with a view of there intercepting our party.

I had dispatched one of the peasants, who were in the convent, to *Terané*, where I was told there was a camp of Bedouins, in order to hire them to come with their beasts to conduct us out of the desert. On the 13th of January, being the fifth day of our retreat among the Copts, ten of these Bedouins, well armed, arrived with a camel and some asses. One of them had, upon the banks of the lakes of natron, shot a flamingo, which he gave me. Although this bird is very bad eating, it became a dainty to people who had lived several days in a state of rigorous abstinence. My companions lost no time in roasting it; but at the moment when we were preparing to make an excellent meal, the monks fell upon it with a voracity comparable to that of so many jackals, ravenous and filthy animals, which, in a cowardly manner, seize upon a disgusting and

easily acquired prey that they have not the courage to attack. Thus, in an instant, our bird disappeared under the claws and teeth of these *monastic jackals*.

As we were preparing to take our leave of these vile Copts, I proposed to make them some present, in return for the disagreeable entertainment we had received. I recollected, however, that I had to deal with men more dangerous than the Bedouins, who, frank and generous in their friendship, preserve some sort of honour even in the commission of their depredations. The superior told me that it was proper I should give something first for the convent, next for the embellishment of the church, then for the poor, and lastly for himself. Having patiently listened to this long enumeration of wants, I had a curiosity to learn at what sum they would be estimated, and asked how much would cover the whole expense. After some moments calculation, the monk answered me, that as the convent required to be entirely whitewashed, he thought that five or six hundred sequins would be sufficient for all these purposes; a trifle, to be sure, for five days lodging, and board on lentil bread, with lentils boiled in salt and water. I made a proposal in my turn. My purse, in passing through the hands of the Arabs, had been almost emptied; the payment of what I had agreed to give Hufflein had also taken several sequins; I had still six remaining, which I offered to the superior. Our calculations were rather different: the monk fell into a rage that can hardly be expressed; he launched out into invectives, protested that he would accept nothing, and swore by the saints of his church, that I should speedily repent of what he called my ingratitude. The wretch dared to invoke the justice of Heaven, on which he founded his sacrilegious hopes, and which, he said, would not fail soon to send to the convent some Arabs, to whom he would give information of my route, and commission them to avenge his cause. At this sample of monkish effrontery I lost all patience, and was going to knock the scoundrel down on the spot,

had not the Bedouins, who were come for me, defended him from my blows, and carried him out of my reach.

At length I quitted this infernal abode, and was ready to mount the ass that was intended for me, when the old monk sent to beg me to give him the six sequins, of which I had made him an offer. The Arab *sbeick* was charged with this commission; and on his account only I complied with the request. We afterwards saw the villain put up a prayer for our prosperous journey to that Heaven which, a few minutes before, he had invoked to pour upon us all its vengeance.

This man, whose name was *Michael*, is now probably dead: he was then old and emaciated, and the ugly hideousness of his face accorded perfectly with the deformity of his mind. But although it is at present unnecessary to describe this friar, it is extremely important to inform our fellow-citizens who are in Egypt, of the perfidious character of these pretended devotees; for, except a few shades of difference, they are all alike. Whatever external appearance they may assume, it is certain that their hatred of Europeans is more deep and atrocious than that of the Mahometans; and that their houses in the desert will be the rallying point of the excursions of the Bedouins, their magazines of provisions, and the scene of deliberations necessary to ensure the success of their predatory excursions.

These bad qualities appear to be hereditary in the superiors of the convents of Saint Macarius; for Father Vanfleb, who travelled in this desert in 1672, complains bitterly of the superior whom he there met with, and whom he calls a dishonest man. In another of these monasteries he had also great occasion to complain of the Coptic monks: they exacted of him thirty Venetian sequins, and the vicar likewise tricked him out of some of his money*.

During the five days we spent at *Zaïdi el Baramous*, there was every morning a very thick fog, and one evening there fell a little rain.

* Nouvelle Relation d'Egypte, p. 220.

CHAPTER XXIX.

DEPARTURE FROM ZAÏDI EL BARAMOUS. — ZAÏDI SOURIAN. — LABLAB. — TAMARINDS. — MR. BRUCE.—AMBA BISHOI.—AMBA MONGUAR.—GENEROSITY OF A BEDOUIN.—OUARDAN.—ROUTE TOWARDS CAIRO.—WEST BANK OF THE NILE.—VOYAGE ON THE NILE FROM SCHOUBRA TO ROSSETTA.—PIRATES ON THE NILE.—SPUR-WINGED PLOVERS.—A FUNERAL.—A WEDDING.—VIRTUES OF THE BEDOUINS.—REMEDY FOR SORE EYES.—NEBKA.—PIGEONS.

ON leaving *Zaïdi el Baramous*, on the 13th of January, 1778, we travelled to the south-south-east for two leagues, along deep gorges, parallel to the great hills. These gorges, which are evidently the effects of torrents, make the sides of the hills very steep. In this space nothing is to be seen but fine sand, except a few naked spots, consisting of thin strata of calcareous stone. On the surface of these strata we saw a considerable number of Egyptian pebbles, which the floods had washed down from the top of the hills.

On our approaching the monastery of *Zaïdi Sourian*, the chief of the Arabs who were our conductors, apprized me, that, according to all reports, those Bedouins by whom we had been attacked were concealed behind the walls, in order to take us by surprise; and that I ought to be prepared to give them a warm reception; promising, at the same time, to support me with all his people. My companions desired nothing better; and upon this occasion we should certainly not have submitted to be plundered. Having made the necessary arrangements, we drew near the building, but discovered nobody in the environs.

We entered the convent, which was built upon the same plan as that we had quitted, but was laid out in a much better and more

convenient

convenient manner. Its name indicates that it was formerly in the possession of Syrian monks, who have been succeeded by the Copts. The ancient Syrian church is still standing; it is tolerably handsome, and decorated with sculpture and paintings in *fresco*. Upon one of the pillars are cut the names of several Europeans; those of the French travellers, Baron and Granger, were the only ones that I knew. This church is not used by the Copts, who have had one built in their own style, that is, in the form of a cross. There is a shrine filled with saints; of these they pay most veneration to *Saint Marmarotous*. The place of retreat, or little fort, was as well constructed as that of *Zäidi el Baramous*; and the monks appeared to be less filthy, and not so grossly ferocious. Their superior was a man turned of thirty, absolutely without a beard, and not having a single hair on any part of his body. In a country in which the beard is an appendage that creates respect, this monk was very much concerned at the want of that ornament, and strongly importuned me to point out to him the means by which he might procure such an embellishment to his chin.

These monks also have a little garden, which is both more extensive and better cultivated than that belonging to the other convent. There were planted in it *atlès*, a few date-trees, some small olive-trees, and one almond-tree. Among the esculent plants I observed the *léblab**, a species of large perennial kidney-bean, which grows very high, and, like the vine, is well adapted to form arbours. Its leaves are of a lively green; its filiques, or pods, broad and elongated, are of the same colour, with a margin of a deep purple. The seeds which they contain are oval, and variegated with yellow and reddish brown, and sometimes with black. This species of pulse is cultivated through every part of Egypt, and its beans are a common article of food.

* *Dolichos lablab*, L.

In one of the courts is an immense tamarind-tree*, which the Copts consider to be the effect of a miraculous vegetation. A Saint Ephraim left his staff at the gate of a brother hermit, to whom he was paying a visit: it instantly took root, shot forth branches, and in a short time became an enormous tamarind-tree. To add to the miracle, they say it is the only tree of this species in Egypt. This, however, is an imposition; for, although tamarind-trees are scarce in that country, yet there are a few plants of it to be seen growing in the gardens of Rossetta, and the pods, stones, and pulp of the tamarind, boiled and mixed up with sugar, are to be purchased in the markets of all the towns in Egypt. This sort of coarse sweetmeat is brought by the caravans from the interior of Africa. It is one of the indispensable articles of provision for those who traverse the deserts; they eat it on account of its cooling quality, and to quench the burning thirst excited by these fiery regions.

The small number of trees that shade a part of the monastery of *Zaidi Sourian* attracts a few little birds, which here diffuse some degree of cheerfulness; while the bare and exposed aspect of Nature at *Zaidi el Baramous* terrifies and keeps at a distance every living animal.

The water of the well is good, compared with that we had been forced to drink for several days; it has but a slightly brackish taste, probably imparted to it by the lake of natron, which is only three quarters of a league from the monastery.

There was in this convent a monk who had been in Abyssinia. He informed me, that an European was there in great favour with the emperor, and was also highly esteemed by the people. I had seen Mr. Bruce at the country-seat of Buffon, at Montbard, and had learned from him several particulars respecting his residence in Abyssinia. These circumstances, repeated by a person perfectly

† *Tamarindus Indicus*, L.—In Arabic, *Tamar-Hindi* (Indian date-tree).

disinterested, together with the exact coincidence of dates, was the completest demonstration, that the European of whom he was speaking, as having made a great figure at Gondar, was no other than Mr. Bruce. This was not the only proof that I have been enabled to collect of the reality of a journey which does honour to the present age, and respecting which some doubts have been raised *. In France, as well as in England, there have been persons who gave it no credit. When at Cairo I received a letter, of which the following is an extract: “ We wish you all the health necessary for a journey
 “ so difficult as that which you mean to make into Abyffinia †.
 “ You will perhaps be able to ascertain the truth of the account
 “ given of it by Mr. Bruce, the celebrated English traveller, since
 “ his return. He has not been altogether believed in his own coun-
 “ try; and if upon your arrival in France you speak of Abyffinia
 “ in the same terms as he has done, you will render a service to his
 “ reputation.”

It is the fate of those who undertake extraordinary enterprises to be censured or calumniated. There is a numerous class of men, who, being themselves incapable of doing good, are envious of every thing interesting and useful executed by others; jealous of talents which they do not possess; anxious to depreciate merit, in hopes that their stupid and proud insufficiency may supply its place; avowed enemies of those who despise the beaten track of routine; base and lying wretches, slanderers of the day, they, by means of perfidious insinuations, of imposture combined with the sole art they possess, endeavour to tarnish and destroy the high reputation of

* Travels to discover the Source of the Nile, by Mr. Bruce, translated into French by Citizen Castéra, to whose zeal and talents the republic is indebted for the translation of several other interesting travels.

† The reasons which prevented me from undertaking this journey are mentioned in chap. xlii.

those whose lustre eclipses them, as much as the rays of the sun dazzle and offend the eyes of the owl.

On the 14th, at three o'clock in the morning, I set off from *Zaidi Sourian*, after having given the monks the few pieces of silver I had still remaining. I fully made up my mind not to set my foot in another convent: there were yet two more in the desert; I had now nothing left to satisfy the covetousness of the monks; besides, I knew that they were not worth visiting.

As we passed in front of one of these monasteries, called *Amba Bisboï*, which is but a few paces from that we had quitted, the monks were waiting for me at the gate: they importuned me to go in for a moment; and, in order to determine me, they said that they were in possession of the body of a saint, which was as fresh and florid as if still alive. They appeared very much offended at my resisting such an attraction; but the true cause of the discontent they expressed was the disappointment of the money which they expected to obtain from my visit.

My Arab *sheick*, however, wished to make me go to another monastery; but I declared to him positively that I would not approach any more of the buildings inhabited by such vile beings, and under shelter of which might be concealed some troop of robbers; preferring to remain exposed in the open plain to the risk of being a second time taken by surprise. We therefore directed our route to the eastward, and passed the southern extremity of the last lake of natron, which was covered with a prodigious number of every species of ducks.

On our right, and at the distance of a long league, we left the fourth of these convents of the desert, the protecting retreats of banditti. It is that which is particularly dedicated to Saint Macarius, and is called also *Amba Monguar*, or, as the Arabs say simply, *Mon-guar*. Like the others, it is inhabited by Coptic monks. In its
environs

environs are to be seen a number of ruins, which the Copts shew as those of the ancient monastery of Saint Macarius itself. The Arabs give these ruins a name which signifies *Castle of the Women*; a strange denomination to designate a retreat erected from an aversion to women, and inhabited by hideous anchorites.

We continued our journey all the day and all the night, and at five o'clock in the morning arrived at the village of *Etrifs*, on the west bank of the Nile. The camp of the Bedouins with whom I had been travelling, was pitched near this village. The *sheick* conducted me to his tent, and the women immediately set before us the repast of hospitality.

At our first meeting in the desert, I had apprized the *sheick*, that it would be impossible for me to pay for the escort and the hire of the beasts which he had provided for me until my return to Cairo, whither I was going to replenish my purse that his countrymen had emptied. He answered me, that, far from being uneasy about his reward, he had money at my service. I had paid but little attention to the latter part of his reply, forgetting that I was no longer in countries where the heart believeth what is uttered by the lips; where a profusion of words, apparently affectionate, are often no more than expressions of indifference, and sometimes of disguised hatred; where, in short, such assiduities, such offers, are regarded as empty compliments, as mere marks of civility, which, by common consent, are made without any intention of being performed, and are declined from a conviction that they are not seriously meant. The repast being finished, the *sheick* went to a chest which stood in the corner of the tent, took out of it a small bag filled with money, and presenting it to me, said: "I am not ignorant of what has happened to thee. With indignation I witnessed the knavery of the monk of *Zaidi el Baramous*. I well know, that as thou carriest letters of recommendation, thou wilt receive all the assistance thou wantest from the *kiaschef* of *Ouardan*; but thou wouldst give me

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" pain,

“ pain, wert thou to apply to a *dog* of a Turk, to a Mamalûk. I
 “ could not bear that a man with whom I have partaken the repast
 “ of friendship, whom I have protected at the hazard of my life ;
 “ who, in a word, is become my brother, should have recourse to
 “ another. Take then this money ; it is thine ; if thou refusest it,
 “ I shall think that thou despisest a friend, because he is one of the
 “ inhabitants of the desert*.” What generosity of sentiment ! what
 greatness of soul ! and yet this very man would have robbed me had
 he met me in the deserts. In return for this frank and honest cor-
 diality, and not to displease my host, I took some patackes, which
 he would not see me reckon, neither would he attend to my promise
 of reimbursement on my approaching return from Cairo.

We learned that the troop of *Abdalla*, the black chief of the
 robbers, who had with so much regret restored the booty of which
 he had obtained possession, reinforced by a fresh detachment, had
 waited for me, concealed under the walls of the monastery of Saint
 Macarius, or *Amba-Mongar*, near which I had resolved not to pass.
 The *sheick* thanked me very warmly for having refused to visit that
 convent, and obliged him to travel the whole night. All the Bedouins
 of the desert were upon the look-out to surprise me, imagining that
 I was loaded with riches ; and it was only to the alteration of my
 route, and the forced march to which I compelled my conductors,
 that I was indebted for my safety. This notion of the quantity of
 gold I carried with me had, in like manner, got into the stupid
 heads of the *fellahs*, or peasants, and might have produced effects
 still more fatal from these brutish and ferocious men, who, as com-
 plete robbers as the Bedouins, possessed none of their virtues. These
 circumstances determined me to proceed to the neighbourhood of the
 commandant of the district, and accordingly I set off for *Ouardan*,
 the place of his residence, half a league south-south-east from *Etrifs*.

* *Bédaoui*, of which we have made *Bedouin*, means an *inhabitant of the desert*.

The Mamalûk officer received me with a great deal of civility, and insisted upon my lodging at his own house.

Ouardan is a large village, built at a little distance from the west bank of the Nile, upon the site of *Latopolis*, a city anciently dedicated to Latona, and which gives its name to one of the *nomes*, or divisions of Egypt. In more recent times, this place has acquired a different kind of fame, that of robbery: it was now become a most formidable resort of pirates, who plundered all the boats navigating in these branches of the Nile. The merchants had no other resource than to ship their goods on board the vessels belonging to *Ouardan*, the masters of which being associated with the pirates, became responsible for the cargoes entrusted to them. This society of robbers has been destroyed by Ali Bey; and since then, *Ouardan* has been secure from depredation.

I hired a boat to carry me to Cairo, and return to Rossetta. I set out on the 16th, at five o'clock in the afternoon, but the wind having failed us, we were obliged to stop. At one o'clock in the morning we continued our route. In the forenoon we saw, as we passed, the inhabitants of a village quitting their dwellings, and crossing over to the east bank of the Nile with their cattle and effects. They had seen in the evening a party of a hundred Bedouins, who, they apprehended, were coming to plunder them. This was, without doubt, *Abdalla's* gang in pursuit of us. The village, although on the bank of the river, is almost in the desert. On approaching Cairo, the space of cultivated country to the west of the Nile, extending to immense plains in the *Babira*, gradually diminishes; so that, towards that capital of Egypt, the west bank is little better than a tract of barren sand.

The master of the boat, not daring to go up as high as *Boulac*, the port of Cairo, lest his little vessel should be seized for the service of the army, which Ismael Bey was collecting against his competitors, Murad and Ibrahim, we stopped half a league short of *Boulac*,

near a village called *Schoubra*. I sent one of my people by land to Cairo; and, as soon as he returned, we again proceeded down the river, at nine o'clock in the evening.

After having kept watch till midnight with the half of my party, which was then relieved by the other half, a measure of vigilance adopted and regularly pursued in all my travels, I lay down in the bottom of the boat. I was almost immediately roused, and informed, that three small boats, without masts or sails, were rowing towards us, and would not answer when hailed. The master gave me to understand that they were pirates, and that not a moment should be lost in firing upon them, before they began their attack. They immediately received several discharges of our musketry, which they answered only by pulling away from us as hard as they could.

On the 18th we passed between *Ouardan* and the little village of *Guéréifs*, a quarter of a league below which stands another, called *Géziret Ouardan*. At this place the Nile runs north-west by north as far as *Etrifs*. We saw several flocks of ducks, gulls both of the large and small species, and a flamingo, which the Arabs call *bésaroufs*. There were also on both banks of the river a number of spur-winged plovers, the cries of which we often heard during the night. At *Roffetta*, where I have already said they are very numerous, these birds pass the night, along the Nile, in front of the houses, and never fail to accompany, with their shrill and screaming voice, the continual barking by which, upon the least noise, the dogs in the streets disturb the repose of the inhabitants.

Sailing past *Géziret Ouardan* we saw a funeral. Two flags, one black and the other red, were displayed at the head of the procession, a custom which is not adopted in the towns. A little lower, near the village of *Mensgi*, a less melancholy scene presented itself to our view: it was a wedding. The bride was mounted upon a tall camel, and surrounded by a crowd of peasants, who were making a
sham

sham fight with long sticks. They were preceded by hautboys and drums. The camel walked at a very slow pace, and was every moment stopped to give the attendants an opportunity of dancing, crying, and fighting, round the bride, whom they marched in this manner for half a day through the village and its environs.

At a quarter of a league below *Mengfi* is the little village of *Monfi*. Opposite to it, and between the two, stands *Etrifs*, where we arrived at ten o'clock in the morning.

I hastened to the camp of my generous Bedouin *sheick*, who appeared astonished at my sudden return. I repaid him what I was in his debt, adding to it a present of a few yards of cloth. While I was partaking with him of the frugal repast which he forced me to accept, he had, unknown to me, a sheep and some articles of provision carried to my boat. My mind was penetrated with admiration and gratitude when I parted from this worthy man. Let those who are indignant at the corruption in our towns, the vices which there prevail, ill disguised by hypocrisy, the false virtues which are extolled, that division of petty interests which renders a society of men an assemblage of enemies, cease to calumniate human nature. To its honour, there are yet people who, not dissimulating great faults, openly blend with the exercise of them the practice of the most estimable qualities. Under the rude tent of the Bedouin, on the barren sand which serves him as a floor, must be looked for simple manners, generous habits, and all the virtues of hospitality.

I had occasion to see a singular remedy, which the *fellabs*, or Egyptian peasants, apply to sore eyes. They suspend from their head-dress, by a small thread, a little ball of coral, so that it may hang immediately opposite to the eye affected, which is constantly fixed on it, and struck by it incessantly. To render a person blind, it would be impossible to discover a more effectual method than this whimsical specific.

Leaving

Leaving *Etrifs*, at four o'clock in the afternoon we reached, two leagues lower down, the village of *Abouneschabè*, and opposite to it, on the east bank, *Thabouè*. Between these two villages the Nile is very broad, but by no means deep: my boat, although quite empty, touched, and remained a long time aground. At nine o'clock in the evening we arrived at *Iagnoufs*, a pretty large village on the east bank, at half a league from *Thabouè*.

At *Iagnoufs* I tasted, for the first time, a small fruit called *nebka*. The tree that bears it is a large species of *rhamnus**, which grows higher than the plum-tree, and the bark of which is gray, and not unlike that of the willow. Its leaves are alternate, obtuse, three-nerved, and of a deep green; the fruit resembles a small round apple †, and has more the flavour of an apple than that of a plum. When not perfectly ripe it has a sour taste, like the crab; and, when over-ripe, it is tasteless; but is pleasant enough when gathered in a proper state of maturity. Its kernel is round and covered with tubercles.

Opposite to *Iagnoufs*, the Nile was almost entirely covered with ducks. I was very much astonished to see, in the midst of them,

* The *nebka* being as yet little known, and the work of Forskal not being in every person's hands, I conceive I shall gratify botanists by transcribing what has been said of it by that traveller, who examined it in the country where it grows:

RHAMNUS NABECA. Variat. (a) Rh. divaricatus; foliis semipollicar. Caulibus ab singula folia divaricatus; spinis validis, sæpe geminis. (b) Rh. rectus; ramis rectis; spinis aut nullis aut solitariis ad latus petioli, rectis patentibus; foliis pollicaribus. Utriusque caudex arboreus; fructu drupa, nuce biloculari; folia crenulata, trinervia, glabra, ovata, obtusa, alterna, disticha, petiolata, stipulæ setacæ. Arab. prior Sidr. vel Ghast aut Ælb. Alter Ardj vel Orredj. Forskal, Flora Egypt.-arab. Suppl. p. 204.

Rhamnus napeca, Rumph. Arab. ii. tab. 42.

† Savary, who appears never to have seen this fruit, says, that it is a *small pear* of a sourish taste. Lettres sur l'Égypte, tome ii. p. 43.

flocks

flocks of *desferter pigeons**, an incredible number of which birds are kept in Egypt, alighting every moment on the water, even in the most rapid part of the stream, and remaining upon its surface often longer than a minute. This habit, which I never observed elsewhere, and which is probably owing to the great heat of the climate, is common in that country to all pigeons of the same species.

* *Columba œnas seu vinago.*

CHAPTER XXX.

VOYAGE DOWN THE NILE CONTINUED.—TERANÉ.—PIGEON-HOUSES.—WAGTAILS.—DUCKS.—CROWS.—A FUNERAL.—NEW SPECIES OF PLOVER.—RUINS.—ANTIQUÉ FIGURES.—FOUAH.—BANKS OF THE NILE.—RETURN TO ROSSETTA.

ON the morning of the 20th we continued our voyage to Rossetta, after the dispersion of a thick fog, during which it would have been impossible to distinguish even the nearest objects. No sooner was the weather cleared up, than a stiff gale came on from the north, which raised a swell in the river, and prevented our boat from dropping down with the stream. Below *Iagnoufs*, the Nile takes a north by west direction. At the distance of half a league on the west bank is a place named *Ikmas*, and half a league lower down stands *Terané*, where I stopped.

Terané, which is the residence of a *kiaschef*, is a large, well-enclosed town, consisting entirely of mud-walled houses, like all the villages in these parts. In its environs are a heap of ruins, the vestiges of the ancient city of *Terenuthis*, but at present known in the country by the name of *Aboubellou*.

The inhabitants of *Terané* are savage and vindictive. The absence of the *kiaschef*, who was gone to join the army, rendered them still more dangerous. We did not escape their menaces and insults. They had heard of my having travelled in the desert; and, according to custom, it had been reported that I had discovered treasures in the course of my journey. It was supposed that my *kanja* was laden with them, and the inhabitants of *Terané* had formed a design of seizing it during the night. We therefore kept a strict watch: se-

veral people were seen hovering about the bank, but none of them tured to approach the boat.

There was a Turk lived here, who made excellent gunpowder. This unfortunate fellow, though young, had a white beard, and had lost his voice, the effects of a sudden panic. Ali Bey, suspecting him of having furnished gunpowder to the Bedouins, whom he wished to destroy, ordered his head to be cut off; and though the sentence of the tyrant was no sooner passed than revoked, it left behind these indelible impressions.

I saw herons, gulls, and flocks of ducks; but the latter did not stop near *Terané*, because the Nile being here broad and straight, there is generally a strong wind and a swell, which they greatly dislike. The course of the river is still north by west. On the east bank, and a little below *Terané*, are two villages contiguous to each other; *Zéié* and *Sansaft*, the *fellabs* of which have as bad a character as those of *Terané*.

I was impatient to quit this inhospitable country; and, on the 22d, at three o'clock in the morning, we again proceeded down the stream. At six we arrived at *Bour-Edgiatt*, where there are some remains of antiquity. Here the Nile takes a north-east direction. *Dimitfchi* is half a league from *Bour-Edgiatt*; and opposite to it, on the east bank, is *Tamalè*. Near this last-mentioned village, a canal conveys the fertilizing waters of the river towards the south.

At a short half league from *Tamalè*, on the same bank, is *Schéb-sebir*; below it, at an equal distance, is *Kafr Nadir*; and a quarter of a league farther, stands *Nadir*, where another more considerable canal than that at *Tamalè*, takes a north-east direction. Here I saw a flight of lapwing plovers, or gray sandpipers*, some gulls, and a great number of ducks. The same northerly gales which had re-

* *Vanneau pluvier*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 854.—*Tringa squatarola*, L.

tarded our voyage the preceding day, still continued to render our progress very slow, and our passage exceedingly rough. On the same side of the river as *Nadir*, is the village of *Geziret el Adjar* (Island of Stones), and at some distance from it there are some ancient ruins, probably those of *Nicii*.

From *Nadir* the river runs to the north-west as far as *Alguan*, a small village, three quarters of a league lower down. This place has a most wretched appearance; it is not enclosed, as in general are the villages of any extent. Here miserable mud hovels are the only habitations of men, while pigeons enjoy commodious houses. No where have I seen such an assemblage of pigeon-houses. They are of a singular form, which bears some resemblance to our bee-hives. (*See a representation of them, Plate VIII.*) This construction is peculiar to the pigeon-houses of some parts of Lower Egypt, where they are prodigiously numerous. They are built of mud, square at the base, and carried up in the form of a cone. The inside of them is furnished with earthen pots, in which the pigeons make their nests.

The commanding officer of this place was a negro Mamalûk. He informed me that two or three years before, the *fellahs* had found, among some ruins, which were at no great distance, a large vase filled with medals; and that this discovery had produced among them a bloody contest, which had lasted for three days.

Following the course of the Nile from *Alguan*, we first proceeded east-north-east for a quarter of a league, then to the north, and afterwards to the north by west as far as *Kafr Demschî*, a village about a league from *Alguan*, on the east bank. Between them, lies *Kafr Géziè*. Half a league lower, during which the river runs north-north-west, is *Denasor*, a village at some distance from the Nile, and of a superior construction to those which I have just mentioned. Opposite to it is *Aboulkaoui*. A sinuosity extending half a league to the north-west by north brought us to *Etrie*, a deserted village on

the west bank; facing which, on the other side, stands *Zavoued el Begli*, situated at a small distance from the river. A quarter of a league below *Etrie*, is *Kafr Etrie*. Between these two villages is a large canal which waters a part of *Babira*, and communicates with that of *Alexandria*.

The Nile then takes its course to the north-east by north. We stopped at a large village, situated about a quarter of a league from the water-side, below *Kafr Etrie*: it is called *Mischlami*. We afterwards crossed over to the west bank, and moored our boat for the night at *Komscherick*.

Besides numerous flights of ducks which were continually passing, I this day saw six pelicans flying in company, and a large flock of wild geese.

I observed that the wagtails, which were dispersed here and there during the day, assembled together at the approach of night. Such associations, which cannot proceed from any defensive impulse, these feeble and innocent birds being incapable, even by their combined numbers, of aving the least dangerous enemy, must be an effect of social instinct. When thus collected, they skim for some time along the surface of the water, and then settle upon one of the banks of the river to spend the night. The flight that I saw at *Komscherick* was so numerous, as to be several minutes in passing the stern of our boat.

There are no kind of birds more plentiful in Egypt. I met with them in every cultivated part of the country, near all the villages, but particularly about those which are in the vicinity of the Nile. At the same time, no birds are more familiar; some of them ventured into the cabin of the boat during our voyage down the river, and would feed beside us with the most engaging security.

At *Komscherick* I found a few medals, but of small value: they prove however, that this had been the site of an ancient settlement. During the day which I passed at this place, I had every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the Mamalûk officer in command.

If my character of physician procured me advantages in the course of my journey; if the exercise of that profession sometimes afforded us amusing scenes, it also exposed me to very severe trials. I had been prevailed upon to remain a day at *Komscherick*, in order to attend an Arab *sheick*, a man of consequence in the district, who was ill. On his arrival he exhibited the most frightful and shocking spectacle I had ever seen. This unfortunate being had little more left than the upper half of his head, having lost his mouth and the whole lower jaw by a dreadful cancer. The tongue, unsupported, was desiccated and motionless, and its root exposed to view. The inside of his throat was almost bare from the eroding power of the disease on its flesh and integuments; while its black tinge and inflamed appearance, announced the approaching termination of the Arab's sufferings, and that a speedy cessation of all power to swallow, or even to breathe, would put an end to his horrible existence. Shocked at the aspect of a head half alive, and half in a state of mortal putrefaction, I turned hastily away from such a patient, and leaping into the boat, ordered it to be instantly cast off; my imagination being so strongly impressed by the sight of this hideous object, that it continued to haunt me for several days.

At ten o'clock in the morning of the 25th we left *Homscherick*, to continue our voyage down the Nile, which now took a north-east by north direction. At the distance of half a league we reached *Amroufs* on the east bank; and soon after, came to *Magenin*, on the opposite side. Another half league below *Amroufs*, but on the same bank, brought us to *Tonnoub*. The river afterwards runs north-north-west, as far as a quarter of a league below *Zaira*, a village on an elevated spot, to the right, at a small distance from *Tonnoub*. Between this place and *Zaira*, to the left, is *Zavoua*, standing not far from the water-side. A little below *Zaira* there is an eminence which appears to be formed of the ruins of an ancient city; and on

its summit is erected a chapel, the sepulchre of a Mahometan saint. Half a league below *Zavoua* is *Tavoued el Bahari*.

From *Zaira* the Nile runs to the east-north-east; and, within a quarter of a league, stands *Negilé*, a tolerably well-built village on its east bank. At the place where the river changes its course from north-north-west to east-north-east, it forms a small island, and supplies a canal that takes a western direction. At half a league from *Negilé* we passed by *Alet Achmet*, and, almost facing it, *Kafr Michelei*. *Mitmei* is half a league below *Alet Achmet*; and a quarter of a league farther is *Acroub*. *Kafr Bagi*, and *Kafr Agou*, opposite to which is *Kafr Garim*, are situated at a quarter of a league from each other, and from *Acroub*. From this latter village the Nile returns to the west-north-west, and leaves an island in view, fronting *Kafr Bagi*. At this place there was such a number of ducks upon the water, that they occupied a space of half a quarter of a league in length, by two yards in breadth.

In the whole course of my voyage upon the Nile, from Cairo to Rossetta, I observed that the ducks preferred those parts of the river where the waters were not agitated by the violence of the wind or the rapidity of the stream; and as still water is generally to be found in front of those villages, which are so situated as not to be exposed to the current, and to afford smooth anchorage for boats, the ducks seldom quitted the water that washes the walls of these habitations, opposite to which large flocks are usually seen. They suffer themselves to be carried gently down the slowly-gliding stream; and when they have thus floated beyond the extremity of the villages, and reach those parts where the surface of the Nile is ruffled, they take wing, return to settle higher up the river, and again float down the same space of smooth water; in which alternate movements they spend the day.

These unruffled parts of the river are also the rendezvous of different

ent species of aquatic birds, as wild geese, spur-winged plovers, herons, and gulls.

At *Kafr Garim*, the river runs north by east for a quarter of a league, and on its west bank is *Salamoum*, a village almost entirely deserted. Another has been built at some distance farther up the country, which is called *Kafr Salamoum*. *Salamoum* is to be distinguished by part of an ancient wall, in which there is a gate. This, with some pieces of granite, are the only vestiges of antiquity there to be seen. From thence to *Schabour* is half a league. These two places, according to D'Anville*, indicate the situations of *Andropolis* (the city of men), and of *Gynæcopolis* (the city of women), two places which appear to have been formerly contiguous.

From *Salamoum* to *Schabour* the river runs to the north by east. Before we reached the latter place, we perceived, on the west bank, the tomb of a saint. I stopped at *Schabour*, which is a considerable village, but very ill-built, and consisting entirely of mud-walled houses. The habitation of the commanding officer is situated on a platform of earth, and, though also a mud building, is of tolerable construction, as is likewise the turret of the mosque.

In the evening, all the crows of the environs successively resorted, in great numbers, to a small sandy island in the middle of the river. There they remained for about a quarter of an hour in a close connected body, and then dispersed, flying away, one after another, in all directions. It might be almost imagined, that they met together in this manner to concert some plan of operations. The same evening several flights of wild geese passed over our heads.

Facing *Schabour*, a village bears the indecent name of *Kafr Sapari*. It was very dangerous to navigate the Nile in these parts during the night, on account of the pirates with whom the villages swarm, and who attack vessels unawares. The disturbances which, at this

* *Geographic Ancienne*, tome i. p. 12.

time, agitated Egypt, and the departure of almost all the commandants, with their troops, to join the army, increased the hazards of these voyages.

We left *Schabour* on the 26th at four o'clock in the morning. During the preceding days, the cold had been perceptible, but it had not hitherto been so piercing. The wind blew strong from the north-north-west, which being directly contrary to the course of the stream occasioned short breaking waves, and greatly impeded our progress; so that we did not reach *Schlimé* till four in the afternoon. It is a wretched hamlet, containing only a few mud hovels; nevertheless, it is a place of some trade; and considerable quantities of grain, sugar-canes, and other commodities are here shipped. We had left to the eastward, on the opposite bank, the village of *Babrim*, and just above it, is the entrance of a canal which takes a south-south-west direction. Near *Babrim* are three large eminences, which, as they are evidently artificial, indicate the site of some ancient city. We had already passed the village of *Istack*, which is on the left, or west bank of the river.

On the 27th, at three o'clock in the morning, we set off from *Schlimé*; and at eight arrived at *Meballet-Abou-Ali*, in the Delta. For some time we had seen nothing but heaps of mud-houses, or rather huts. Here, however, we again met with habitations built of brick, forming a town which was defended from occasional inundations, by a dike, constructed of the same materials. In one of the streets I met a funeral. By the side of the coffin was carried a large black flag, covered with yellow spots and figures. The female mourners who were following it, held in one hand a corner of their only garment, which might be called either a gown or a shift, and which they kept continually shaking, as if they were driving something before them.

I here met with, for the first time, a new species of plover. I call it new, because it has not been mentioned by any ornithologist. The mean

mean length of this bird is somewhat more than eight inches. The head is of a deep green with fugitive reflections; a sort of white diadem, passing above the eyes, encircles the head: the back and the lesser wing coverts are of a bright cinereous; the greater wing coverts, white; the quill feathers are white, tipped with black, and have each a spot of the same colour near the middle of their length: this forms a transversal black stripe on the wing. The throat is white; the under part of the neck and of the body white, with a rufous tinge. On the upper part of the breast is a narrow half-collar, of a deep shining green. The tail, the feathers of which are short and wedge-like, is of the same gray colour as the upper part of the body, for two thirds of its length, where it is crossed by a broad black stripe, and it is tipped with white. The eyes are brown; the legs and feet, blueish; the bill and claws, black.

If the shape of the bill were alone to be considered, this bird would appear not to belong to the genus of the plover. For the bill, instead of being perfectly straight and convex, like that of the plover, is slightly curved at the point of the upper mandible, and the convexity is less determined; differences which bring it nearer to the *pluvian** of Buffon; and in a still greater degree to the bird, which, for the same reasons, that naturalist has separated from the plovers, under the name of *coure-vite* †. But if we consider, that these Egyptian birds possess all the other distinctive characters of the plover genus, that they have only three toes turned forwards, without the least vestige of a hind toe; that the part of the leg above the knee is altogether naked; and, especially, that their habits are the same as those of plovers, it will be impossible not to regard them as birds of the same genus, notwithstanding the trifling difference in

* *Pluvian*, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 918.—*Ang.* The black-headed plover.

† Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 795 et 892.—*Ang.* The cream-coloured plover.

the conformation of the bill ; a diffimilitude which is one only of the innumerable means employed by Nature to baffle the narrow conceptions of man, and to escape from those limits within which he pretends to circumscribe the effects of her omnipotence.

In preparing for preservation the bird from which this description was taken, and which was a male, I thought at first, that there was something peculiar in the conformation of the thigh-bone, it being flattened and curved like a fabre ; but this was a mere accidental deformity, as the other thigh did not exhibit a similar appearance.

I have since seen many plovers of this species in different parts of Egypt ; but they never appeared, at least on the banks of the Nile, where I have always met with them, but when its waters had retired, and were confined to their natural bed. They are most commonly seen in pairs, and seldom in flocks ; and whenever they assemble together, their number scarcely exceeds seven or eight. They keep on the bank of the river, and feed on aquatic insects. I observed that they never alight upon the mud with which the shores of the Nile are generally covered ; and that sandy spots are their favourite haunts. When they take wing, they repeat a short shrill cry ; though they seldom quit the ground, and employ their feet much more than their wings. So far are they from being shy, that they may be very closely approached.

Half a league from *Meballet-Abou-Ali*, in an easterly direction from the river, is *Sennebour-Medini*, a village near which are some considerable remains of antiquity. The whole surface of the ground is strewn with ruins. There is, however, nothing entire, except some vaults of brick, and prostrate columns and capitals of granite and marble. By the side of these ruins, two villages attract the attention by their handsome appearance. They are built of brick, and seem to be more ancient than the other villages and hamlets of Lower Egypt.

I was informed, that there were some ruins on the opposite bank,

half a league below *Schlimé*. I approached that side of the river, and saw, at a distance, very considerable vestiges of an ancient city. It being almost dark, I could not visit them; for it would have been highly imprudent to have remained during the night in this district, which is the most dangerous of any in Lower Egypt, from the great number of robbers who infest both the land and the water. The village off which we anchored is called *Salbe el Adsjar*; a place so very notorious for being the resort of banditti, that it was with difficulty I persuaded the master of the boat to make any stop. Thus was I compelled to relinquish the examination of the beautiful monuments of antiquity which I saw before me, but at a considerable distance from the Nile. I made, however, at *Salbe el Adsjar*, a tolerable collection of antique fragments which I purchased of the inhabitants, and which I shall here enumerate.

A small figure in bronze, three inches high. (*See Plate X. Fig. 1.*)

An *Ifis* in plaster, three inches ten lines in height. (*Plate XI. Fig. 3.*)

A hawk in bronze, height ten lines. (*Plate XI. Fig. 1.*)

A head of *Ifis*, in terra cotta: its height two inches, and its breadth at the base eighteen lines. (*Plate XI. Fig. 4.*)

A fine bust of *Ifis*, with the crescent and the *modius*, in white stone; two feet in height. (*See Plate XII. Fig. 3.*)

Two figures, which appear to be tragic masks, like those which are to be seen on the corners of sarcophagi. (*See Plate XII. Fig. 1. and 2.*) The first is of basalt, and eleven inches high; the second is nine inches, and of mortar.

A porcelain figure, two inches nine lines in height, covered with an enamel of aqua marina. (*See Plate IX. Fig. 4.*)

Another in plaster, two inches eleven lines high. (*Plate X. Fig. 2.*)

Another, probably an *Ifis*. It is of bronze, and three inches high. (*Plate IX. Fig. 5.*)

A head in bronze, representing an *Ifis*. This is not of Egyptian work-

workmanship, but of the times when the Greeks were masters of Egypt. (*Plate X. Fig. 3.*)

The same character may be given of another head of Isis in alabaster, which is much flattened, and bears the crescent. (*See Plate IX. Fig. 7.*) Its length is twenty-one lines.

Figure 4, of Plate X. is that of a beetle*, an insect held sacred by the Egyptians. It is of black stone, eighteen inches long and thirteen broad.

A cynocephalus in porcelain, covered with an apple-green enamel. It is two inches high, and has been pierced to be worn as an amulet. (*See Plate IX. Fig. 2.*) I had obtained one at *Terarié*, which was somewhat smaller, but in every other respect exactly similar.

An Ofiris, holding the whip, in gilt bronze, two inches high. (*Plate IX. Fig. 1.*)

Lastly, a grotesque idol in porcelain, covered with a purple red enamel. It was two inches four lines in height. (*Plate IX. Fig. 6.*) There are many of them in porcelain, and in *lapis hæmatites*, or blood-stone, which have been engraved in Caylus' Collection of Antiquities, but have never been accompanied by any satisfactory explanation.

Having made these little purchases, we returned to pass the night off *Meballet-Abou-Ali*, and proceeded on our voyage on the 28th at five o'clock in the morning. We soon came in sight of *Rahmanié*, built on the west bank, at the entrance of the canal of *Damanbour*, which is navigable only at the rise of the Nile.

I stopped a few hours at *Fouab*. When the Nile was allowed to fill the canals with its waters, which once supported trade and diffused abundance; when boats laden with the commodities of Europe and of Asia, could navigate in tranquillity the canal of Alexandria, without being subject to the fury of the sea and of the *Boghafs*, *Fouab*, which was situated at the entrance of this canal, was a large

* *Scarabæus sacer*, L.

and flourishing city, where the Europeans had their commercial establishments. But the barbarous supineness of the tyrants of Egypt having suffered such an abundant source of prosperity to be dried up, by leaving the mud to collect in the bed of the canals, so as to obstruct navigation, commerce was compelled to abandon the shore of *Fouah*, and carry its means and its riches to the harbour of Rossetta, where a variety of dangers render its progress very uncertain. *Fouah*, therefore, has declined considerably from its former splendour. Its contracted limits, the ruined state of its ancient edifices, and those yet standing, undermined by want and wretchedness; all announce the rapid approach of a general decay. Nature, however, more powerful, and at the same time more generous, still here distributes her bounties. The fields that surround *Fouah* display a rich and smiling fertility; while its delightful gardens produce fruits, which, on account of their superior excellence, are held in high estimation.

It is the opinion of many, that this city is the ancient *Metelis*, which I have placed near Rossetta, conceiving that *Fouah* was *Naucratis*, built by the Milesians, and the country of Athenæus, a celebrated grammarian, who remarks that, in his time, there were here fabricated earthen vases, the covers of which had the appearance of silver. If I am mistaken, the learned Pococke has fallen into the same error*.

In front of *Fouah*, the Nile forms, in the middle of its course, an island called *Geziret-el-Dabab*, or Golden Island. We left *Fouah* at noon, and reached Rossetta at midnight.

I had followed the course of the Nile through an extent which, from the numerous windings of the river, was upwards of sixty leagues. It had, at this time, retired within its banks, which are low, when they consist of sand, but high and steep, when they are

* See Pococke's Travels, vol. i. p. 16.

composed of loamy earth. The latter prevailed through the far greater part of our voyage. They are formed of a firm, solid, blackish loam, which, like calcareous stones, separates in perpendicular flakes. Its exterior colour resembles that of the Egyptian pebble.

A report had been spread at Rossetta, that we were murdered by the Arabs. My return removed the anxiety which this intelligence had occasioned my friends ; and their apprehensions respecting me appeared too well founded, as Hufflein had said that he had left me in a very perilous situation. This worthy Bedouin had been for some days at Rossetta, and was continually calling at the house occupied by the French, to know if they had heard of me. No sooner was he informed of my arrival, than he hastened to embrace me, and to mingle his honest heart-felt joy with the congratulations of my countrymen.

CHAPTER XXXI.

POLITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE BEDOUINS.—AGRICULTURE.—CORN.—BREAD.—NIGELLA, OR FENNEL-FLOWER.—SESAMUM, OR OILY GRAIN.—PTISANS.—BARLEY.—FLAX.—INDIGO.—SUGAR-CANES.—COFFEE-TREE.—FRENCH COLONY IN EGYPT.—OLIVE-TREES.—FIG-TREES.—DATE-TREES.—HABLEZISS.

THE journey I had just completed, made me acquainted with the best and the worst parts of the soil of Egypt: plains smiling with superabundant plenty, and deserts parched with perpetual aridity. It also introduced me to those wandering tribes, who are equally remarkable for their contradictory habits, the exercise of social virtue and the practice of depredation.

It is a question not easy to be resolved, whether the existence of the Bedouins, who are at once a scourge and an example to society, is more injurious than beneficial? Swift as the wind, they disappear in a moment from the spots they have suddenly desolated, and penetrate into those vast solitudes which are frequented only by them, and with the topography of which they alone are acquainted. Hence, it is difficult to check them, and would be still more so to keep them in order. On the other hand, their destruction, if not altogether impracticable, could be effected only by slow degrees, and would prove disadvantageous to Egypt. Ali Bey, a governor of these provinces, concerning whom so many fables have been related, and who wanted nothing but a good education and sound principles to direct him in the execution of his pure intentions, had resolved to purge his country of every sort of robbery. In that respect, his government was mentioned with praise and gratitude. This Bey said what Sextus Quintus had said before him, though he had no suspicion of his having been anticipated in this resolution by a pope, “ I would
“ wish that every man might be able to carry his purse in his hand,
“ and

“ and leave his door open even during the night, without running “ any risk.” Several nests of robbers had already been annihilated ; villages which had been inhabited by the pirates of the Nile were razed ; the communication between different parts of the country was free ; the roads were no longer infested with robbers ; nor was navigation interrupted by that spirit of pillage which, since the death of Ali Bey, has resumed its fatal activity.

In this plan for the establishment of public tranquillity, the extermination of the Bedouins was a principal object. Every possible measure had been taken, and every precaution adopted, to obtain this end. Already had several hordes fallen victims to the policy of the governor. Whole tribes had retreated into the desert. But the people of Egypt, far from approving these means of protecting their property, murmured aloud at the scarcity of camels, sheep, and other animals, with which the Bedouins had been accustomed to supply them in abundance, though it was their frequent practice to steal the property they had sold.

It appears, then, that the prosperity of Egypt is intimately connected with the preservation of the Bedouins. In fact, they alone can traverse, with facility, immense sandy and uninhabited districts ; maintain through them a ready and constant communication, and there even fix their abode ; so that they can supply the cultivated parts with their numerous flocks, which they barter for those commodities that have become necessary to them from habit. It would, surely, be sounder policy to increase the number of their wants, than to pursue the detestable scheme of annihilation ; for it is very doubtful whether a continual state of warfare be an effectual mean of correcting the morals and improving the character of mankind. They, whose habits are most simple, become easiest the dupes of the allurements presented to them. Were the prevailing tastes and appetites of the Bedouins flattered ; were new ones excited in them, unfortunately for these people, it would be no great difficulty to destroy the ancient and

venerable simplicity of their manners, and replace them by a multitude of factitious wants. It would then become their interest to keep upon good terms with their neighbours, from whom they would never fail of procuring every gratification of their new desires. Sincerity and friendship would govern their mutual intercourse, and the daily routine of traffic would assimilate nations of the most opposite character, smooth down all inequalities, and at length produce a cordial intimacy. And should some of the Bedouins, forgetful, for a moment, of their own interests, return to the practice of pillage; should they, by resuming their former habits of attacking the property of others, infringe a sort of treaty cemented by a reciprocity of wants and services, a refusal of those articles which they had learned to consider as indispensable, would, perhaps, be a sufficient punishment: at all events, it would be preferable to that exterminating destruction at which humanity shudders, and which is an execrable custom that seems unnatural to mankind.

If we turn our attention from the vicious qualities of nations, to an art which alone would be capable of effacing their impressions, we shall be convinced that no part of the globe displays so many resources for advancing the prosperity and splendour of agriculture as the land of Egypt. Its incomparable fertility invites every species of cultivation. Those plants which bedeck the face of our northern regions; those whose verdure tempers the heat of the interior of Africa; those which are the pride of India; those, lastly, which constitute the riches of our American colonies, are almost all seen to flourish in Egypt, or could there find a soil favourable to their vegetation.

This theatre of agriculture is also capable of great enlargement. Fertility would easily resume its influence over the extent of country it formerly occupied. Canals, not kept in order; lakes dried up; the waters of the Nile no longer overflowing the lands they once moistened; and several other causes, the fruits of supineness and ty-
ranny,

ranny, have suffered the sands to encroach upon parts heretofore covered with vegetable mould. But these sandy strata, spread over a soil they have recently usurped, are of no great thickness, and, were the waters permitted to reach them, would again yield to cultivation. These new domains of sterility are easy to be distinguished. The sand that covers them has not the red and fiery aspect of the plains eternally devoted to aridity; it has not the same depth; it is not of a fluctuating nature; and the foot that treads it feels the solidity of the earth beneath. The places which plenty reclaims, are so very numerous, that they may be safely estimated at nearly a fourth of that part of Egypt which is now in culture. There are other tracts which are in so languid a state of vegetation, as almost to wear the appearance of having been deserted; but a more active industry would soon recall their former abundance. All these resources, which the soil of Egypt possesses, would speedily restore the ancient splendour of its agriculture, even at this time so interesting; and new acquisitions adding to it fresh lustre, would soon render it the most flourishing in the world.

I have already mentioned several of the agricultural productions of Egypt, and, in order to complete, as far as lies in my power, a picture that Nature has animated with her most lively colours, I shall enumerate the other plants which have already been here introduced, or might hereafter be propagated with advantage.

Of the various plants which have rendered Egypt celebrated for its superior abundance, wheat justly claims the pre-eminence. Rome considered this country as her nurse, as her most certain and inexhaustible granary. It was also the granary of Constantinople, and the resource of the neighbouring nations. Even at this day, Arabia derives from it the means of subsistence. The numerous caravans which set out from Upper Egypt for *Coffeir*, a port on the Red Sea, carry nothing but corn. It is there conveyed to *Dsjedda*, from

whence it is distributed over a part of Arabia, which could not subsist but for the fertility of Egypt.

Wheat is sown as soon as the waters of the Nile have retired from the lands destined for its reception: the seed-time, consequently, varies with the latitude, and, as well as the harvest, is earlier in Upper than in Lower Egypt. In general, the cultivator does no more than cast the seed upon the moistened earth. Sometimes, indeed, shallow furrows are made by a large clumsy plough, without either wheels or coulter, and which is drawn by oxen driven by a single man. The corn soon springs up from the mud heated by a burning sun; its vegetation is rapid, and, four months after it is sown, it is fit to be reaped. The sickle is not used; but the stalks are pulled up by the roots, and immediately carried to large floors, like those which are used for treading out rice. Here it is placed in thick heaps, and the same sort of little cart that I have already described, when speaking of the treatment of rice*, is drawn over it by oxen; by which means the straw is cut, and the corn separated from the ear. These heaps of corn a man turns over with a large rake, so as to expose them successively to the action of the cutting wheels of the machine. This method is far from being so advantageous as that of threshing with a flail; but it is more expeditious, and certainly less laborious, which are sufficient inducements for its being adopted by cultivators, who are indolent from nature, and rendered careless by abundance.

Ears of wheat cut before they are quite ripe, then dried and slackly baked in an oven, and afterwards bruised and boiled with meat, are a common dish in Lower Egypt, where it is called *fèrik*. I have since eaten it in France, and it is an excellent mess.

There are neither water-mills nor wind-mills in Egypt; and the useful arts of the miller and baker, which have been brought to such perfection in Europe, are here in the rudest state of infancy. The

* See page 146.

bread, which is made in small thin cakes, is unleavened; the crust is soft; it is very slightly baked, and on that account is heavy and difficult of digestion. In the towns are made a kind of loaves or cakes, which are finer than the common bread, and covered with fennel-flower seeds * that are procured from Upper Egypt, and called in Arabic *habé sodé*, black seed, or *habé braké*, blessed seed. These communicate to the bread a slight aromatic flavour which is not unpleasant: they are likewise reckoned to be of a wholesome quality, and to sharpen the appetite. Another sort of small loaves or cakes, which are soft and pierced with holes, is likewise sprinkled with *sesamum*, or oily grain †. Their agreeable flavour, like that of a hazel-nut, which they acquire from the seeds, makes them preferable to the crust strewed with those of the fennel-flower.

These two sorts of cakes are considered as delicacies. The common people keep to their heavy and ill-baked bread; and when they want to quench their thirst with a beverage less insipid than water, they find in the streets of the towns, people who, like those in Paris, sell ptisans, very cheap liquors, consisting of decoctions of liquorice, raisins, or of the fruit of the carob-tree ‡. The decoction of liquorice is the dearest, because that root is scarcer than raisins or the St. John's bread §.

Another farinaceous plant, the culture of which, like wheat, occupies a considerable portion of land throughout all Egypt, is barley: it is ripe a month earlier than the wheat, and its harvest is equally abundant. Barley is the common food of horses in Egypt, as it is in all parts of the East, where oats and rye are unknown. We should find our advantage in adopting this branch of oriental agricul-

* *Nigella fativa*, L.

† *Sesamum Indicum*, L.

‡ *Ceratonia siliqua*, L.

§ From this tree growing naturally in Palestine, and the notion of the pulpy pods affording aliment to John the Baptist, it obtained its old name of St. John's bread. T.

ture. Crops of barley are much more productive than those of oats; its roots, not being so strong or numerous, do not in an equal degree exhaust the land; and, whatever prejudice our cultivators may entertain against barley, as food for horses, it must surely vanish upon the consideration, that in the countries where these animals are most remarkable for their excellence and beauty, they eat no other kind of corn.

From the most remote periods, flax * has been in general use in Egypt. It was then, as it is now, a considerable article of cultivation and commerce; and its thread was also employed in the fabrication of the garments of a numerous people. A considerable quantity of cloth is, at this day, manufactured from it, and the plant from which indigo † is extracted to dye it, grows also in that country, where it is called *nile*.

If, from these plants of indispensable necessity and sovereign utility, we pass to other species of vegetables, whose produce is considered as still more valuable, because it is subservient to the demands of opulence, we shall behold plains covered with a reed, the expressed juice of which furnishes the sweet and palatable salt, that is become a part of the ordinary diet of almost every nation. The sugar-cane ‡ is one of the valuable productions of Egypt: its cultivation, however, might be improved and extended; and if the sugar-refineries were better managed, this branch of commerce might be rendered very flourishing, from the ready means of its production, and the facility of conveyance. Not that no good sugar is manufactured at Cairo; indeed that which was prepared there for the Grand Signior, and sent to Constantinople, was of a superior quality; but the manufactory of it employs much time, and is impeded by difficulties

* *Linum usitatissimum*, L.

† *Indigofera spinosa*, L. *Indigofera hauer*, Forskal, *Flora Egypt.-arab.* p. 137.

‡ *Saccharum officinarum*, L.

arising from an imperfect knowledge of the necessary process. The common people do not wait for the extraction of the sugar, but eat the canes green, which are sold in bundles in all the towns. The women, in particular, are very fond of them, and the consumption in this state, so detrimental to the sugar manufactories, is prodigious. They begin to ripen in October, but, in general, are not fit to be cut till November or December. The Arabic name of the sugar-cane is *kassab*.

Though Maillet was informed that the culture of the coffee-tree had been in vain attempted in Egypt*, I am convinced, that by more judicious experiments it might be made to thrive. The proximity of Arabia, where this shrub yields berries so fragrant, and the affinity between the soil and climate of the two countries, confirm the opinion, that many parts of Egypt are well adapted to the growth of the coffee-tree †, and that its fruit, excelling in flavour the produce of either of the Indies, would dispute the palm with the far-famed coffee of Yemen. There is also every reason to presume, that the aromatic plants, the different parts of which are known under the appellation of *spices*, would here find a suitable soil and propitious situations; and that, by the facility with which they might be propagated, they would complete the agricultural and commercial opulence of Egypt.

But with what superior splendour will Egypt shine by becoming a colony of France? Adjoining Africa on one side, and wealthy Asia on the other, the seas of the north and of the west seem to terminate on its shores; while the Indian ocean, after having washed the happy confines of Arabia, from which it is separated only by a short passage, loses itself in the Egyptian sands. It will be the centre and emporium of the commerce of the universe. The ancient cradle of

* Description de l'Égypte, partie. ii. p. 15.

† *Coffea Arabica*, L.

the arts and sciences will become the theatre of their power ; and the abode of their infancy will be the scene of their astonishing growth and perfection. To this exuberance of trade and of genius, the most precious treasures of vegetation, the immutable boons of Nature, will add permanent lustre. Uniting the various productions dispersed through our ancient colonies, Egypt will become the epitome of them all ; while its proximity to Europe will give it incalculable advantages. Humanity will not, as in the other colonies, have to shed tears over the luxuries of a prolific soil. Here Nature almost dispenses with labour, and man, with the slightest efforts, is enabled to enjoy her bounties.

At the moment when our possessions in the West Indies were a prey to discord and desolation ; when the enemies of France redoubled their exertions to snatch them from her dominion ; when neglected agriculture, instead of offering its produce, increased the troubles of the mother-country ; it was a great and noble conception to approximate them, and, in a manner, concentrate all their riches, by removing their trade to a land within the reach of a short voyage, and affording inappreciable resources.

It is said, that the appropriation of this highly interesting country is by no means an original idea. It had certainly been an object of the old government. I remember, when I was at Cairo, that a French officer, who was passing through that city in his way to India, was employed to collect information respecting the means best adapted to facilitate the conquest of Egypt. With that view he applied to the consul, who had seen no other part of the country than the road from Alexandria to Cairo ; and who, like the French merchants, had never exceeded the limits of the quarter to which they were confined. Plans, however, were drawn up and transmitted to Versailles ; where, according to custom, they were eternally buried in the public offices, the ordinary fate of similar productions.

It was reserved for the government of the French republic to execute, in an instant, what others considered as a prodigy to have conceived, and the maturity of which was left to the slow progress of time. Immortal glory and gratitude to the man, whose genius conceived the bold and sublime design, to the heroism with which it has been executed, and to the valour which guarantees the permanent possession of the richest and most extensive trade in the universe!

Fruit-trees of various species shade with their exuberant branches this land of delight*. To them many more might be added to increase and vary the abundance; while others, in a great measure abandoned by that supineness bordering upon apathy, which is the constant attendant upon slavery, might be restored and extended by an active and spirited cultivation. Among these is the olive-tree †, which has always been very scarce in Egypt, but might be propagated there with success. In former times, this tree grew only in the Heracleotic nome, or department, that is, near the lake Mæris, and in the gardens about Alexandria ‡. At present, a few of these plants are still to be seen in these districts, and some other parts of Lower Egypt. They grow to a greater size than in Europe, and their fruit is proportionally larger and more pulpous. The propagation of this tree would add another productive article to the already immense commerce of Egypt. The oil formerly made in this country was of a good quality, when proper precautions were used in the process; but if these were neglected, it contracted a strong smell §. From bad management in the preparation, the olive oil of the Levant is, in general, very indifferent, and fit to be used only in manufactures.

* The ancients entertained the same idea of Egypt:

“*Delicias videam, Nile jocosæ, tuas.*” OVID. TRIST. lib. iii. eleg. 2..

† *Olea Europæa*, L.

‡ Strabo. Geogr. lib. xxii..

§ See the excellent translation of Herodotus by Citizen Larcher, book ii. § 27; note 201 of the translator.

The fig-trees * yield an abundance of sweet and pulpy fruit, but of different qualities: this, however, depends rather upon the aspect of the plantations, than on the variety in the species. These figs are, in general, of an exquisite flavour.

But among the trees of Egypt there is none more widely dispersed than the date-tree †: it is every where to be found, in the Thebais and in the Delta; in the sands as well as in the cultivated districts. Although it requires little or no culture, it yields a considerable profit, on account of the immense consumption of its fruit. The date varies in quality; that which is produced in the environs of Rossetta is delicious, and boats are laden with it for the market of Cairo. The whole cluster of fruit is cut before it is quite ripe, when it is thrust into baskets made for the purpose, and having no other opening than a hole, through which the branching extremity of the cluster projects. In this situation the dates successively ripen. By pounding and kneading them, thick and solid black cakes are made, for the use of the caravans in their journies through the deserts. These cakes are so hard, that they must be cut with a hatchet; pieces of them, steeped in water, afford a cooling, and, at the same time, a nutritious beverage.

To climb trees which have no branches but at their top, and the straight and slender stem of which cannot support a ladder, the Egyptians employ a sort of girth fastened to a rope, that they pass round the tree. On this girth they seat themselves, and rest their weight; then, with the assistance of their feet, and holding the cord in both hands, they contrive to force the noose suddenly upwards, so as to catch the rugged protuberances with which the stem is symmetrically studded, and formed at the origin of the branch-like leaves, that are annually cut. By means of these successive springs,

* *Ficus carica*, L.—*Ang.* Common cultivated fig-tree.

† *Phoenix dactylifera*, L.—*Ang.* Date-bearing greater palm, or Indian date-tree.

the people of this country reach the top of the date-tree, where, still sitting, they work at their ease, either in lopping off the leaves, or gathering the clusters of fruit: they afterwards descend in the same manner.

The dates are not the only produce of this species of palm-tree; by hard beating its bark, its branch-like leaves, as well as the rind of its clusters of fruit, filaments are obtained, from which are manufactured ropes and sails for boats. The leaves serve likewise for making baskets and other articles. The very long rib of the branches, or leaves, is called in Arabic *dsjerid*. From its combined lightness and solidity, it is employed by the Mamalûks, in their military exercises, as javelins, which they throw at each other from their horses when at full speed.

During the stay I was now making at Rossetta, I met with a quantity of fruit greatly resembling the earth-nut, but of a much more agreeable flavour. The plant that produces it is a species of cyperus*. It is pulled up in the beginning of November, and fleshy tubercles, of the size of a hazel-nut, are separated from its slender roots. The Arabic name of these tubercles, or roots, is *hablezijs*, which signifies pleasing to the palate. They have, in fact, a sweet taste, and well deserve that name. This cyperus is cultivated in the environs of Rossetta, and the small tubercles are sent to Constantinople and other towns of the Levant, where they are in great request. The Egyptians express from them a lacteous juice, which they consider pectoral and emollient; and give them to nurses, in order to increase the quantity of their milk.

Two Turkish vessels from Constantinople having arrived in the port of Alexandria, occasioned considerable alarm among the Europeans, who knew that the plague, which had not desolated Egypt for up-

* *Cyperus esculentus*, L. Forskal, Flora Egypt.-arab. pag. xl. "Les plantes "singulières," says Granger (Voyage en Egypte, page 240.), are—"l'Abelasis, qui "ressemble au *sisyrrinchium* avec un gout de chataigne."

wards of twelve years, then raged with uncommon violence in the capital of the Ottoman empire. The French at Rossetta were preparing to shut themselves up. Such a determination would have laid me under great restraint; but the subsequent tidings that arrived from Cairo extricated me from this embarrassment. Intelligence was received, that Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey, supported by an Arabic prince, had re-entered Cairo, after having defeated their enemy, Ismael Bey, and forced him to fly into Syria. Upper Egypt being no longer infested by ferocious and undisciplined combatants, the roads were becoming less dangerous, and I was eager to avail myself of a moment of tranquillity, which, in these countries, is so very uncommon.

CHAPTER XXXII.

GREBE.—RAVENS.—RUINS AND FRAGMENTS OF ANTIQUITY.—TERANÉ.—VARIOUS SPECIES OF FISHES OF THE NILE.—ARRIVAL AT CAIRO.

ON the day of my departure for Cairo, I shot, on the Nile, near Rossetta, a bird which has a great affinity to the *river grebe*, or *chestnut* *. In Egypt it is called *farba rebeit* † (water-hen). Its length is ten inches and a half, that of the bill thirteen lines, that of the wings four inches nine lines, that of the legs, or rather the tarsi, eighteen lines.

In shape it resembles the grebes; the head small in proportion to the body; the bill pointed, almost straight, and only slightly incurved; the upper mandible a little longer than the lower; the nostrils oblong, and situated in the bottom of a large groove, extending to half the length of the bill; the wings short; the tail wanting; the leg, or rather the tarsus, flattened laterally and covered with scales, forming, on the hind part, a double denticulation, like that of a saw; the three anterior toes half-webbed, and furnished with a membrane divided in lobes; the membrane of the posterior toe rounded on each side; the claws broad, flattened, and, in some degree, resembling the nails of the human hand; that of the middle toe almost as broad as long, and the others much narrower; the tongue thick at the root, and nearly as broad as the bill.

Its colours are pretty much the same as the *chestnut*, the apparent difference being only the effect of climate. The river grebe being a

* *Castagneux*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 905. — *Colymbus minor*, L.

† The *h* must be strongly aspirated.

winter bird in our northern countries, must have experienced some change in its plumage, when taking up its abode in very hot regions.

In the Egyptian grebe, the crown of the head and all the neck are of a blackish brown; the feathers covering the upper part of the body are of the same colour, but tipped with rufous; the throat and under part of the neck are of a bright fawn colour, becoming gradually lighter towards the breast, which, as well as the belly, is of a silvery white; the lower part of the belly is gray; the sides of the body are variegated, blackish, white, and rufous; the lesser wing coverts, and the primary and tertial quill feathers, are blackish, and the secondary ones white. The bill is nearly black, except at the base of the lower mandible, where it is reddish. The legs, or rather the tarsi, as well as the toes, membranes, and claws, are of a blackish green; and the membranes are bordered with a deeper colour.

At this season, in the month of February, a few small flights of ravens* are seen in the environs of Rossetta, which do not appear there at any other time of the year. They mix familiarly with the flocks of crows, remaining with them on the ground in the vicinity of inhabited places.

On my voyage up the Nile, in my way to Cairo, I stopped at *Iagnoufs*, where I had been informed there were the remains of an ancient city. In fact, at some distance below that village, and not far from the bank of the river, I saw a considerable space of ground covered with ruins. Columns of granite are lying prostrate upon the surface of the earth, and magnificent vaults built of brick still re-

* *Corbeau*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 459.—*Corvus corax*, L.—N.B. I am at a loss to discover what bird Hasselquitz meant to designate (Voyage au Levant, traduit de l'Allemand, par M**, Paris 1769, partie ii. p. 20.) by the appellation of *corvus Egyptius, viridi maculatus, dorso medio cæruleo* (the Egyptian raven, spotted with green, and having a blue tinge on the middle of the back), which is of the size of a lark, builds its nest on trees, and feeds on insects. I have never met with this singular species of raven.

main entire. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood are continually loading their camels with the large fine bricks, which they obtain by demolishing these vaults. In pursuing this barbarous plan of devastation, they are daily finding medals, statues, and other fragments of antiquity; but, slaves to an absurd fanaticism, they instantly break in pieces all the statues, because, to use their own expression, these statues were the workmanship of *dogs*, meaning Europeans, and besides, the law prohibits them from the possession of all sorts of pictures and images. It was not in my power to stop long among these ruins: the ferocious beings who profane them by their presence, as well as by their destructive spirit, were beginning to assemble. I was therefore obliged to return to the water-side, in order to secure myself from the effects of their fury.

Having reached my boat, some of these mischievous *fellahs* came and offered to sell me a few fragments of antiquity, which had escaped their rage for demolition. I purchased from them the following articles:

1. An idol, representing a cat sitting, three inches two lines in height. It was of porcelain, and covered with a greenish enamel. (*See Plate X. Fig. 5.*) This idol was mutilated, the two hind legs of the animal being broken off.

2. A bust of a woman unknown, whose head-dress had been perforated, that it might be worn as an amulet. It is of terra cotta, of a reddish colour, and without any enamel. Its height is four inches three lines. (*See Plate XI. Fig. 2.*)

3. A head of a woman, likewise unknown, of the same reddish earth as the preceding. (*See Plate X. Fig. 6.*)

4. Two small figures of children, strangely muffled up, and resting upon a dolphin. This piece of sculpture appears to me to have been placed upon a fountain, or perhaps upon an urn. It is of white marble. The length of its base is nine inches three lines, and its height is five inches. (*See Plate XI. Fig. 6.*)

5. Ofiris holding the whip and the crooked truncheon, or Egyptian sceptre. This idol is two inches and an half in height. It is of porcelain, covered with a greenish gray enamel. (*See Plate XIII. Fig. 1.*)

6. A head of a woman unknown, in white stone; height, nine inches. (*Plate XIII. Fig. 4.*)

7. A head in black marble, five inches and a half high. It is a Vespasian, and was, perhaps, sculptured at the time when he was proclaimed emperor by the army in Egypt. His crown is decorated with flowers of the *lotus*. This figure probably represents Vespasian in the act of fulfilling some sacred function. However, when that emperor sacrificed in Memphis to the ox Apis, according to the Egyptian rites, his brow, by the account of the ancient historians, was encircled with a diadem. (*See Plate XIII. Fig. 2.*)

8. A head of a woman, whose character is not sufficiently expressed. It was probably intended to represent *Arfinoë*, the wife of Ptolemy Philadelphus. This head is of white marble, and four inches in height. (*See Plate XIII. Fig. 3.*)

The ruins in the environs of *Iagnoufs* probably indicate the site of the ancient city of *Taua*. They have not, to my knowledge, been mentioned by any traveller. Their situation is easily recognised by the tomb of a Turkish faint, which is built directly facing them, on the east bank of the Nile. The village of *Ikmas* stands opposite to them, on the west bank.

The wind having failed us, we were obliged to stop again at *Terané*, a place of which I have already spoken. I availed myself of this delay to have a view of it drawn, whence an idea may be formed of the manner in which the villages in this country are built. (*See Plate VII.*)

We met with several small fishing-boats. The fish they had on board consisted of *schalls*, *kaschoïés*, *berfés*, *karmouths*, *keschérés*, *schilbis*, *bouris*, and *sardines*, or *sprats*.

The *schall* is a species of *filurus*, which has never yet been described. (See Plate XIV. Fig. 2.) The body is naked and slippery; the head large and broad. The pole is covered with a bone, reaching to the first dorsal fin, on each side of which it terminates in a blunt point, as if cut square. This bone has a reddish skin, which extends to the eye. The remaining part of its length is naked, and full of small elevated points, like those of shagreen. The sides of the head are covered with a soft thick skin, which forms a border round the opercula of the gills. The rostrum is rounded. The upper jaw projects a little beyond the lower, and both are furnished with teeth, which, in the upper jaw, are hooked, and, in the lower, straight, and very closely set. The lips are very fleshy; the upper has two appendices, or beards, which are not much longer than the head; the under has four, much shorter, slender and unequal. The nostrils, which are round, and bordered by a small prominent membrane, are placed near the extremity of the rostrum. The eyes are sunk.

There are two fins on the back; the one has seven rays, the first of which is broad at its base, thick, bony, and serrated on the inside, a third of its length. It has also a few small denticulations towards the extremity of its exterior side. The second dorsal fin is fleshy, long, low, and terminates near the caudal fin. The tail is deeply forked, and its rays have very fine transverse interstices throughout their whole length. The anal fin consists of ten rays, united by a membrane; the ventral have only seven. The first ray of the pectoral fins is thick, bony, serrated on the upper side almost to the end, and on the lower from the middle to the extremity. The denticulations on the upper side are deep; on the lower shallow. This ray is also longer than the rest.

The lateral line is straight, and covered with small spots throughout the whole of its length.

The colour of this fish is a gray brown; the sides of the head are bluish;

blueish; the extremity of the rostrum, the under part of the head, the pectoral fins, and the cirrhi, are shaded with red; a semicircle of the same colour marks the origin of the caudal fin; and a very faint tinge of red is also visible near the tail.

The individual from which this description was taken, was fourteen inches eight lines in length, measured from the tip of the rostrum to the extremity of the caudal fin. Its greatest breadth was four inches, and its smallest thirteen lines. The cirrhi of the upper lip were three inches seven lines long; the exterior cirrhi on each side of the lower lip, sixteen lines; the interior, nine lines. The first dorsal fin was nineteen lines broad at the base, and two inches seven lines and a half high. The second, which is inserted twenty-one lines from the first, rose by an imperceptible curvature to the height of seven lines, and terminated three lines from that of the tail.

Upon opening this fish, I remarked that the air-bladder was formed of a thick yellow membrane, and had but one lobe; the stomach was entirely filled with a species of millet called *dourra**, some other seeds, and a mucilage, in which nothing more could possibly be discriminated, and which emitted a fetid odour somewhat like that of human excrement.

A fish without scales, with soft flesh, and living at the bottom of a muddy river, could not have been admitted in the dietetic system of the ancient Egyptians, whose priests were so scrupulously rigid in proscribing every aliment of an unwholesome quality. Accordingly, all the different species of *filuri* found in the Nile were prohibited. M. Paww pretends to have discovered the motive of this prohibition. He says that the flesh of fishes without scales increases the irritation of those diseases which have any affinity to the elephantiasis, or the hypochondria, because it thickens the blood, and di-

* *Holcus durra*, L.—See page 206.

minishes perspiration*. The ancients, however, kept *filuri* at Bubastis; but this very M. Pauw asserts, with great probability, that, being rejected by men, they served only for the sustenance of the sacred cats, which were very numerous in that city, and which the Egyptians, according to Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, fed with fish †. Be this as it may, the *schall* is at present consigned to the use of the lowest class of the people, and is, in fact, only fit to be considered as food for cats.

The *kaschoüé* is of a different quality, its flesh being both firm and delicate. (See Plate XIV. Fig. 3.) This fish is covered with scales, and at first sight greatly resembles the pike, with which it has often been confounded. Its jaws are less elongated than those of the pike, and its rostrum is short and obtuse, while that of the pike is slender and pointed. Besides, there is another difference which determines the distinction: the *kaschoüé* has a fin extending from the anus almost to the caudal fin; whereas the pike has a fin in the same part that is very narrow at its base.

It appears certain that this fish is the same as the *oxyrinchus* of the ancient Egyptians, as has been remarked by Bellon, who likewise mistook it for the pike ‡. This *oxyrinchus* was held in veneration in one part of Egypt, while in other districts it was looked upon with disgust. At present it is universally admired. Like the pike, it is voracious, and feeds on other fishes. It is a general observation, though no reason for it has yet been assigned, that while those quadrupeds which devour each other, are considered as improper food for man, from their habits of carnage having impregnated their flesh with

* Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et Chinois, tome i. p. 154.

† Ibid. tome i. p. 130.

‡ “ Le fleuve du Nile nourrit plusieurs autres poissons moult renommés, lesquels, toutefois, je ne veuil spécifier en ce lieu, sinon en tant que le brochet y est fréquent, et que nous avons difficulté à lui trouver une appellation antique, je veuil monstré qu’il fut anciennement appelé *oxyrinchus*.”—Bellon, Observations, liv. ii. chap. xxxii. p. 103.

a disgusting smell and flavour, the fishes of prey afford a more exquisite dish than any other of the finny tribes.

The engraving of the *kaschoïé* will give a clearer idea of its exterior form than can be conveyed by a long description. I shall, however, add, that the jaws are furnished, in front only, with little sharp teeth, and that the scales extend almost to the middle of the caudal fin. This fish is in general of a blueish gray; the blue tint, which is pretty strong along the back, grows lighter on the sides, and is shaded off into a whitish gray on the belly. The rostrum is red; and the head is covered with little blueish spots.

The *kaschoïé* is very common in the Nile; it is most frequently caught in the upper part of the river, and is one of the most plentiful sorts of fish in the markets of Cairo.

At first sight it appears to be of the number of those fishes of the Nile, of which Linnæus has made a distinct genus, under the name of *mormyrus*. We might, therefore, be particularly induced to consider it as of the same species with the *caschive* †, which that naturalist has described from Haffelquitz ‡. Nevertheless, on comparing the drawing of the *kaschoïé* with the description of the *caschive* of Haffelquitz, the reader will be convinced that these two fishes are not only of different species, but even of different genera, and that the former has characters which distinguish it from all the *mormyri*.

The *kaschoïé* is not the only fish approaching to this new genus. *Figure 1* of *Plate XV.* represents another fish of the Nile, bearing a still greater resemblance to the *mormyri*, particularly to that species

† *Mormyrus anguilloïdes*, operculis nullis: pinna caudali bifida, obtusa.—*Mormyrus caschive*, rostro tubuloso, pinna dorsali longitudinali, cauda bifurca.—Artes. Gen. Piscium, p. 632.—Paul Lucas (Voyage, tome iii. p. 197.) has given an exceedingly bad drawing of the *kaschoïé*. He adds, very justly, that it is one of the best fishes of the Nile.

‡ Voyage au Levant.

which

which Linnæus has named *cyprinoïdes* *; but there are also such differences between them as will not admit of their being confounded, as may easily be perceived by comparing the description which Linnæus has given of his *cyprinoïdes*, with the drawing of the *berfê*, as well as with the following particulars.

Its name of *berfê*, which, in Arabic, signifies a weasel, is derived from the elongated form of its head and rostrum, which has some resemblance to the sharp muzzle of the weasel. The lips are thick and round, and the mouth is rather small. Each of the jaws is furnished with teeth, which are straight, oblong, and not very closely set. Those of the lower jaw are larger than those of the upper. The eyes are round and small; the nostrils are double, and placed near the extremity of the rostrum. The head is covered with a smooth and naked skin, and the rest of the body is fortified with very small scales. The lateral line is strongly marked, straight, and divides the body into two nearly equal parts, throughout its whole length; the upper part appears to be the smaller of the two.

The pectoral fins have ten rays, the dorsal fin has twenty-four; the anal thirty-eight: and, lastly, the ventral fins have only six. The other particulars of its conformation are so well expressed in the plate, that to repeat them would be superfluous.

The top and upper half of the sides of the head are of a shining blackish hue, with little gray spots, scarcely discernible. The rest of the head is blue tinged with red, and speckled with black. The eyes are of a blueish gray, and the back is blackish. This doubtful colour grows fainter on the sides of the body, and becomes gray towards the belly, and in some places has deeper tints. The pectoral fins are gray; the ventral are of the same colour at their base, and their extremity is blackish. All the other fins are of the same dusky shade.

* *Mormyrus cyprinoïdes*, operculis nullis; pinna caudali bifida, acuta.—*Mormyrus cyprinoïdes*, cauda bifida, acuta. Arted. Gen. Piscium, p. 632.

The *berfè* never grows to a large size. That from which I was enabled to give this drawing and description was only six inches and a half in length; and though some individuals of the species may be a little larger, none of them much exceed these dimensions. It has a heart of a triangular form, a gall-bladder, the intestinal tube not much convoluted, with a long appendage, a little below the stomach, and a very large air-bladder of a silvery hue.

By casting his eye on *Figure 2* of *Plate XV.* the reader will perceive another fish of the same genus as the *schall* already described, that is to say, of the *silurus*. The Egyptians give it the Arabic name of *karmouth*. It is one of the most common, and at the same time one of the worst fish of the Nile; its flesh having, like that of the *schall*, neither flavour nor firmness; and being seldom eaten but by the poorest class of people. Its greatest length scarcely ever exceeds two feet. The muscles of its tail are very strong; and perhaps there is no fish more tenacious of life. I saw one which, though it had been a whole day out of the water, and had received several blows on the head with a hammer, was still full of life and vigour. When cut in two, the divided parts of its body retained the power of motion, and its œsophagus contracted half an hour after it had been separated from all the surrounding parts.

Hasselquitz is the first who has noticed and described this species of *silurus* *. I shall content myself with mentioning those characters which are not indicated by the engraving; namely, the shape of

* Voyages au Levant, trad. part. ii. p. 50. *Silurus carmuth Niloticus*.—*Silurus anguillaris pinna dorsali unica, radiis 70, cirris 8*. L. Arted. Gen. Pisc. Append. p. 565. N. B. It appears to me that this fish has, in the *Synonima*, been improperly identified with another *silurus* of the Ganges and the Orontes, described by Gronovius (Zooph. No. 322. tab. 8. f. 3, 4.) under the denomination of *clarias*. The differences of these two fishes are, in fact, so obvious, that it would be difficult to class them together in the same species.

certain parts that are less conspicuous, and the colours with which this fish may be more properly said to be obscured than embellished.

The *karmouth* is not furnished with scales, but is covered with a smooth and slippery skin. Its eyes are round and small, and its lips thick. Its nostrils are double and tubulated. Under the lower jaw is seen the beginning of a transverse aperture, which resembles the mouth of a shark, but does not penetrate to the inside. The tongue is thick and fleshy, and the jaws are armed internally with a double range of little sharp and cutting teeth, resembling those of a rasp. The upper jaw has, likewise on the palate, a third row of teeth similar to the others, disposed in the form of an inverted crescent. The aperture of the gills is placed rather below, than on the sides of the head. The opercula are bordered by a thick skin, which covers them exactly. The pectoral fins have ten rays, the first of which is thick and bony. I counted sixty-four on the dorsal fin; twenty-two on the caudal; six in each of the ventral fins; and in the anal fin fifty-four. Between the anal fin and the anus there was a pretty long appendice, broad at the base, and terminating in a point. The lateral line divides the body into two parts, the upper being rather the larger. It is accompanied by a row of little white spots; and parallel lines of similar spots descend, at intermediate distances, from the top of the back to the lateral line. Some others are also seen, but much less distinct and less regular, towards the head and below the lateral line.

The stomach is large. The liver is divided into two lobes, red and flattened, between which lies the gall-bladder, elongated into the shape of a pear. The intestinal tube is but little convoluted, and still less sinuous. The roe of the male is oblong, compressed, and of a reddish colour. The top of the head is of a deep green. The part of the body above the lateral line is variegated or marbled with gray and a faint black, but the latter tint predominates, and both grow lighter on the lower part of the body. The belly and the

under jaw are of a reddish gray. The cirrhi are red at the base, and the remaining part is blackish. The irides of the eyes are yellow, and the pupils black. The pectoral fins are blackish above, and divided transversely by a broad red stripe. At their base they are of a reddish gray, in the middle red, and blackish at the extremity. The dorsal and caudal fins are gray tinged with black. The middle of the latter is longitudinally marked with red. The anal and ventral fins are reddish near their insertion. Every other part of them is gray, intermixed with blackish tints. The appendice near the pinna ani is reddish, and its extremity is of a bright red.

Hasselquitz, the Swedish naturalist, is also the first who has described a species of perch of the Nile, called in Egypt *keschééré* *. This likewise is one of those fishes, a very imperfect drawing of which is to be found in the Travels of Paul Lucas, under the denomination of *variole*; the name that is given it by Europeans †. Gmelin has also published a drawing of it ‡, but none of them possess the accuracy of that contained in *Plate XV. Fig. 4.*

There is every reason to presume that this fish is the same as that called by the ancient Greeks *latos*, and held sacred in the Egyptian nome of *Latopolis*, where the use of it as food was strictly prohibited. M. Pauw seems to establish a difference between the *keschééré* and the *variole* of the Europeans §. It is nevertheless the same fish, under two different names, owing to the diversity of the languages. From this mistake the same author is inclined to think that the *keschééré* is the fish called by the Greeks *oxyrinchus*, which was likewise held sacred in a part of ancient Egypt. It has already been seen

* *Perca Nilotica*, *Arabis keschr*; *Gallis variole*. Voyages au Levant, trad. part. ii. p. 50.—*Perca Nilotica*, L.—*Perca Nilotica*, *maxilla inferiore longiore; lamina superiore operculi anterius aculeata*. *Arted. Gen. Pisc.* p. 333.

† Voyages, tome iii. p. 197.

‡ Itin. iii. p. 344. tab. xxv. fig. 3.

§ Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. p. 128.

that the *kafchoüé* had a much greater affinity to this *sharp-nosed* fish, as the *keschééré* approaches nearer to the *latos*.

The Arabic word *keschééré* signifies *scale of fish*, and this name has been given to it from the great quantity of scales with which it is covered almost to the extremity of the caudal fin. This is one of the best, as well as one of the largest fishes of the Nile. It grows to the size of the tunny, and, according to Paul Lucas, it is sometimes found to weigh three hundred pounds. All those that I ever saw fell very far short of this weight. Their flesh was certainly more delicate than that of the larger ones, which must necessarily be harder, more indigestible, and perhaps unwholesome; and as it is in the upper part of the Nile that fishes of that enormous size are met with, it is probable that this was the motive of the prohibition of their being used as an article of food at *Latopolis*, which was above Thebes, and near the twenty-fifth degree of latitude.

This fish is also extremely voracious, devouring many other species, of which it depopulates the Nile, and is one of the principal causes of the inconsiderable quantity of fishes found in the river, in proportion to its width, and the extent of its course.

The small-sized *keschééré*, which is the most common in the northern part of the Nile, is distinguished by a particular name, *bemmor*. This, for I never had an opportunity of seeing any of the very large ones, has the inside of its jaws beset with very slender teeth, so close and so small, that they make no other impression on the finger than that of a fine file.

A third species, for the knowledge of which, among others, we are likewise indebted to Hasselquitz, is the *schilbi*, a fish that is pretty common in the Nile. It is without scales, and of the genus of the *silurus**. However, it is better eating than some of those I

* *Silurus schilbe Niloticus*, Hasselq. Voyages, part. ii. p. 50.—*Silurus mystus*, L.—*Silurus mystus*, pinna dorsali unica, radiis sex, cirris octo. Arted. Gen. Pisc. Append. p. 563.

have already described. (*See Plate XV. Fig. 3.*) I can add nothing to the description given of it by Linnæus, after Hasselquitz, nor to the drawing I had made of it, except that the upper jaw of the *schilbi* is provided with two rows of little sharp hooked teeth; that the under jaw has but one row of these recurved teeth; that its whole body is of a blackish gray colour, deeper above the lateral line than below it, with a few shades of red on the rostrum, and at the base of the anal, pectoral, and caudal fins; and lastly, that the iris of the eye is of a golden yellow.

The *bouri*, although frequently caught in the Nile, is nevertheless a salt-water fish. From the coasts of the Mediterranean it goes a considerable way up that river, and is found even above Cairo. It is the mullet*, from the spawn of which *botargo* is prepared; this fish is too well known to require any farther description. Besides, a representation of an individual of this species is given in *Plate XVI. Fig. 3.* Though its flesh is not firm, it is tolerably good eating. Those I saw in Egypt did not exceed ten inches in length.

Another salt-water fish, as well known as the mullet, in like manner quits the Mediterranean, to ascend the Nile. The sprat or *sardine* †, which bears the same name in Egypt as in France, is

* *Mugil cephalus*, L.---*Mugil cephalus*, *pinna dorsali anteriore quinque radiata*. Arted. Gen. Pisc. p. 225. On this I shall observe, that the number of five rays, given by Artedius, as well as Linnæus and Hasselquitz, to the first dorsal fin of the mullet, is not the same as I remarked on the individuals that I saw of this species. I found, as did Gronovius and Brunniche, only four rays in that fin.

† *Clupea sprattus*, L.---*Clupea quadriuncialis maxilla inferiore longiore, ventre acutissimo*. Arted. Gen. Pisc. p. 39.---*Clupea alosa*, Hasselq. Voyages au Levant, trad. part. ii. p. 53. The name of *sardinn* is also given by the Arabs of Yemen to a fish of the same genus, which frequents the Red Sea in shoals, and which Forkal (Descrip. Animal. Eryp.-arab. p. 72.) has described under the denomination of *clupea balama*.

caught from the several mouths of that river, as high up as Cairo. The fishermen whom we happened to meet had taken a greater quantity of this than of any other kind of fish. Most of the individuals which I bought were ten inches long and three broad. These dimensions, so much exceeding those of the sprats caught on the coast of France, which are not more than four inches in length, no doubt induced Hasselquitz * to consider the sprat of the coasts and river of Egypt, rather as a shad than as a sprat. Nevertheless, though these two fishes are of the same genus, they have some specific characters by which they may be distinguished; and all those of the sprat perfectly agree with this fish of the Nile, as will appear from *Figure 4, of Plate XVI.*

However this may be, the sprat of the Nile is covered with pretty large scales of a beautiful azure blue on the upper part of the body, and shining with a silvery lustre on the lower parts. The head is variegated with different colours, and the belly is white; the jaws are without teeth. The flesh of this fish is by no means firm, and the prodigious number of small bones which it contains, renders it unpleasant to eat. According to Hasselquitz, the Egyptians stuff it with marjoram, and fry it, when it is almost putrid. In the whole course of my journey I never saw it dressed in this manner.

While I was employed in examining these different species of the fishes of Egypt, a favourable wind filling the sails of my boat, it rapidly ploughed the stream of the river. A forest of masts, with their lofty lateen yards, soon announced to me that I was approaching the port of Cairo, which is always crowded with different kinds of craft. I landed at *Boulac*, a pleasant town, built on the east side of the harbour, and hired asses to carry me and my companions to Cairo, which is only half a league distant. The road

* In the place before quoted.

leading to it appeared to be one of its streets ; and the crowd and bustle indicate the entrance of a populous and commercial city. At length I arrived at the retired quarter occupied by the French, and took possession of my former lodging, in the house recently quitted by the French consul.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CITY OF CAIRO.—ITS INHABITANTS.—EUROPEANS SETTLED THERE.—ITS SITUATION.—ITS GOVERNMENT.—SUMMARY OF THE REVOLUTIONS OF EGYPT SINCE THE TIME OF AUGUSTUS.—MAMALUKS.—PASHA OF CAIRO.—APPROACHING DOWNFALL OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE.—ALI BEY.—MURAD BEY.

TO imagine that Cairo, in Arabic *Maſr**, bears any reſemblance to the great cities of Europe, would be to form an erroneous idea. The houſes have neither the form nor the elegance of ours; the ſtreets are unpaved, very narrow, and not built in ſtraight lines; the ſquares, which are large and irregular, without ornamental edifices, or any ſort of monument to determine or embellish the centre, are, in general, vaſt baſins of water, during the inundation of the Nile, and fields or gardens when the river has retired to its bed. Crowds of men, of various nations, hurry about and preſs through the ſtreets, diſputing the way with the horſe of the Mamalûk, the mule of the lawyer, the numerous camels which ſupply the place of carriages, and the aſſes, which are the animals moſt commonly uſed for riding.

This city, which is of a greater length than breadth, covers a ſpace of about three leagues †. It was inhabited by Turks, Mamelûks, Greeks, Syrians, Arabs, Copts, Moors, Jews, and a few Europeans; and its population might be eſtimated at four hundred thouſand ſouls. Inhabitants of a different kind had likewiſe

* “*Miſr*, without an equal. *Miſr*, the mother of the world.” Browne’s Travels, page 46.

† The author, probably, means three leagues in circumference.

established their abode in the midst of this confused assemblage of various nations. The terraced roofs of the houses were covered with kites and crows, which lived there in perfect security, and mingled their sharp cries and raucous croakings with the tumult of a restless and noisy populace. The disgusting vulture, the *vultur percnopterus** of naturalists, the *ak bobas* of the Turks, the *Pharaoh's hen* of the Europeans, augmented this singular and dismal society. Feeding only on reptiles and offal, these filthy birds are, fortunately, too dastardly to attack others of a more interesting nature. The plaintive and amorous turtle had no greater cause to dread the talons of the vulture than the violence of man, but entered the houses of the inhabitants, giving them, by a display of domestic cares and affection, practical, though unprofitable, lessons of love and tenderness.

The splendour and profusion of luxury was contrasted with the rags and nakedness of misery; the extreme opulence of the rulers with the frightful poverty of the most numerous class. The riches that commerce bestowed on the intermediate order of people were either buried, or carefully concealed; those who had acquired wealth durst not enjoy it, but in a clandestine manner, from the apprehension of exciting the unrestrained covetousness of power, and of exposing themselves to the extortions which are sanctioned by a barbarous government, under the name of *avaries*, and which, in spite of the most mysterious precautions, they could not always contrive to avoid.

However brilliant might be the exterior appearance of those in power, they were not the less ignorant and savage; the garb of luxury was no less the cloak of the most complete barbarism; and if this appeared still more hideous and ferocious in a populace very prone to mischief, it was only because it was here exposed to full view, and that the eye was not dazzled by the delusive lustre of

* The Egyptian aquiline vulture.

magnificence. At Cairo a few arts were exercised by foreigners ; mechanical trades were far from having attained any degree of perfection ; and the sciences were there altogether unknown. The two extremes are in many points very nearly connected. The Bey and the meanest individual are equally fanatical, superstitious, and illiterate. To be able to read and write were reckoned great accomplishments, and, with arithmetic, were confined to merchants and men of business. On the other hand, the Mahometan priests, buried in the gloomy labyrinth of scholastic theology, were endeavouring to understand and comment upon the reveries of the Koran. The cultivation of the sciences in the capital of Egypt did not extend beyond these limits ; and any attempt to enlarge them would have been not only a fruitless, but a dangerous enterprise. To possess a greater share of information would have been a crime. Knowledge would have been stifled in the bud, never again to shoot forth, had not the French undertaken to release it from its confinement, and to favour its expansion ; for, according to the philosophic reflection of Volney, when knowledge tends to nothing, no exertion is made to acquire it, and the mind remains in a state of barbarous ignorance*.

No where, in fact, could the people be more barbarous than at Cairo. Foreigners, persecuted, and even personally ill-treated, under the most frivolous pretences, lived there in perpetual fear. The French had established several mercantile houses, and occupied a small enclosed quarter, which was shut up by a large gate, guarded by a few janizaries. I shall observe by the way, that the whole city of Cairo was divided in like manner into separate quarters. The Europeans denominated these divisions or enclosures *countries*, and that in which the French were confined, and where they were more than once besieged, was called the *country of the Franks*. Here

* Voyages en Egypte et en Syrie. Etat Politique de l'Egypte.

our countrymen, remote from all assistance, and every mean of protection, passed their days in a state of continual inquietude. The temporary satisfaction resulting from the success of their commercial speculations, was suddenly checked by the invariable prospect of an approaching *avanie*; and the sums or presents with which they were compelled to purchase an insecure tranquillity, owing to the almost daily changes among the officers of the government, greatly diminished the profits, which, although immense on certain occasions, ultimately became very inconsiderable, being frequently reduced by a ruinous multiplicity of incidental circumstances. Confined to their *country*, these merchants, continually a prey to anxiety, and too often not without reason, a striking example of what the love of gain can produce, were obliged to wear the oriental habit. Woe to the European who ventured to appear in the streets in the dress of his own country! He would soon have fallen a victim to his imprudence, and would infallibly have been knocked down or murdered.

It was not enough for them to be clothed in the long garments of the East, it was also necessary that some part of their dress should be a distinguishing mark, or, to speak more correctly, the badge of contempt and proscription. The head-dress of the Europeans was a *talpack*, a sort of high hairy cap, peculiarly assigned to the *Franks*. For some time past the more enterprising English had introduced among them the *seste*, or head-dress of the Druses, consisting of a large piece of striped silk of different colours, decorated with fringe, which is rolled round the head in the form of a turban. The French, however, had not dared to adopt this innovation, which, by giving them a nearer resemblance to the other people of the East, would have rendered less conspicuous the mark of infamy with which the most savage tyranny had debased them, and by which they were exposed to inevitable insults. Another indispensable precaution was not to wear garments of green, or to have that colour in any part of their

their drefs. This would have been a criminal profanation, the punishment of which would have been both prompt and terrible. Green, which was the favourite colour of Mahomet, is ftill referved exclusively for his numerous defcendants, and for thofe who, by frequent pilgrimages to the tomb of the Prophet, have deferved to be ranked among his chofen difciples.

In the few excursions which our merchants made out of their *country*, mounted upon affes, fear was ever at their back. They were under the neceffity of paying particular attention to perfons who were either before or behind them. If a Mamalûk, a prieft, or a man in office, appeared, they made way, difmounted, placed their right hand upon their breaft, as a mark of refpect, and durft not proceed on their way till the exacting and haughty Muffulman had paffed on, and then only to repeat, in a few moments, the fame irk-fome ceremony. When from abfence of mind they chanced to neglect thefe abject duties of flavery, a very inhuman method was employed to bring the performance of them to their recollection. A clafs of domestics, called *cavouafs*, armed with great fticks, fix feet in length, and clad in a long black robe, with the sleeves tucked up under the arm-pits, by means of a cord croffing on the back, attended on foot the men in power, and with heavy blows reminded the Franks of their inattention. Of two French merchants with whom I was acquainted at Cairo, the one had his leg, and the other his neck broken, in confequence of an omiffion of this tyrannical *étiquette*.

Such being the alarms and agonizing fears which almoft inceffantly fucceeded each other, an idea may be formed of the difagreeable and dangerous fituation of Europeans refident at Cairo, as well as of the baneful and fhocking character of the government. To a foreigner it was, in reality, the abode of defolation, dread, and danger; whence Haffelquitz, with equal truth and fhrewdnefs, ob-
ferved,

ferred, that whatever crime a man might have committed, a temporary residence at Cairo would be a sufficient expiation*.

The government with which Egypt was at this time oppressed, was, in fact, of a very extraordinary nature. With the forms of an aristocratic, and even of a democratic constitution, it was most arbitrary, despotic, and cruel. It consisted of twenty-four Beys, or *Sangiacks*, though for many years past their number had not been complete. One of them became governor-general, or *sheick-el-belled*, that is, a tyrant without control, without laws, and without any rules but those of his own will and pleasure. They had all been Mamalûks, pages, or slaves of honour. The Mamalûks were not natives of Egypt, but were brought very young from Georgia, Circassia, and other parts of the Ottoman empire, where they were purchased by the merchants to be resold at Cairo. Some few of them were Nubians, and consequently black. These slaves were bought by the Beys, and by them educated under their own roof. The first object was to have them instructed in the Mahometan faith, and by circumcision to invalidate the baptism which the greater part of them had received as Christians. They were taught to manage a horse, and to excel in every sort of military exercise. The power of the Beys was proportionate to the number of Mamalûks who formed their household. All the offices of state were filled by these Mamalûks; and the favour of their masters advanced them more or less rapidly to the most important employments, and at length to sovereign power. To attain this, it was necessary to be a Mamalûk, that is, the native of a foreign country, as even their children did not enjoy the right of succession.

This singular government had existed from the time of the conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans; but it was now become a mere

* Lettre à Linnæus, datée du Caire, le 7 Septembre 1750, et insérée dans la traduction du Voyage au Levant d'Hasselquitz, part. ii. p. 154.

shadow of that of the ancient Mamalûks, under their sultans, whose reign closed with the unfortunate Toman Bey, as the dominion of the modern Mamalûks has just terminated with Murad Bey. The history of the frequent revolutions of Egypt would fill volumes; but a succinct account of the principal events by which they have been signalized, from the time of Augustus to the conquest of the emperor Selim, will not be considered as a digression in the work of a traveller, who is desirous of diffusing the knowledge he has acquired of the countries that have been the object of his observation. This historical abstract, the most concise which I have read, is taken from the Memoirs of the *ci-devant* Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres*.

“ When the race of the Ptolemies became extinct in the person of Cleopatra, the kingdom of Egypt sunk into a Roman province. The three sons of Constantine having at his death made a partition of his dominions, Egypt fell to the lot of Constantine, the second of these princes.

“ Theodosius having reunited the whole empire under his sway, made another partition of it between his two sons. Arcadius obtained the eastern part, and consequently Egypt, which continued under the dominion of the Greek emperors till the year 641, the nineteenth of the hegira.

“ In this year, Omar, the third Caliph, commissioned Amrou-Ben-el-Has to subject Egypt to the rising empire of the Mussulmans, which he accomplished by making himself master of Alexandria, after a siege of fourteen months.

“ The dynasty of the Ommiades terminating in the year 749, the Abbassides retained the possession of Egypt till the revolt of Ahmed-

* Tome xxi. p. 559. Extrait du Mémoire sur la Conquête de l’Egypte, par Sélim, premier du nom, Empereur des Ottomans, par M. Tercier, 17 Mars 1747. *Translated.*

“ Ben-Toulon, whose successors, the Toulonides, reigned only
 “ thirty-seven years, being dethroned by the Caliphs of Bagdad.

“ Saladin, a Curdeen by birth, availing himself of the dissensions
 “ between the Fatimites and the Abbassides, took Egypt from the
 “ latter, and erected a dynasty of the Aiöubites. The family of the
 “ Abbassides, however, remained under the dominion of these usurpers ;
 “ and one of them was always permitted to enjoy the empty title of
 “ Caliph.

“ Muffafer-Touran-Schah, the last of the Aiöubites, was absent at
 “ the time of the death of his father Salah-Nuginmeddin, by whom
 “ Saint Louis was taken prisoner. His mother Schagereddar, a
 “ native of Turkey, and a woman of abilities, for some time go-
 “ verned Egypt ; the officers of the army, won by her munifi-
 “ cence, having delegated to her the sovereign authority till the return
 “ of her son. She afterwards married a Turcoman, named Azzeddin.
 “ The Mamalûks, suspecting that Touran-Schah meditated some de-
 “ sign injurious to them, assassinated him in the second month of
 “ his reign in the year 1250, and raised Azzeddin to the vacant
 “ throne. He also was assassinated by one of his wife’s eunuchs,
 “ after a reign of seven years and eleven months.

“ Salah-Nuginmeddin established the military institution of the
 “ Mamalûks, a name which, in Arabic, signifies slave. He ac-
 “ cordingly formed it of the slaves brought by the Tartars to Cairo
 “ for sale. The greater part of them were Circassians, which occa-
 “ sioned their being called indifferently Circassians, or Mamalûks.
 “ They became so powerful, that, according to some Arabic authors,
 “ they raised one of their own body to the throne, in the year 1381.
 “ He was called Aboufaid-Berkouk, or Eddhaber-Berkouk, a name
 “ which had been given him by his master, as expressive of
 “ his courage. This was the last dynasty that reigned in Egypt ;
 “ the death of Toman Bey, who was the twenty-ninth of its sul-

“ tans, and the submission of this kingdom to the Ottomans, having
 “ terminated the empire of the Mamalûks.

“ Toman Bey, betrayed, and seeing his troops dispersed by the
 “ fire of the enemy, fled in disorder to Toura, where he was joined
 “ by about seven thousand Mamalûks.

“ The march of the emperor had afforded Chair Bey an oppor-
 “ tunity of surprising the citadel and city of Cairo, whence he sent
 “ a detachment in pursuit of Toman Bey. Ahmed does not mention
 “ the date of the capture of Cairo. Maillet, in his *Description de*
 “ *l’Egypte*, says, it was on Tuesday the 27th of January 1517,
 “ that Toman Bey was found concealed in a morafs, where the
 “ Arabs thought him in safety, and that he was hanged by order of
 “ Selim. That prince, however, was at Chanaka, in the month
 “ of February 1516, which proves the inaccuracy of the date given
 “ by Maillet, who is likewise mistaken respecting the death of
 “ Toman Bey.”

The Mamalûks, inflamed with the ambition of attaining supreme authority, neglected nothing to please their masters, and procure from them those employments which were the first step to their future preferment. They who had deserved favours, which generally depended on a criminal caprice, considered themselves as peculiarly fortunate. Their rise was rapid, and they soon obtained a place among the small number of those who enjoyed the administration of the government. They then exerted themselves to collect partisans, to acquire, or rather to extort wealth, to increase their military household, and to gain the summit of absolute power, the office of *sheick el belled*. On such occasions, intrigue, perfidy, treason, and the most secret artifices, were employed. These Beys, when they had, by all the means of corruption, secured a powerful party, have been known to visit the governor-general with every external mark of friendship and respect, and, during a calm conversation, to stab him on his sofa in the midst of his guards, who, without shewing the

smallest disposition to defend his life, or avenge his death, have kissed the hands of the assassins, and proclaimed him sovereign. The example of their predecessors did not check their ambitious career, though a similar fate awaited them, and in a few months after their usurpation they might expect to be hurled from the seat of power, or become the victims of assassination.

It is not difficult to conceive, that in these frequent convulsions of the government, oppression still continued to be the lot of the people. The ferocious Mamalûks considered them only as proper instruments to second their avarice and ambition. Commerce was, in their eyes, nothing more than a productive mine, from which they drew at pleasure, but without prudence or reflection, the riches they employed in the acquisition of consequence and power. The Beys harassed with their demands the several governors dispersed throughout every part of Egypt, who, in their turn, desolated the country by their partial exactions. Agriculture, oppressed, and exhausted by the infliction of repeated wounds, was compelled to furnish the means of gratification to the passions of the despots at Cairo, while the earth, almost desolated, was frequently reduced to repine at her own fecundity.

But the people of Egypt, debased and cruelly tormented by a pretended government, remained neuter and indifferent amidst the most terrible commotions, never interfering in the quarrels of the Beys, or in the perpetual wars in which they were reciprocally engaged. The streets of Cairo were frequently the theatre of the furious and bloody conflicts between the competitors for power and their partisans. The tradesman neither quitted nor shut up his shop; and the mechanic worked coolly at his door, without giving himself the smallest concern respecting the combatants, or the issue of the contest. The inhabitants of Cairo, certain of experiencing the same grievances; whoever might prove the conqueror, cared little about the name he bore, and testified neither joy nor regret at the accession or defeat of any one of their rulers; while the latter, being, on their part, well assured

assured that the people would remain in a state of neutral indifference, never disturbed them on such critical occasions, but reserved all their fury for their ambitious opponents.

These perpetual dissensions were fomented by an envoy from the Ottoman Porte, a pasha whom it had resident at Cairo, in order to preserve a shadow of its ancient authority. The sole employment of this officer, who winked at the degradation of his own dignity, consisted in receiving and transmitting to the Grand Signior whatever voluntary tributes he could collect, and in sowing and cherishing discord among the Beys, that their united strength might not entirely deprive the Sultan of the phantom of power which he still possessed in Egypt.

The viziers and pashas employed upon this dishonourable mission were, in fact, in a sort of exile. Whenever the *sheick el belled* was dissatisfied with the governor, he dispatched to him a messenger, clothed in a long black robe, who abruptly entered the pasha's apartment, and without any explanation whatever, turned up the carpet of his divan, or of the eminence upon which are placed the cushions serving as seats, according to the custom of the East. This was a signal, or tacit order, informing the representative of the *Sublime Porte*, that he was dismissed, and must instantly quit the castle. Possessing no means of resistance, he was compelled to submit. The number of Turks he brought with him was but small; and the Ottoman troops, which are by no means formidable in Egypt, were commanded by Mamalûks. Accordingly the pasha, without reply or remonstrance, quietly walked out of the castle, on the slightest intimation of the pleasure of those whom he was appointed to command. The Bey governor instantly declared himself *caïmacan*, or lieutenant of the pasha, apprizing the Porte of the change that had taken place; and the cabinet of Constantinople, without any inquiry, sent another officer, destined to suffer the same humiliation, while
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the envoy who had been thus arbitrarily dismissed, was thenceforth abandoned to disgrace.

Sometimes the Beys, not contented with having dismissed the pasha, also stripped him of his wealth, and had him dragged to prison. In this manner, while I was in Egypt in 1778, Murad Bey, on his re-entering Cairo, treated Mehemet Vizier, a man of a mild disposition and respectable character, who had been so imprudent as to side with Ismael Bey against Murad.

Although the authority which the Porte had the appearance of exercising in Egypt was chimerical, it was, nevertheless, displeasing to the actual despots of that country. The smallest semblance of dependency was irksome to them; and their sole object was to obtain for themselves the throne of the sultans. This was the favourite project of the weak, but ambitious Ali Bey; and Murad Bey, notwithstanding the fruitless expedition undertaken, in the summer of 1786, by the famous Captain Pasha Haffan, had begun to carry it into execution, by divesting the government of Constantinople of every sort of influence.

Such, however, was the puerile and degrading power which the Ottoman Porte pretended to retain in Egypt, and which now seems to excite its regret to such a degree, as to determine it to abandon its ancient allies, and to throw itself into the arms of its natural enemies. When too late, it will be sensible of its error. The downfall of its empire, a huge and overgrown colossus of despotism and anarchy, is not far distant. Its approaching ruin will rouse the Turks from their lethargic stupidity; and they will not perceive the perfidy employed by the enemies of France to precipitate them into the abyss into which they are fallen, until they have reached the bottom.

The first of the Mamalûks who, about the year 1770, conceived the plan of for ever emancipating Egypt from the unobtrusive authority

rity of the court of Constantinople, was Ali Bey; and he would have obtained his object, had he not perished by the foulest ingratitude, and, above all, had he not been the victim of bad advice. He committed many great faults, which, however, were rather those of his minister than his own. His confidence was entirely placed in a Venetian merchant named *Rofetti*, a man of neither an enlarged mind, nor of extensive views, and whose abilities were too confined to embrace the whole of a plan which was to change the political face of an important country, and to establish in it an entirely new system. The ineffectual attempts of the Bey had rendered his name famous throughout Europe, where he became the subject of stories of every kind; for instance, it was said that he was born in Germany, a country in which he never set his foot; that his name was *Julius Leonard*; that he had served as a common trooper in the regiment of Platen, and deserted from it to enter into the Austrian service, which he quitted by again deserting; and that, at length, his fickle disposition having carried him to Constantinople, where he embraced the Mahometan religion, this adventurer proceeded to Egypt, and found means to get himself placed at the head of the government*.

Ali Bey was born in Natolia, a province of the Turkish empire. Like the other Mamalûks, he had been brought, at an early age, into Egypt, and purchased by a man in power. Part of his history may be seen in the *Lettres sur l'Egypte*, by Savary †. Though it could not be written with more elegance, it might have been related with more truth. Nevertheless, if the extravagant praises which that traveller bestows on the character and genius of his hero were omitted, and more particularly if the romantic and fabulous adven-

* This absurd fable is to be found in a work printed at Paris in 1775, intitled, *Anecdotes Africaines, depuis l'Origine ou la Découverte des differens Royaumes qui composent l'Afrique, jusqu'à nos Jours.*

† Tome ii. page 209.

ture of the young and beautiful Maria were suppressed, the principal events of this Mamalûk's political life would form an interesting history. Egypt was, in fact, indebted to him for a short interval of security. He had, as I have already mentioned, declared a war of extermination against robbers of every kind; and he is certainly to be commended for the vigorous measures he took to establish a police in a country that had been so long a prey to licentiousness and plunder. But this Bey was almost as ignorant as the other Mamalûks; like them, he was subject to paroxysms of cruelty; and, like them, was the destroyer of industry and commerce, by the arbitrary imposition of *avanies*.

The second Bey, who, with still less favourable dispositions than Ali, attempted to render himself completely independent, was Murad; and he succeeded, as far as it was possible, without having secured any connexion with other nations, or adopted any of those political measures which new arrangements require. A Mamalûk of Ali, he had been advanced by him to the dignity of Bey. Several times compelled to fly from Cairo, and yield his place to various competitors, he had always the good fortune to re-enter it in triumph. No *sheick el belled* enjoyed a longer reign. From 1776, with very few interruptions, he has retained the supreme power; and the French found Egypt under his dominion. For such a prolonged exercise of sovereignty, in a country where authority has been so transient and precarious, he was indebted to his profuse liberality and his uncommon courage. The former of these qualities surrounded him by partisans, while the latter made him at once feared and respected.

Murad surpassed all his predecessors in state and magnificence. His Mamalûks were richly clothed; opulence reigned in his household; his horses were of the greatest beauty, and superbly caparisoned. He dispensed his wealth with boundless profusion, but he filled his coffers with equal facility, by frequent and odious extortions.

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A few days after he had put to flight Ismael Bey, by whom he had at first been compelled to retire into the Saïd, he resolved to drive from the castle of Cairo a Bey attached to the party of his enemy. He encamped in the plain, sent for an Englishman of the name of *Robinson*, who served him in the capacity of an engineer, and ordered him to set the castle on fire. The European observed to him, that he had neither the necessary mortars nor bombs. The barbarian, entirely unacquainted with these implements of war, inquired where they were to be found; and on being informed that Venice was the nearest place from which they could be procured, he dismissed Robinson, after ordering him a purse of a thousand sequins. In a moment of ill-humour he would have condemned him to lose his head.

I visited the camp of Murad. For the accommodation of him and his principal officers, were erected immense tents, which were divided into several apartments. The floors were covered with the most beautiful carpets, and the interior decorations consisted of the richest gold and silver stuffs that the manufactories of Lyons could afford. Nothing could equal the magnificence of his cavalry. Gold and silver ornaments, with the choicest embroidery on Morocco leather, glittered with a dazzling lustre in the rays of a burning sun; and the housings of the saddles, trimmed with a broad gold lace, were made of those handsome velvets, the small and delicate patterns of which display the elegant taste that prevails in the productions of the manufacturers of Lyons.

I was sometimes admitted into the palace of Murad, by means of a young Frenchman, who enjoyed his confidence. The Bey received me with civility, made me sit by him, and smoke out of his own pipe, in this country a distinguished honour, but by which I was nowise flattered. He asked me a thousand questions, every one more silly than the other, and all betraying the most profound ignorance. At length, from the account given him by my introducer, and the

fatisfaction he received from my answers, he was determined to have me enter into his service, in the double capacity of physician and engineer. He offered me a large house at Cairo, domestics of every sort as servants and guards, a daily superabundance of provisions, and a considerable income. His offers might have seduced any one unacquainted with the capricious humours of these unprincipled Beys, who one day will load a man with favours, and the next suddenly throw him into irons, or perhaps order him to be put to death.

Murad, who has had the courage to fight the French, is a very handsome man: he has a martial appearance; his chin is covered with a bushy black beard; his thick eyebrows describe arches of ebony over his large eyes, which are full of vivacity and fire. A long scar in one of his cheeks adds to the fierce cast of his countenance. To great bravery he joins singular address and extraordinary strength. He has been known, when riding past an ox, to cut off its head with one stroke of his scimitar. An intrepid warrior, capable of enduring the severest hardships, an excellent horseman, dexterous and powerful in the use of the sabre, courageous in adversity, bold in enterprise, cool in action, but terrible in an onset, Murad, with instruction, might have become a great general. His proud deportment, and munificent disposition, give him the dignified appearance of a sovereign; but injustice, ignorance, and cruelty, have rendered him a ferocious tyrant. (*See the portrait of this Mamelûk, Plate XVII.*)

CHAPTER XXXIV.

GENEROUS TRAITS OF CERTAIN MAMALÛKS.—THEIR WIVES; THEIR WARLIKE QUALITIES; THEIR CAVALRY.—EGYPTIAN AND ARABIAN HORSES.—AUDIENCE OF THE PASHA.—CASTLE OF CAIRO.—JOSEPH'S WELL.—MOORS.

IT has been seen, that two Beys of the Mamalûk race have displayed the glimmering rays of a strong and vigorous intellect, a few qualifications suited to the purposes of a good government, some amiable propensities, and particularly a certain greatness of mind. These virtues were by no means so rare as might have been imagined among this horde of foreigners, brought from all quarters, and collected at Cairo, there to reign without control. Nature had endowed them with good dispositions, which a martial education, and the example of pomp and profusion, developed and enlarged; while a total deficiency of every other sort of instruction or knowledge; a profound ignorance of the fundamental principles of all society; the gross fanaticism inspired by the new religion which they were forced to embrace; their military life, and the examples of injustice, cruelty, and treachery afforded to them by their patrons, rendered them, in reality, an assemblage of barbarians. Hence arose the astonishment and even the admiration excited by the noble actions, which, much oftener than could be expected, did honour to this class of men. The following anecdote, which was related to me at Cairo, happened in the time of Ali Bey, and some years before my travels in Egypt.

Mehemet Bey, having conquered his father-in-law and benefactor, put to death all those who followed the fortunes of Ali. In the atrocious

cise of his distrustful cruelty, he condemned to the loss of his hand and tongue, a Bey, whose only crime was a refusal to participate in this signal treason, and a steadfast adherence to that patron to whom he was indebted for his dignity and opulence. The unfortunate Bey, driven to despair by his miserable condition, imparted to one of his Mamalûks, who had the generosity not to desert him, his insupportable condition, and his extreme desire to get rid of his existence. He concluded by entreating his follower to precipitate him into the Nile, on which they were then sailing to the destined place of his exile. "Yes, my dear master," said the Mamalûk, "I feel the full extent of your misfortune. I well know that in this extreme of wretchedness, life must be a burden that you cannot long support: yes, you shall die, but you shall not die alone." He then embraced his patron, seized hold of him, clasped him tightly, and leaped with him into the river, where they were both drowned in each other's arms.

More recently, when Murad Bey, driven from Cairo by Ismael, took refuge among the Arabs in Upper Egypt, a *kiaschef*, bent down with years and covered with wounds, had retired to one of his estates at a distance from the city. The conqueror having dispatched a confidential officer to this *kiaschef* to persuade him to come and join his standard; the messenger represented to him, that at his age, and with his ill-cured wounds, he was not in a situation to follow his patron, with whom he could experience nothing but misfortune and misery; whereas, if he would return to Cairo and join the victorious party, riches and honours should be his reward. This worthy man replied to the emissary of Ismael, that he sincerely thanked the Bey for his offers, but could not accept them, because, being indebted for all he possessed to Murad, fidelity to his master was a sacred duty, and he was resolved never to forsake him, but to follow his fortunes to the grave. Accordingly the generous veteran abandoned all his property, only recommended his wife and children to
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the humanity of the conqueror, and entreated that he would not suffer them to end their days in want and wretchedness ; adding, that if the Bey, from a spirit of revenge or any other motive, should deprive of the common necessaries of life, persons so dear to him, and whom he was compelled to forsake, he with confidence entrusted them to the protection of Providence, the guardian of the upright and grateful, and the divine avenger of treachery and ingratitude.

But nowhere was the practice of the most generous virtues held in higher estimation than in the *harems* of the Mamalûks. Examples of magnanimity, and of the most devoted attachment, were daily displayed in these communities of women, who were likewise born out of Egypt, yet in whose mind Nature had not implanted the faintest shadow of that harsh and austere disposition which characterises the men of the same countries : on the contrary, she had adorned them with the most ardent, and at the same time the most tender affections, forming a delightful and harmonious accompaniment to the charms of beauty. These lovely captives, overwhelmed with disgust, and constantly harassed by injustice and outrage, at once forgot all their injuries, when their husbands or protectors were involved in adversity. They not only remitted them, in their flight or exile, all the money they possessed, but cheerfully parted with every ornamental article of their dress, in order to afford them all the assistance in their power.

Women so distinguished for their generosity towards a race of men incapable of making any adequate return for such elevated sentiments, or of forming a happy union with their tender natures, were respected amidst the vicissitudes of perpetual intestine war. The asylum containing so many charms, as well as too many ungratified passions, was ever held sacred, and a violation of it would have been considered as a most flagitious crime. They were not doomed to participate in the disgrace of those to whom they were bound by the ties of nature, of marriage, or of property, but remained unmo-

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lefted in their solitary habitations, which were never attempted to be profaned by the infuriate exertions of animosity and revenge.

Trained from their infancy to military evolutions, the Mamalûks displayed in them uncommon skill. The javelin, aimed with precision, was never thrown by them but to strike the mark. The well-tempered blades of Damascus, with glittering undulations, were by them wielded with astonishing dexterity; and, in their hands, proved a most dreadful weapon. I have often seen them try these famous sabres. For this purpose, a large cushion stuffed with feathers, or materials equally soft and flexible, was placed about the height of a man, without any support, and in such a manner that the slightest touch would bring it to the ground; when the sword that divided it by a single stroke gave the requisite proof of its excellence.

The custom of engaging in sham-fights, and too often in real combats, had rendered the Mamalûks a brave and warlike class of people. The ardent and courageous ebullition of their youth would have made them a formidable body of cavalry, had they possessed any idea of European tactics, and known how to engage in regular ranks. But this cavalry derived an additional advantage from the rare excellence of their horses, and the extraordinary skill in horsemanship exhibited by the riders. These exercises of the Mamalûks could not be sufficiently admired; and even some of their children, though dressed in pantaloons of an extravagant width, and reaching up to their breast, so that they were scarcely able to walk, would, when mounted on Arabian couriers, gallop backwards and forwards with astonishing swiftness, and wheel about in every direction. All their movements, whether of approach, retreat, or change of disposition, are made with the rapidity of lightning; and when the velocity of their career seems to have separated them, they are in a moment again collected. No people better understand how to shew themselves to advantage in the management of a horse. The reputation of

the Turkish cavalry is well known, but it will not bear a comparison with that of the Mamelûks. The Turks do not possess an equal degree of agility and grace; and in the capital of Egypt they were afraid to appear on horseback before a party of these young men, whose raillery they seldom escaped.

Their courfers, however, which are taught to perform all their various manœuvres with so much docility, have not, like ours, the head loaded with a complicated bridle, or the mouth filled with iron. A simple snaffle, and a single rein, without any superfluous addition, are sufficient to guide them at the rider's pleasure. The saddles are of the same shape as those made use of in Turkey, with which every one is acquainted; the heads of them, indeed, are somewhat higher, so that the horseman is supported to the middle of his body, both before and behind. The stirrups, or those sorts of long metal boxes which supply their place, and receive the whole foot, are also larger than those used by the Turks; and their pointed corners perform the office of spurs. These stirrups, which are worn very short, are never employed for getting on horseback; a stone, or some other eminence, is used for that purpose, and the rider always mounts on the off side of the horse.

Arabian horses, as well as those of Barbary, Turkey, and Persia, have been seen in France, but Egyptian horses were there not known. None were imported into our country, where they were held in no estimation. The equeries sent to the Levant by the French government in 1706, to procure horses, received express instructions not to purchase those of Egypt. Indeed any order to this effect was unnecessary, the exportation of them from thence being strictly prohibited. The accounts published by travellers, particularly by Maillet, probably gave rise to the erroneous opinion formed of this breed of horses; and, as it usually happens respecting prejudices in general, this particular notion was accredited without examination or inquiry. The Egyptian horses have been represented as wanting bottom and spirit.

spirit. "Ninety out of a hundred," says Maillet, "will be found either fired or lame. They could not stand the heavy roads and pavements of Europe*." But that consul was by no means well informed, when he wrote this part of his memoirs. In fact, the horses of Egypt, which, like the Barbs, are descended from the Arabians, but differ from them sufficiently to constitute a distinct race, are the handsomest in the world. A majestic stature, the head well set on, eyes full of fire, wide nostrils, a fine forehead, the crupper round and plump, legs slender and tendinous, a light and sure step, proud and noble attitudes; in short, an admirable proportion between all the parts, give them a most beautiful appearance. They are equally full of fire, vivacity, and vigour; but as if beauty and elegance were incompatible with strength, these showy horses are not so strong as the Arabians which are found in the same countries; and which, as is well known, are the first among the numerous family of quadrupeds made by man his most favourite companions. Those of the Egyptian breed are not capable of performing so long journies as the Arabian couriers; and more delicate, as they are more elegant, would be sooner jaded, were they employed on services as immoderate in their length, as in the privations by which they are accompanied.

However, if the Arabian horses are the first in the world, those of Egypt may claim the second rank. They are distinguished for the same spirit; and their paces, which are equally active, are at the same time less fatiguing to the rider. The Arabian horse possesses, in an eminent degree, qualities most useful to man, inexhaustible strength, prodigious speed, and inconceivable temperance. The Egyptian horse has the same qualities, but in an inferior degree; yet he compensates for the deficiency by his stately motions, his proud step, and his beautiful make, the individual parts of which attract

* Description de l'Egypte, partie ii. p. 27. & suiv.

and captivate the beholder. The Arabian horse will always render more essential services ; but the Egyptian will be more gratifying to the vanity of his owner. Were it possible to *acclimatize* the latter in France, his superiority would doubtless be universally acknowledged in a country where beauty is often preferred to strength, and grace to utility.

The preceding observations on the horses of Egypt are confirmed by the testimonies of both ancients and moderns. According to the Jewish history, it was chiefly in Egypt that Solomon purchased, at a very high price, the prodigious multitude of horses which he kept in his numerous stables *. One of my countrymen, an illustrious person in his day, a prince of the house of Beauveau †, having travelled to Cairo in 1605, though in the habit of seeing fine horses, could not refrain from expressing his admiration of those which he met with in the capital of Egypt. Shaw, the English traveller, also describes them as superior to all others in size and beauty ‡. Lastly, to terminate a series of quotations by a testimony so transcendent as to eclipse them all, I shall quote what Buonaparte wrote to the Executive Directory respecting the Mamalûk cavalry, in his dispatch dated Cairo, 6th Messidor, year VI. (24th June 1798). “The Mamalûks,” says this great man, “had a magni-

* “And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots.” 2 Chron. chap. 9. ver. 25.—*Is not this an error in the English translation of the Bible ; and should it not be forty thousand ; as it is in the Vulgate, and also in the following passage in the book of Kings ?*—“Habuit quoque Salomon quadraginta millia equorum in stabulis.” Paralip. cap. ix. et xxv. “And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots.” 1 Kings, chap. iv. ver. 26.—“And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt.”—“And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty.” 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 28, 29.

† Relation journalière d'un Voyage du Levant, fait & decrit par Henri de Beauveau, 4to. Nance, 1619, p. 159.

‡ Shaw's Travels, p. 239.

“ ficient body of cavalry, covered with gold and silver, armed with
 “ the best carbines and pistols of London manufacture, as well as
 “ with the best fabres of the East, and mounted upon, perhaps, the
 “ best horses of the continent.”

These horses were held in equal estimation by the people of Egypt, as by the Turks, who compared them to those pretty, light, and elegantly shaped animals with slender legs, fleet as the wind, and which, under the name of antelopes, are considered by the Orientals as the type of celerity and perfection, as their eyes are the emblem of beauty. *Kiff el gazel* (like the antelope).

This distinguished breed of horses is restricted to two paces, a stately walk, and a gallop with a long stroke. The trot is reckoned an ignoble and vulgar pace, with which these horses are perfectly unacquainted. They are accustomed to stop short, if required, when at full speed. Such a practice would be sufficient to ruin the legs of these animals in a very short time, were they not so remarkably well formed.

When the rider alights, his horse is led about by a groom till he remounts; and however short a distance he may have ridden, the horse is never taken to the stable, till he has been thus walked about in the air long enough to become cool and recover his breath. This precaution appears to be universal throughout the East. The horses are rubbed down with the greatest care, and are also frequently washed. These attentions sufficiently indicate the value set upon them by their owners. Their food is likewise as different from that of the horses of the western hemisphere, as the manner in which they are ridden and managed. They are neither allowed hay nor oats, but only chopped straw and barley. When in their stalls, the head is left at perfect liberty; this preserves that handsome part of the horse from the defects which are often occasioned in Europe by the weight or improper make of the halter. In the stable, as well as in the field, they are kept on their legs by a cord fastened to a
 stake

stake fixed behind them in the ground. Their hoofs are not loaded with thick and heavy pieces of iron; but are simply covered with a light semicircle, which is neither recurved at the ends, nor studded with clumsy nails, but is sufficient to defend them from injury in countries where there are no pavements or miry roads. Besides, it is well known, that in hot climates horses have a harder hoof than they have in our part of the world.

A body of cavalry entirely formed of stone-horses appears to be an extraordinary circumstance; such however was the cavalry of Egypt. The Arabs prefer mares, experience having taught them that they are more robust, better able to endure fatigue, hunger, and thirst, and are at the same time more gentle than horses. Stallions, on the contrary, are preferred by the Turks and Mamalûks. Michaelis seems to question this fact. Numerous accidents appeared to him inevitable from such an usage; and he could not conceive how, in the day of battle, it would be possible to employ a body of cavalry mounted upon stone-horses. In his opinion, the people of the East, from their being able to dispense with geldings, must be infinitely better versed than the Europeans in the art of training horses*. Nevertheless, it is a general custom to abstain from castrating horses, not only in Egypt, but also in Arabia, and almost in every other part of the East. A profuse perspiration may probably be sufficient to obviate the necessity of an operation which appears necessary in Europe. That a difference of climate has a very sensible influence on the disposition of stallions, seems to be proved by the curious observation quoted by Niebuhr†, made by a French officer on the coast of Coromandel, where he resided several years, and where the unmutated horses on which the Europeans mounted their cavalry, were more unmanageable in winter than in summer.

* Voyageurs savans et curieux, quest. 54. p. 198.

† Description de l'Arabie, tome i. p. 72.

However this may be, in the uniform climate of Egypt, where it is not customary to geld horses, these animals have the singular advantage of combining gentleness and docility with the most beautiful conformation. I have frequently seen them embarked without the smallest difficulty, in narrow and incommodious boats, where they remained for several hours together, without stirring, notwithstanding they were in a very uneasy position. They are seldom restive; and though ever so spirited, are easily mounted: and on alighting from them, it is generally sufficient to place them against a wall, where, without being tied, they patiently wait for their rider. The Arabs, when they came first into Egypt, brought with them their generous courfers, which are too well known to require any farther description; I shall therefore content myself with this single observation, which will serve to reconcile the different accounts, given by travellers, of the Arabian horses. Those which belonged to the stationary Arabs, are of a stronger make, and carry more flesh than those of the erratic Bedouins. The former may be considered as friends that are fed with great care, and not over-ridden; while the latter are the indefatigable companions of men who pass their life in traversing the scorching sands, are satisfied with a few handfuls of dried beans once in the four-and-twenty hours, and can travel three days without quenching their thirst, in spite of the fiery rays of a burning sun, and the suffocating heat reflected from the ground over which they make their rapid excursions and journies. In this continual succession of fatigue and abstinence, they preserve incomparable vigour and spirit; but their meagre condition, the consequence of severe toil, and very scanty diet, so entirely changes their natural appearance, that their breed cannot easily be discovered.

The horse, which man has made the partaker of his toils in almost every part of the world, and ennobled by making him share his glory, was, at Cairo, reserved exclusively for the highest and most distinguished class, that of warriors. Soldiers alone were permitted

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to ride these valuable animals; a real treasure to man in a state of society, and one of the most useful conquests he has gained over Nature. The preachers of the law, those fanatic and hypocritical interpreters of the Koran, notwithstanding the great veneration in which they were held by the stupid followers of Mahomet, were not entitled to appear on horseback in the streets of the capital of Egypt. The consuls of the European nations resident at Cairo, enjoyed, in conformity to treaties made with the Porte, the right of riding on horseback; but they very seldom availed themselves of this privilege, except to go into the country, or to repair to the levee of the Pasha, upon the audience they had at the commencement and termination of their consulship. This was a dangerous prerogative, which the consuls were bound to support, though they exercised it with trepidation, and never without experiencing insults from a populace to whom every European was an object of abhorrence.

To my great regret, I was present at one of these ceremonies of pride and humiliation, which a momentary vanity purchased at the expense of opprobrium and danger. The inspector-general Tott took it into his head to have a public audience of the Pasha of Cairo, though he was well aware that this officer was no more than a mere nominal representative of the authority which the court of Constantinople formerly possessed in Egypt, and that all the power was concentrated in the person of the *sheick el belled*. He was determined, he said, to assert the rights of the Grand Signior, as if he had been actually charged with a special commission for that purpose; though he could not be ignorant that by such a conduct he was awaking the restless jealousy of the Beys, from whose displeasure he had no means of protection or defence; particularly as he was come to Cairo to withdraw the French consul, whom it was no longer possible to maintain there, against the sudden caprices and designs of these despotic and oppressive rulers. Besides, he must have foreseen, that this indiscreet and ostentatious step, from which

France:

France could derive neither honour nor advantage, and which cost a considerable sum of money, would expose to certain danger the merchants who remained isolated at Cairo, as well as the French, who, from politeness or curiosity, swelled the retinue of this vain and imprudent man.

I was one of those induced by curiosity to join in this pompous show, with which I certainly had no reason to be satisfied. The Pasha, having received official notice, applied to the Bey in command, to issue orders for our being provided with the necessary horses and escort, he being unable to supply them from his own establishment. The Aga of the janizaries was commanded by the Bey to make the previous arrangements; and it was impossible for him to fulfil his commission with greater magnificence. The horses we rode were the finest that could be procured; the lustre of the gold and silver, and the dazzling embroidery with which their trappings were enriched, still more enhanced their beauty. Each horse was led by a groom; and these fiery couriers, constrained to walk with a slow step, impatiently champed their bits, while their mouths whitened with foam; gracefully curving their swelling necks, and displaying all the beauty of their forehead, they moistened their chests with the breath that their eagerness expelled from their burning nostrils; they pawed the ground, and by all the restless activity they could employ under the restraint in which they were held, endeavoured to get free, and gratify their ardour, by indulging in the quicker pace, that was become natural to them by early and constant habit.

Janizaries, mounted upon asses, led the way. The French interpreters, mounted like them, went next. The cavalcade advanced between two lines of infantry. Each of us was surrounded by a party of tall *cavouafs*, holding in their hands staves taller than themselves. We marched in file, and, unfortunately for us, wore the French dress. All the merchants of our nation, habited in the eastern fashion, followed, but mounted on asses, and a body of foot foldiers

soldiers closed the procession. Being obliged to traverse a considerable part of the city, we had full half a league to go through the streets of Cairo before we reached the castle. The populace, astonished at seeing the *Franks* treated with such honourable distinction, issued in crowds from their houses as we passed along, lavishing upon us hootings, insults, and the opprobrious epithets of *Nazareen* and *dog*. Some of the more moderate contented themselves with pitying the horses on which we rode. "Unfortunate animals!" exclaimed they, "what a miserable lot is yours! what crime can you have committed to be thus condemned to carry *accursed infidels* and *dogs*!" Amidst these acclamations of contempt and superstition, we at length arrived at the castle of Cairo, which was the residence of the Pasha.

The ceremonial of the audience was conducted according to the Turkish *étiquette*: a few insignificant words were interchanged; coffee, sherbet, and sweetmeats, were served; perfumes were burnt, and, in a few minutes after our entrance, we withdrew.

The rabble had collected during the short time we were at the audience, in order to intercept us as we left the castle. M. Tott having ordered the French interpreters to throw handfuls of medines among the crowd, a most dreadful confusion prevailed around us: the clothes of the interpreters were torn in a thousand pieces, while the guards, by a very active employment of their staves and sabres, in vain endeavoured to disperse the mob. It would be difficult to form an adequate idea of this alarming riot. The sort of munificence with which we scattered our money, answered no other purpose than that of purchasing a shower of stones, and volleys of invectives, with which we were on all sides assailed: Some of the stones passed so near my head, and with such violence, that had they struck me, they must have fractured my skull. I now fully resolved, though rather too late, never more to increase the train of pride or the pomp of ostentation.

Having regained the *country* of the French, an uproar of a different nature arose: every guard, domestic, and groom, demanded a remuneration ; ;

remuneration; and they were not to be easily satisfied. The Aga of the janizaries also announced his claims, to which we were compelled to submit. But this unprofitable, as well as mortifying expenditure, was likely to be attended with a much more serious inconvenience. The jealous and restless Murad, then governor-general, piqued at the French for having acknowledged the precarious authority of the Porte in a country where he ruled with despotic sway, and at the very moment when he had determined to shake it off for ever, caused to be signified to the French consul his displeasure, which he would no doubt have expressed with more severity, and clogged the French commerce at Cairo with a heavy *avanie*, had not Ismael Bey, two days after, supplanted Murad.

The castle of Cairo is situated at the back of a chain of mountains on the east side of the Nile, called *Mokattam* (hewn mountain), because it is very steep, and almost perpendicular. It commands the city, but is itself commanded by the summit of the mountain on which it is built. Flanked with towers, and provided with a few bad pieces of cannon, of small calibre, this fortress, the sole defence of Cairo, was falling in ruins in every part. It affords a delightful prospect. The remains of spacious and magnificent apartments, which are yet, in some measure, supported by columns of granite and the most costly marble, still attract attention. In the middle of this enclosure is the deep excavation which has been mentioned by all travellers, and is commonly called *Joseph's well*, not, as many imagine, because it was dug in the time of the patriarch of that name, but because it was the work of Joseph the Vizier, in the reign of the Sultan Mahomet, son of *Calaun* *. This well, which it was not very difficult to sink in a soft calcareous rock, is formed of two sections that are not in the same perpendicular line. The descent is by a flight of steps of a gentle declivity, and on the platform sepa-

* Pococke's Travels, vol. i. p. 34.

rating the two sections, oxen are employed in turning a wheel to raise the water, which is excessively brackish. This double well is said to be two hundred and eighty feet in depth, and forty-two in circumference.

The Beys kept in their pay an auxiliary body of infantry, composed of Moors, who are bad soldiers, and on whose fidelity no reliance could be placed. Without the bravery of the Carthaginians, they still retain all the other characteristics of their ancestors. They are not only liars, but are also vindictive, cruel, and treacherous, to an excess. These *Maugrebis* (men of the west), encumbered with their *bournoufs*, a sort of white cloak of a single piece, made without seams, and having a long pointed hood, were ever ready to sell themselves to those who would purchase them. They passed from the service of one Bey who paid them well to the service of another who paid them better, and were at Cairo an additional instrument to promote the views of ambition, treachery, and vengeance.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ASSES OF CAIRO.—WOMEN OF THE HAREM OF A BEY TAKING AN AIRING.—ASSES OF EGYPT.—AVERSION OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS TO THESE ANIMALS.—MULES.—JUMARS.—HOUSES OF CAIRO; ITS EXTENT, QUARRIES, CANAL.—DANCING-GIRLS, AND JUGGLERS.

IF the horses of Egypt are remarkable for their beauty and their valuable qualities, the asses of that country have no less a claim to distinction. It is certain that the hottest and driest climates are most favourable to horses, since those of Arabia, Persia, Egypt, Barbary, and Spain, surpass all others in vigour and beauty. The asses, a species so nearly related to that of the horse, are also handsomest and best in these climates, where they appear to be indigenous. In proportion as they are remote from thence they degenerate, so that in the northern countries they lose all resemblance to those of the south. If this degeneration be not so perceptible in horses, of which there are very fine races in the north, the difference arises from the pains that have been for a length of time taken by the Europeans to change their nature, by procuring stallions and mares from foreign parts, forming studs, crossing the breeds, and lavishing upon them the most indefatigable attention; while the race of their asses has not only continued unimproved, but been deteriorated by an unmerited contempt and almost total neglect. Ill fed, worse attended, overladen with burdens, and oppressed with blows, the ass of our country is, doubtless, the most wretched of slaves. Debased to the lowest degree, he is only made use of by the meanest class of people, for whom he performs every service that his battered condition will permit. His name is become synonymous to stupidity and dulness. Nevertheless
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he is docile, gentle, patient, and temperate in the extreme, and would be, in our countries, the most valuable of animals, were we not in possession of the horse and the ox. But this is not the only instance where modest and useful simplicity, when contrasted with more active and brilliant qualities, is rewarded with ingratitude, and insulted by derision.

How great the difference between these sorry and degraded animals, and the asses of Arabia and Egypt, which, as well as the horses of those countries, are the finest in the world! Some of them are very tall; and these are the most esteemed and valued, sometimes selling for a higher price than even the horses. But whatever may be their size, their head is well set on, their eyes are lively, and their body is plump. They have elegance in their attitudes, grace in their motions, and even somewhat of a noble and stately carriage. Their tread is firm, their step is light, and their paces are quick, active, and easy; in short, they are very pleasant to ride. All travellers have extolled this beautiful species of animals. Pietro della Valle*, who indulged his vanity for a long time in the East, observes, that the inhabitants make no scruple of riding upon asses, which trot very fast, and that he laughed heartily at the sight. For my part, it quite struck me with astonishment. In Egypt, the people not only made no difficulty of riding upon asses, but, as I have already mentioned, these were the only animals on which Christians of all nations were permitted to appear at Cairo. The Mahometan merchants, and the most opulent inhabitants, likewise rode them; and in this country, where carriages were unknown, they served as palfries to ladies of the highest rank, and even to the wives of the Beys.

I once chanced to meet the entire *barem* of a Bey, taking an airing in the environs of Cairo. An equivocal figure, a eunuch, of a mean but fierce countenance, preceded the women on a beautiful horse,

* Voyages, tome i. page 142.

covered with gold, silver, and embroidery. The ladies were mounted on the finest asses. The richest metals glittered on the bridles of these animals; and a magnificent piece of tapestry was thrown over their saddles and cruppers, and hung down to the ground. It is to be presumed, that this was the cavalcade of beauty. But these charmers were masked with thick veils, and so wrapped up in various kinds of drapery, that neither feature nor form could be seen of any one of them, and they appeared only like so many shapeless figures. Such meetings were by no means pleasant to Europeans, who were obliged to alight, as a mark of respect, and take care to avoid not only the appearance of looking the ladies in the face, which, in fact, it was impossible to distinguish, but even of turning their eyes towards them; and a slight glance at them as they passed was all that could be risked. A more particular examination would have afforded a pretext for an *avanie*, or some still severer act of oppression.

The asses of Egypt have at least as much vigour as beauty. They perform with ease the longest journies. More hardy than the horses, and less difficult as to the quality and quantity of their food, they are preferred by those who traverse the deserts. Most of the Mussulman pilgrims use them in their long and fatiguing route to Mecca; and the chiefs of the Nubian caravans, who are sixty days in crossing immense solitudes, are mounted on asses, which do not appear tired on their arrival in Egypt.

Their hoofs are preserved by thin light shoes. The saddles put on them are like our pack-saddles, rounded, raised, and nicely stuffed; on these the rider sits nearer the crupper than the neck. The stirrups, which are of a shape somewhat similar to those we use, are small, and have only a flat bar at the bottom, three fingers in breadth. Men ride on these saddles without housings; but for the women there is thrown across them a piece of tapestry, more or less rich, which sometimes sweeps the ground. The asses have the same sort of bridles as the horses. In the squares and principal streets of

Cairo they stand ready saddled and bridled for hire, and answer the purpose of hackney-coaches in that great city. The owner accompanies his ass, and follows to goad him on, as well as to warn the foot-passengers to make way. On a journey, the rider carries in his hand a small stick pointed at the end, with which he pricks the animal in the withers.

On dismounting, it is not necessary to tie up the ass; the reins, when pulled tight, and fixed to a ring in the fore part of the saddle, confine his head in such a manner as to make him remain quietly in the same place.

Though the Arabs do not take the same trouble to preserve the breed of their asses, as to perfectionate the race of their horses, yet it must be acknowledged, that asses are no where the objects of such attention as in Arabia and Egypt. They are rubbed down and regularly washed, so that their coat is clean, smooth, and glossy. Their food is the same as that of the horses, consisting commonly of chopped straw, barley, and small beans.

To increase the number of the species of useful animals, or, what amounts to the same thing, to improve them, in order to render them more useful, is to multiply the benefits and resources of public and private economy. If, without diverting our attention from the horse, we condescended to pay some regard to the ass, though placed by Nature in the second rank, we should thence infallibly derive very considerable advantages. To attain this useful object, it would be necessary to cross the breeds. From the union of Arabian or Egyptian jack-asses with our she-asses might be obtained individuals of superior strength and beauty, which, by successive crossings, would, with time and care, produce a fine race of animals, that would be within the reach of general economy, and add to the comforts of life.

The handsomest asses seen at Cairo come from Upper Egypt and Nubia. On ascending the Nile, the influence of climate is perceptible in these animals, which are of the greatest beauty in the Saïd, while
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towards the Delta they are in every respect inferior. So true it is, that they are indebted for their superior qualities to the concurring effects of great heat and extreme drought. In those countries which, although very hot, are at the same time wet, they are but indifferent: for in India, and even in the southernmost parts of that peninsula, that is, in regions bordering upon the equator, and where a greater degree of humidity prevails than in Arabia, Nubia, and Thebais, the asses are small, heavy, weak, and ill made*.

From the pre-eminent qualities of the asses of Egypt, it cannot be surprising that they have been the objects of luxury. The opulent took a pride in keeping asses of the greatest value. To the Europeans settled at Cairo that circumstance lessened the mortification of their not being permitted to ride on horseback; but, in 1779, this sort of luxury attracted the attention of the government, who considered it indecorous that foreign merchants, abominated on account of their religion, should ride on animals surpassing in beauty those kept even for the wives of the Beys. This was more than sufficient to subject the European merchants to a compulsory contribution, an *avanie* of four or five hundred thousand livres, which they were obliged to pay for being in possession of fine asses.

In the East, asses have also been of the number of those animals held in the highest estimation: they constituted a part of the wealth of the ancient patriarchs, as they still do of the flocks and herds which the wandering nations of the same countries have continued to rear. The Egyptians alone regarded them with abhorrence; in their eyes they were the execrated emblem of the evil genius of the giant Typhon, the son of Tartarus and Terra, a monster with a hundred heads and a hundred mouths, vomiting flames, who had

* Such, at least, is the account given by the author of the "Essais Philosophiques sur les Mœurs de divers Animaux étrangers," pages 240 and 246.—Pliny had remarked, that the ass was not fond of cold countries: *ipsum animal frigoris maxime impatiens*. Hist. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 48.

dared to declare war against the gods, and had at length cut to pieces Osiris, one of the divinities of Egypt. The hatred which the inhabitants of *Coptos*, in particular, bore to asses, was so inveterate, that it was their custom to precipitate them from the summit of a rock. The people of *Bufiris* and *Lycopolis* carried their superstition so far as to abstain from blowing the trumpet, because they thought its sound resembled the braying of an ass*.

It has been generally imagined, that this decided aversion to these animals originated from their rufous colour, which the Egyptians supposed to have been the colour of Typhon, and on that account held it in detestation. This opinion has been adopted by the learned author of the *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois* †. The reverse, however, is the fact; for the greater part of the Egyptian asses are of a bright gray, several are black, and those which are marked with a few shades of rufous are very uncommon.

If in the wide field of conjecture, which the history of the most remote periods of antiquity leaves open, I may be permitted to hazard an opinion respecting the horror manifested by the Egyptians towards a race of useful animals, I should trace it to a very different origin. I have already observed, that the ancient people of Egypt were neither conquerors, travellers, nor merchants. They passed from place to place by navigating the Nile, and the canals with which Egypt was more generally intersected than it is at the present day. Horses, as well as camels and asses, which Nature has placed in an almost isolated country, in order that nations separated

* See La Dissertation sur Typhon, par l'Abbé Banier, Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, tome iii. p. 116.

† “La répugnance des Egyptiens (pour l'âne) étoit extrême; c'est qu'on a toujours attribué à la nuance de son poil, qui est ordinairement rousse dans ce pays.”
Tome ii. p. 131.

by sandy and uninhabited plains might establish an intercourse with each other, were consequently very much neglected. But as if it was not enough for the Egyptians to be uninfluenced by a spirit of conquest, and as it was at the same time requisite that they should keep themselves in a posture of defence against the enterprizes of their ambitious neighbours and the incursions of the Arabs, they were obliged to maintain troops and bodies of cavalry. The horse, excluded from the catalogue of animals honoured by the Egyptians, was no less necessary to them in this point of view; but being in a manner employed by them with reluctance, and in a kind of service contrary to the genius and political system of the nation, his utility was nevertheless insufficient to acquire him the degree of consideration which he deserved. It appears, indeed, that warriors alone enjoyed the right of keeping horses. Placed in the secondary rank, the ass, according to the principles adopted, was considered as altogether useless, and therefore doomed to a state of absolute proscription. It seemed as if the Egyptians endeavoured to revenge themselves on this animal for the use they were compelled to make of the horse. Whatever is regarded as useless is soon despised; and from contempt, founded on reason and reflection, the transition is short to hatred and disgust.

With the most distinguished race of horses and asses, Egypt must naturally possess the finest mules. There were at Cairo some of these animals that exceeded in price the most beautiful horses. In that capital of Egypt they served to mount the Mahometan priests and the officers of the revenue. Their furniture was the same as that used for asses. Their pace is a very long amble, which they are taught, by fastening for some time each fore foot to the hind foot of the same side with two cords, that are made of the length the mule is to pace, and are suspended by another cord passed under the girth to the stirrup-leather.

In Egypt she-mules are preferred, because they are supposed to be more docile, and capable of enduring greater fatigue. For the same reasons the Arabs prefer mares to stallions.

If the accounts of several writers may be credited, the genus of the ox has also its mules, the reputed offspring of a bull with a mare or she-afs, or of a horse or a jack-afs with a cow. They are called *jumars*. It is said, that in the burning climes of Egypt and Barbary these monstrous productions are principally, though but seldom, found. During the three years and upwards which I spent in my travels in the East, I was never able to procure a sight of one of them, notwithstanding I made every possible inquiry for that purpose. Dr. Shaw, however, has described one that he saw in Barbary *; but that traveller appears to have paid little attention to the natural history of animals. Besides, he has not traced the production of this pretended mongrel, nor was he a witness of any of the circumstances that could serve to confirm the reality of the existence of a jumar, such as the congress, gestation, and birth. Shaw's account, therefore, has not prevented Buffon from considering the existence of jumars as fabulous, or at least as doubtful †. It is, in fact, highly improbable that animals so dissimilar in their nature as the bull and the mare should engender together; since the buffalo, so nearly resembling the genus, and even the species of the ox, and also forming with it numerous herds, reared and fed together in every part of Egypt, never copulates with the cow, while the bull has as little propensity to the female buffalo.

The French settled at Cairo assured me, that a short time previous to my arrival a jumar was shewn there, which was said to be the offspring of an afs and a cow; but these popular reports were unsupported by any observation or particularity. I could not even

* Shaw's Travels, p. 239.

† Supplément à l'Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, art. des *Mulets*.

obtain a knowledge of the principal features of the conformation of this animal, so that it possibly was, like the *kumrab* described by Dr. Shaw, nothing more than a variety of the genus of the ox. Thus the pretended jumars of Dauphiny and the Pyrenees are *bar-deaux*, that is, small mules produced between the horse and the she-afs.

I made but few excursions in the city of Cairo. My first residence there was during a period of great confusion, disorder, and tumult. The gates of the quarter assigned to the French were generally shut; and it would have been an act of imprudence to expose myself in the streets. I was little less confined on my second visit to that place. By the departure of the French consul our merchants were abandoned to themselves; for though the presence of a consul could not always afford protection, or prevent the imposition of *avaries*, his office, from some remains of habitual respect, still gave him a sort of consequence, and served as a barrier against more oppressive exactions. The inquietude of our countrymen was augmented by this total desertion; their eyes and alarms were incessantly directed towards the traveller, whose curiosity might involve them in difficulties; and, however circumspect I might be in making my observations out of doors, it would have been a great want of deference and attention on my part not to sacrifice my wishes to the tranquillity of those to whom the commerce of France had considerable obligations.

The houses of Cairo are ill built; the smallest and lowest of them are crowded by a numerous and wretched populace. Those which are occupied by the rich are generally surrounded by a court; the greater part of them are constructed of three different sorts of materials, stone, brick, and wood; but they have no appearance of regular architecture or exterior decoration; within, is a large hall paved with marble, having in the middle one or more basins or fountains of water, likewise of marble. The halls are the whole height of the house,

house, and are covered with a small dome, having, on the north side, an aperture consisting of a sort of funnel, into which the wind forces its way, and rushing with rapidity through a narrow tube, is diffused in the hall, and increases the coolness produced by the marble and water. These saloons are exceedingly pleasant, and the fresh air circulating within them, forms a delightful and unexpected contrast to the intense heat that is felt without.

Cairo is not defended by any fortifications. The walls, flanked with very fine towers, by which it was surrounded, are no longer entire: part of them, like those which enclose the Alexandria of the Arabs, having fallen beneath the stroke of time, and the still more destructive hand of barbarism. I saw two gates, which are specimens of the most simple and noble architecture. One of these is called *Babel Nafr* (that Gate of Victory); and the other, which is the handsomest, is named *Babel Foutoub* (the Gate of Passage); because it was on this side that the Sultan Selim entered the city by a breach. The suburbs of Cairo towards the east contain many fine buildings, most of them falling to ruin: they are the mausolea of the ancient Sultans of Egypt. From every appearance, the city was of much greater extent in former times than it is at present; at least the numerous ruins strewed on the circumjacent ground justify this presumption. But the French, who had the politeness to shew me the most remarkable buildings at Cairo, forced me to examine them in such haste, from the apprehension of exciting the malignity of the inhabitants, as not to allow me to form a very precise idea of these monuments of antiquity; I therefore prefer silence to inaccurate description.

In following the walls that enclose the city on the east side, I came to the mountain on which the castle is built. From thence I ascended it half way up to the summit. From this mountain are extracted the white and calcareous stones employed in the buildings of Cairo. I had here an opportunity of observing the ignorance of

the people in the exercise of the rudest arts. They do not cut out the masses of stone in courses or strata; as is the common practice in quarries, but with much difficulty work off and detach huge and irregular blocks.

A large canal, which communicates with the Nile a little above Old Cairo, crosses the middle of the city from the west to the north-east. Over it are thrown several bridges, on each side of which are rows of houses. Ptolemy attributes the construction of this canal to Trajan; but it certainly is of much higher antiquity than the reign of that emperor, and is the work of the Pharaohs. According to the Arabic historians, its bed is paved with marble; but this magnificent pavement is at present covered with thick strata of mud. The Nile no longer flows through it, except in August, September, and October; during which months it fills large squares with its waters, forming lakes, round which were built the houses of persons of distinction. By the light of torches, and the splendour of illuminations, boats, richly decorated, were then to be seen floating on their surface; while fireworks seemed to set both the air and the water in a blaze. Bands of musicians kept rowing about, and a vast concourse of people who repaired thither to breathe the cool evening air, converted these large basins into delightful scenes of festivity and pleasure. But the canal, half choked up, allowed only a short season for such amusements. These inundated squares affording so charming a prospect, soon became infectious marshes, plains of slime and mud, which, shortly after, the stranger with astonishment beheld covered with golden harvests, and the verdure of esculent herbs.

The ceremony of breaking down the dike which closes the entrance of the canal was a day of mirth and jubilee for the people of Cairo. The Pasha and Beys appeared on this occasion in great state. In 1777 it took place on the 9th of August.

As the canal dried up, the bottom, which was never cleansed, and on which was deposited all the filth and nastiness brought from the

sewers of the city, emitted an offensive stench, that rendered the houses situated upon its banks almost uninhabitable. Fortunately, the extreme heat soon applied a remedy, and it then became a street, wider than most of those in the city, and as much frequented as any.

I generally spent part of the day at the windows of the consul's house, behind which the canal passes; and it being dry during my last residence at Cairo, it was become a sort of theatre. Here were continually to be seen dancing-girls, whose steps and jumps bear no resemblance to the dances of our countries. They consist chiefly of very quick and truly astonishing movements of the loins, which they agitate with equal suppleness and indecency, while the rest of the body remains motionless. These movements they interrupt by springing from the ground with a quick and airy step. This dancing, or rather wriggling, is performed to the sound of a hautboy, a lute with three strings, and a tambourine. Two of these women generally danced together. In the interval between their capers, they stop opposite to each other, and on a close approach, for some moments, vie, to musical measure, in this brisk agitation of their loins. Such an impudent and wanton exhibition is highly diverting to a gross and vitiated people. It always attracted an immense crowd of spectators; and the women, who saw it through their lattices, received at the same time the gratification of amusement, and the lesson of immorality.

These female dancers wear on the thumb and fore-finger of both hands a small cup, which they strike against each other in cadence, like castanets. Their face is uncovered, which, as has been observed, is in these countries considered as the height of effrontery. They are also trained and versed in a profession still more dishonourable than that of performing lascivious dances in public. The greater part of them wear a ring in one of their nostrils. Their dances conclude with a musical concert, which is far from being agreeable. After
letting

letting down their veil, they take hold of their ears with both hands, and sing, or rather squall, with all their might.

The dancing-girls are succeeded by jugglers, whom I have seen perform the same tricks, and with equal dexterity, as our conjurers in Europe. Tumblers likewise display various feats of activity, and they are always accompanied by a buffoon, whose office, like that of the merry-Andrew of our mountebanks, is to excite laughter among the populace.

The road from Cairo to *Boulac*, which is very much frequented, is infested with improvisatori. These half-naked poets, who wear a cap made of rushes, compose verses in honour of every passenger. Whenever they have a prospect of obtaining a little money, two of them instantly commence a dialogue on the virtues of the person whom they address, and to whom they are perfect strangers; and thus they spend the whole day in reciting, with great volubility, the praises of all comers and goers, in a long rhapsody of commonplace.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WEDDINGS.—CIRCUMCISION.—COMMERCE.—CARAVANS OF NUBIA.—BLACK SLAVES.—NUBIAN DOMESTICS.—SCORPIONS.—ANTIQUÉ STATUE.—PYRAMIDS.—MUMMY-PIT AT SAC-CARA.—BOLTI, BAYATTE, AND BENNI, FISHES OF THE NILE.—TIT-LARKS.

SUCH were the exhibitions which I enjoyed from my window, and of which the canal, now become a considerable thoroughfare, was the theatre. The other amusements that relieved the dull and retired life I was compelled to lead at Cairo, were the various processions connected with civil or religious ceremonies, which sometimes passed before the entrance of the *country* of the *Franks*. One of the most pompous, and, at the same time, most noisy of these processions, was that of weddings. The preliminaries of a matrimonial union being settled, whenever the bride goes from home, she appears with a numerous and splendid retinue. Preceded by hautboys and drums, she walks in state beneath a canopy, enclosed on all sides with drapery, and is surrounded and followed by a considerable crowd. Her first visit is to the bath, where she is deprived of the mysterious veil of nature. To divert her attention from this painful operation, she is successively dressed in the habit of a janizary, a Mamalûk, or in some other male attire. In assuming these sort of masquerade disguises, and indulging the bursts of mirth they occasion, a great part of the day is spent.

A few days after her visit to the baths, the bride is conducted from her father's house to that of her destined husband. She is attended by the same procession, with the same noisy instruments; and is preceded by a number of persons, carrying all her paraphernalia, that is, her clothes and jewels, besides a few trifling moveables.

ables. These constitute the whole of a daughter's marriage-portion; the father gives no other; on the contrary, he himself receives a remuneration. The bridegroom not only secures to the woman he marries, a jointure proportionate to his fortune, but likewise pays a sum of money to the father; so that he may be truly said to purchase his wife. On this occasion, the appearance of the bride's property is a principal source of vanity, for the gratification of which every attention is paid to display it to the utmost advantage. The different articles are distributed among a great many persons, some of whom carry the weight of only a few ounces; for the magnificence of the ceremony consists in having the greatest possible number of bearers, which gives a high idea of the opulence of the woman who can boast so numerous an attendance.

This is the first interview of the bride and bridegroom, who never see each other before. The bride appears in various dresses of the other sex, and resumes the same disguises with which she had amused herself at the bath. The prevailing fancy of the women in this country to dress themselves in men's clothes is very remarkable. The jealousy of the Orientals respecting those signs of virginity, which are often equivocal, is well known; so that it may happen that an unpolluted woman suffers reproach and disgrace, while another less virtuous enjoys unmerited reputation. The precautions the Egyptians employ in this respect; the proofs to which the bride is subjected by the bridegroom before he is allowed to see her face; the importunate crowd which besets the nuptial apartment on the wedding night; the joy testified by this numerous assemblage, when the real or supposed proofs of an insulted chastity are displayed, are circumstances which may be necessary to complete a knowledge of the manners of nations; but however interesting they may be, it would be a difficult task to relate them, without a breach of decorum, and my pen refuses to trace the indelicate details.

Though priests have no where more influence and preponderancy than

than in Egypt, and though, like the greater part of those of all religions, they are actuated by ambition, the lust of power, and the desire of trenching upon authority, they have never pretended, among the Mussulmans, to intermeddle in matters relating merely to social order, or to direct the formalities of marriage, which the Mahometans universally consider as a compact purely civil. The parties present themselves before the Cadi, who receives their declaration, writes the agreement, and draws up the contract.

The circumcision of children is another ceremonial, in which the Egyptians, as well as the Turks, display the greatest pomp and parade. These processions, consisting of numerous bands of music, horsemen with their brilliant furniture, and people of every rank, accompanying the boy to his sanguinary initiation into the religion of Mahomet, formed a spectacle by no means indifferent. I shall have an opportunity of describing one of these ceremonies at which I was present in Upper Egypt, where they are conducted with the same accessory solemnities, though less pompous than at Cairo, which in wealth and magnificence surpasses every other town in Egypt.

Cairo, as has already been observed, was the emporium of the trade of almost every quarter of the world. The warehouses in that city were filled with the manufactures of India, and those silky stuffs of astonishing fineness, wove from the wool of Cassimere. In others, the diamond of Golconda shone with dazzling brilliancy; the pearl of the Eastern ocean, less effulgent, modestly exhibited its argent rays; and the porcelain of Japan displayed its lively and never-fading colours. Some of the latter were scented with an immense quantity of the fragrant berries of the coffee-tree of Yemen, and the spices of the Molucca islands; while the sweetest essences and most delicate perfumes that Arabia and Africa could afford, odoriferous woods, as precious as gold, imparted to others a delightful mixture of the most exquisite exhalations. The productions of the ma-

factories of Europe are there equally abundant; and burning Africa sends thither, from her inmost recesses, her gold, ivory, gums, and slaves.

This last species of living merchandise is brought to Cairo by the caravans of Nubia. Two of them generally arrive in the course of the year; and the number of blacks with which they annually supply the capital of Egypt may be estimated at fifteen hundred or two thousand. Of these there are commonly fewer males than females. When I was at Cairo, their price varied from two to three hundred livres, according to the extent of the importations of human flesh; but the handsomest slave of either sex did not cost more than three hundred; a moderate price compared with that of the slaves imported into our American colonies, when they were disgraced by that infamous traffic and the atrocious abuses to which it gave rise. The long journey, however, of the Nubian caravans across parched and perilous solitudes, occasioned the death not only of many of the slaves destined for sale, but also of the beasts of burden, sinking under the weight of a continual succession of toil, privations, and heat. The duties to which the merchants who conduct these devoted beings are subject on their arrival at *Siout*, a city in Upper Egypt, ninety leagues above Cairo; the freight of the boats hired to convey them down the Nile to the capital; the duties that they there pay; lastly, the expense of providing for the subsistence of themselves and their beasts, would, it might be imagined, produce such an accumulation of charges, as to increase the price of the merchandise; but these traders go as naked as the slaves they bring, and are as abstemious as the camels they ride.

At Cairo, these negroes are uncomfortably crowded into a large building, particularly appropriated to that purpose; and in a long and narrow street adjacent, they are exposed to sale by their own countrymen. There, every one is at liberty to go and examine them, handle them, turn them about, and make them use their limbs in every way,

as is the practice in the purchase of beasts. They did not, however, all remain in Egypt. Other dealers in human flesh purchased some of them to take to Constantinople. The young Nubians are particularly esteemed in the capital of the Ottoman empire, where men who have no confidence in virtue, mutilate their fellow-creatures, in order to secure the fidelity of the women.

With us, the idea of black slaves is always associated with that of whips, torture, excessive toil, and every kind of cruelty with which the civilized nations of Europe oppressed, or still continue to oppress, those who have had the misfortune to become their property. There is no feeling mind that, abhorring the abominable traffic in human beings, has not been shocked at the sight or detail of the daily sufferings which the blacks in the European colonies are made to endure. There is no grateful heart that does not cherish the memory of those philosophers, the courageous friends of humanity, to whom France is indebted for being no longer dishonoured by the practice of treating men with far greater severity and rigour than the vilest animals.

Throughout Turkey, as well as in Egypt, humanity has no cause to repine at the fate of the negroes brought thither for sale. If, condemned in their native land to be dragged away and sold like cattle, they not only experience from their countrymen the disgrace of becoming an article of trade, but also the fatigues inseparable from the most toilsome journies, and the state to which they are reduced; yet their misery ceased as soon as they were received into the service of the wealthy inhabitants of Egypt. The severe treatment inflicted on men of the same colour in the West Indies, the horrid characteristic of civilized nations, is unknown to these people, among whom barbarism is supposed to predominate. The Nubian, when purchased by an Egyptian, is no longer, in any respect, a slave. He becomes a favoured domestic, and a companion adopted and beloved by his master. Several of these negroes were taken into the military establishments of the Beys, and advanced to offices of importance and

dignity, as well as the white Mamalûks, among whom they were brought up and educated; and I have known some of them attain the rank of *kiaschef*, which is the second place in the Mamalûk government. Those who belong to the household of private persons are not less happy, but are shewn a regard and attention which is bestowed upon no other servants. In the *barems*, the female blacks become the confidential companions of the wife, where they are treated with affection, and often partake of the favours of the Mussulman, who, by keeping all the women in an indiscriminate state of confinement, renders these retreats of weakness and beauty the real abodes of slavery.

Other blacks come voluntarily from Nubia, and offer their services to the inhabitants of Cairo, where they are known under the name of *Berberis*, of which the Europeans have made *Barberines*. In a few years they return to their own country with the money they have earned. They are intelligent and handy servants, but complete knaves. Their food and clothing cost almost nothing; and their wages were very moderate. The Europeans readily took them into their service, all except the French, who, since the year 1706, having been prohibited from keeping Nubian domestics, as a sort of retaliation for the murder of Du Roulle, the physician, whom the Jesuits had persuaded Louis XIV. to send into Abyssinia, in order to pave the way for their admission into that country. I read in the registry of the chancery at Rossetta, the ordinance of the Consul Maillet, containing this prohibition, which was more prejudicial to the French than to the king of Sennaar, to whom it gave very little inquietude. The following is the substance of it, and will give an idea of the character of this nation of Africa:

“ M. de Maillet, consul-general at Cairo, having, on the 9th of
 “ September 1706, called a meeting of all the merchants of that
 “ city, informed them that M. du Roulle, who had been appointed
 “ envoy from the king of France to the king of Ethiopia, and had
 “ resided

“ resided with him three months in the chief place of his abode,
 “ that petty prince, from mere motives of avarice, had had the bar-
 “ barity to cause him and all his suite to be massacred, M. Maillet
 “ is therefore of opinion, that the first mark of resentment to be
 “ shewn by them against that nation, should be to expel for ever
 “ from their service the subjects of the unfeeling king of Sennaar,
 “ who are called Barberines; more especially as this perverse people,
 “ having lately had among them a French monk, sent to M. du
 “ Roulle by the said Consul, not only refused to protect him against
 “ the persecutions of the chiefs of those districts, but even suffered
 “ him to be menaced and ill-treated by some of their fellow subjects,
 “ who had been in the service of the French and eaten their bread,
 “ so that he was compelled to relinquish the property he had taken
 “ with him, and fly naked into the desert, in order to save his life,
 “ when it was the interest of the inhabitants to afford him an asylum.
 “ Besides, the robbery not long since attempted in the house of the
 “ late Sieur Dauphin by persons of that nation, and others that have
 “ at different times been committed, are sufficient reasons for ex-
 “ cluding them entirely from the service of the French, from which
 “ the greater part of them had already deserved to be expelled. Re-
 “ quiring, therefore, &c.”

The deliberation of the merchants is followed by the ordinance of
 the Consul, enjoining all the French in Egypt, as well as the fo-
 reigners under the protection of France, to dismiss from their service,
 within the space of three days, the Nubians, otherwise called Barbe-
 rines, and other subjects of the petty king of Sennaar, who may
 form a part of their household, and never again hire them nor any
 other Barberines, under the penalty of forfeiting three hundred livres,
 to be applied to the redemption of poor slaves, &c.

One of these Barberine negroes, who was very young, and had an
 interesting countenance, frequented the quarter inhabited by the
 French merchants. To gain a few medines, he exhibited a number

of scorpions, which he carried in his cap, and handled with impunity. Like his countrymen, he pretended to possess the secret of rendering himself invulnerable against the sting of those venomous insects; but this boasted secret, as he confessed to me, consisted in extracting the pointed weapon with which the last joint of the scorpion's tail is armed. The vivacity and natural understanding of this little Nubian induced me to take him into my service; but I was soon tired of him, and had reason to be convinced that the Consul Maillet was not to blame for dismissing the people of that nation from the houses of the French.

Plate XVIII. represents an antique statue, in the hands of an Italian monk of the congregation of the *Propaganda*, who made a present of it to M. Tott. This statue, which is rather more than a foot in height, is of white calcareous stone, and was found in Thebais. It is the figure of one of those priestesses, who, in ancient Egypt, carried the images of the gods in the Isiac procession, and who were called by the Greeks *Pastophores*. The divinities seated in a case, are Osiris, with the head of a hawk, and Isis with a human head. Between them, as well as can be determined from the wretched sculpture of every part of the statue, is the head of a serpent, crowned with a lunar orb. The top of the head of each of these two divinities is perforated with a small circular hole of some depth.

Among the numerous hieroglyphics with which this statue is covered, may be distinguished the horned serpent, the *thau*, the ibis, the hawk, the eye, the lotus, &c. emblems, the signification of which has hitherto escaped the inquiries of the learned, and will, perhaps, still long remain enveloped in impenetrable obscurity. The letter E indicates the row of hieroglyphics engraved on the face of the pedestal marked C. Those on the side of the pedestal opposite to D, are designated under the letter F. At G are seen the hieroglyphics on the side of the support of the two divinities opposite to A; and the
long

long string of hieroglyphics, H, is on the back of the statue, and extends from the neck of the priests down to the pedestal.

The same circumspection which compelled me to live so reclusive at Cairo, also prevented me from visiting at my ease the monuments of antiquity in its environs. I ventured to take only a hasty view of the pyramids and the subterraneous galleries in the plain of *Saccara*.

Who has not heard of the celebrated pyramids of Egypt? Whose mind has not expanded on reading the description or hearing the accounts of these prodigies of human power? Their indestructible mass, the admiration of ages and the despair of time, still loads the ground, where once flourished the ancient and proud Memphis, which revolving ages have entirely effaced from the surface of the earth. The largest of these pyramids, which is about five hundred feet in perpendicular height, and seven hundred on its inclined plane, was open. Profane and avaricious hands had violated the sacred and dark asylum of death. Its inside, now completely gutted, had been subject to pillage, and the treasures it contained had been made the booty of some barbarous usurper. From the rapid and alarming manner in which I surveyed them, I shall not attempt to give a minute description of the pyramids, or enter into a detail of those subterraneous caverns or sepulchral apartments, which are now become the abode of an incredible number of bats. I shall not follow the example of Savary, and copy the work of another Frenchman, who has described them with great care and precision. But even what Maillet has written on the subject by no means tends to fix the opinion of mankind respecting the real object of these monuments, to which the ancients gave a very distinguished rank among the wonders of the world*. Conjecture, however, will soon be dispelled; the pyramids, which so long remained untouched, are about to

* See *La Description de l'Égypte*, par Maillet, partie i. lettre vi. p. 215.

throw light upon the original design of their construction ; and our countrymen will soon tear off the thick veil that has incrufted them with the uncertainty of thousands of years.

I have had in my poffeffion two drawings of fome parts of the great pyramid, accompanied with a manufcript account, which were entrusted to me by the late Duke de Chaulnes, who had engaged me to purfue the particular recherches he fuggelted. Not having had it in my power to execute this commiffion, I left the manufcript of M. de Chaulnes at Cairo, as it might there facilitate the inquiries of fome other perfon who had fufficient leifure and opportunity to forward his views. I took copies only of the two drawings, which have not yet been published. (*See Plate XIX.*) It may be neceffary to obferve that the letters refer to remarks contained in the papers with which I was entrusted, and of which I did not think myfelf juftified in taking a copy. Confequently, an explanation of them will not be expected in my work.

The firft figure is a fimple fection, of which Mr. Dalton has given the perpective. This fection being drawn upon a much fmaller fcale than the perpective, includes a part of the chamber of the fepulchre. The drawing was made by Mr. Davifon, who had at firft been fecretary to Mr. Edward Wortley Montague, and was afterwards employed in the fame capacity by M. de Chaulnes.

Figure 2 represents the perpective view taken by Mr. Dalton of the fpace which is between the chamber of the fepulchre and the large inclined gallery. Thefe parts are in the infide of the largeft of the pyramids of Memphis, which is open. In both thefe drawings the Englifh meafures are ufed.

The point to be afcertained with thefe drawings, and the object for which they were fent by M. de Chaulnes, was to compare the two meafurements with the pyramid itfelf. The fection given by Davifon (*Fig. 1.*) exhibits only the fpaces comprifed between A, B, and C. In the drawing B, is an ifolated wall, and C is the mafon-work

work between these spaces and the gallery ; whereas, in the perspective view by Dalton (*Fig. 2.*) C is the second isolated wall, leaving another space between C and D, which there represents the same massy structure.

Two other drawings or plans are annexed to the manuscript which I have just mentioned. They are a representation of the mummy-pit in the plain of Saccara, which lies to the southward of the pyramids of Memphis. (*See Plate XX.*) The two short sides of the plan (*Fig. 1.*) indicate the two pits into which it is necessary to descend, in order to reach the subterraneous gallery made by the Arabs, and delineated by the long lower side of the same plan. The line parallel to this gallery determines the level of the ground. The distance from one pit to the other is from a hundred to a hundred and fifty yards. That which is on the left side of the plan is a fictitious aperture made by the Arabs, the real entrance being to the right. A little below are a heap of rubbish and the trunks of some palm-trees. There were also two horizontal galleries, the commencement of which is traced in the plan. The darkness, probably, prevents the entrance into the pit from being distinguished. The little line marked ooooo to the left of the trench made by the Arabs, designates the place from which the embalmed birds were mostly taken.

The general plan of the real mummy-pit, the entrance of which is on the right of the plan of *Figure 1*, is traced in *Figure 2*. It is to be observed, that the letters of the plan correspond with each other. At this place are seen the beautiful figures represented in the drawing.

If Cairo was enriched by commerce with every kind of merchandise, its markets also afforded a profusion of the necessaries of life. Its population and luxury attracted them thither in such abundance, that all the delicacies of the table might be procured at a moderate price. Every sort of fish that is caught in the Nile is there to be

found. Of these I examined three, the *bolti*, the *bayatte*, and the *benni*, which I had not before had an opportunity of observing.

The first of these fishes, already observed and described by Haffelquitz*, is, according to that naturalist, of the somewhat equivocal genus *labrus*, so called from the Latin word *labrum*, because the *labrus* of the ancients had large and thick lips. (See Plate XVI. Fig. 1.) This is the *nébuleux* of the history of fishes in the *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, a denomination taken from the cloudy shades with which the fins are undulated†. The individual from which I had this drawing taken, was a foot in length, and four inches and an half in its greatest breadth. The jaws, which are nearly of an equal size, are furnished with a row of small, slender, and closely-set teeth. Behind this row are several other teeth or points, so minute that they are scarcely perceptible; and make no other impression on the finger than the indentations of a fine file. The upper jaw is moveable, so that the fish can protrude or retract it at pleasure. The nostrils are small and oblong; the eyes are large; the bone of the head projects over each eye, and forms a kind of border or osseous eye-brow.

The scales are large, and advance in the head beyond the anterior angle of the eye. The ground of the colour of the body is white, with large blackish stripes, which descend from the back to the belly, and the tint of which gradually grows lighter. Other shades of red and blue enliven the dusky tinge on the sides of the head. The iris of the eye is of a golden colour; the fins are in general gray, and are marked with blackish spots and stripes. My drawing, and the description of Haffelquitz, render it unnecessary for me to mention the other features of its conformation.

* Voyages, partie ii. p. 50.

† *Labrus Niloticus*, L.—*Labrus Niloticus*, *cauda integra*, *pinnis dorsali*, *ani*, *caudæque nebulatis*. Arted. Gen. Pisc. p. 258.

On opening this fish, I did not find any air-bladder. It appears to inhabit the bottom of the river, as the stomach was filled with a quantity of greenish matter much resembling the moss that grows on mud; and I also found in the stomach a worm seventeen lines long, with a round body terminating in a point at both its extremities; it was of a dirty white colour, with a few reddish tints.

The *bolti* is caught in the Nile, but more generally in the small canals communicating with it, and in the pools of water remaining after the inundation. It is one of those few fishes of Egypt, the flesh of which is delicate and well-tasted. In the vicinity of Rosetta, I saw an Egyptian take a great quantity of small ones in one of these pools. He employed that kind of net which with us is called *épervier* (sweep-net). At every cast this fisherman brought up a great number of *boltis*, but no other fish.

Figure 2, in the same Plate XVI. represents one of those bad fishes, without scales, but with a naked and lubricous skin, which are very common in the Nile, and of which naturalists have made a genus called *silurus*. In Egypt this species of fish generally bears the name of *bayatte*, though I have likewise heard it called *saksatt* and *bébedé*. It is also designated by the inhabitants of the Saïd, under the denomination of *bogar*, on account of the size it attains. *Bakar*, in Arabic, signifies ox; and the people of the Saïd, who, like the peasants of every part of the world, speak their language incorrectly, pronounce it *bogar*. Forskal has given an account of this fish in his description of the animals of Egypt and Arabia*.

The predominant colour of the *bayatte* is sea-green, shaded with brown on the back and upper part of the head. Red tints are observable on the opercula of the gills, on the first dorsal fin, on the

* *Silurus bajad*; *pinna dorsi postica adiposa*, *cirrhis octo*, p. 66.—Arted. Gen. Pisc. p. 569.

pectoral fins, and also, though more faintly marked, on the ventral and caudal fins. The iris of the eye is yellow.

Although I found nothing in the stomach of some individuals of this species, but a greenish slime, it appears, nevertheless, that they can devour other fishes, for their jaws are armed with teeth, small, indeed, but at the same time closely set, and very sharp: the upper jaw is furnished with a double row of these teeth.

Bayattes are very common in the Nile. Their flesh is soft, insipid, and considered very indifferent eating. According to Forskal, these fishes attain a foot in length, but they grow to a much larger size; I have myself seen them near three feet long, and they are frequently much bigger. Indeed the Egyptian fishermen whom I consulted, in order to give me an idea of the extent of their growth, assured me that they were sometimes met with of the size of a man.

The fish, *Plate XV. Fig. 5*, might at first sight be taken for the barbel of our rivers*, to which it bears, in fact, a very great resemblance; but though it is of the same genus as the barbel, it differs from it in the convex shape of its back and belly, and particularly in the three first rays of the dorsal fin, which are so close and of so hard a consistence, that they may be considered as forming one single spine. This fish, which is very common in all parts of Egypt, is the *benni* mentioned by Forskal †, who with some reason expresses his surprise, that it could have escaped the inquiries of Hasselquitz. Another modern traveller, Mr. Bruce, has given a description and drawing of a fish of the Nile, which he supposed to be the *benni* ‡; but, in this instance, he has fallen into an error. The fish, of which he has furnished some very interesting particulars,

* *Cyprinus barbus*, L.

† *Cyprinus bynni*; *pinna dorsali radiis tredecim; tertio crasso corneo*. Forskal, *Fauna Egypt.-arab.* p. 71. *Arted. Gen. Pisc.* p. 22.

‡ Travels to discover the Source of the Nile. *Natural History*.

is of quite a distinct genus from the *benni*, as it has two dorsal fins, the cirrhi otherwise disposed; its shape, in short, and the conformation of all its parts entirely different; so that there is no principle of comparison between it and the *benni*. The latter fish, according to the observations of Forskal, as well as my own, is of the same genus as the barbel, the carp, the tench, and some other fishes well known in Europe; a genus which ichthyologists have agreed to designate by the name of *cyprinus*, and in which numerous and striking dissimilitudes will never permit them to introduce the fish erroneously considered by Mr. Bruce as the *benni*.

The upper jaw of the *benni* is a little longer than the lower; the nostrils are large; the eyes round and pretty full; four cirrhi, two of which are placed upon the upper lip, and two others at the corner of the mouth, which is without teeth; lastly, the lateral line is formed of elongated points, dividing the body into two equal parts. The scales with which it is covered are large, and shine with a silvery hue. The caudal and anal fins are of a saffron-coloured red.

The *benni* grows to a considerable size, though great numbers of small ones are caught. Its flesh is of a delicate flavour.

The lustre of its scales gives some degree of probability to the presumption, that it is the *lepidotos* (scaly), which was worshipped in ancient Egypt. We learn from a passage in Athenæus, that this sacred fish, which gave its name to a city and district, was of the genus of the carp*; indeed its silvery lustre was sufficient to make it distinguished, and to offer a preternatural and valuable object to the weakness of superstition; for it is well known, that whatever dazzles disposes the ignorant to respect and admiration.

In the month of September, a great many tit-larks † are eaten at

* Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens & les Chinois, tome i. p. 131.

† Forlouse, ou l'allouette de pré, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. & Pl. enlum. No. 574, Fig. 2.—*Alauda pratensis*, L.

Cairo. These birds are a species of larks, which, on their arrival in Egypt, keep in numerous flocks on the little patches of ground surrounded by water in the inundated plains. The bird-catchers take them with a large net, and bring them to the city in cages, in great abundance. The period of their arrival continues not many days in the beginning of September: they then disperse, and few or any tit-larks are afterwards to be seen. They arrive from the westward of Cairo, that is, from the coasts of the Mediterranean bordering upon Barbary; but as they appear to come from the sandy mountains of the Desert, they are called in Egypt *asfour dsjebali* (mountain-birds). The Provençal merchants settled at Cairo give the name of *colantine* to this species of bird, which is likewise migratory in their country.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ELECTRICITY.—METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS MADE AT ALEXANDRIA AND CAIRO.—
WINDS.—PILLARS OF SAND.—GENERAL STATE OF THE WEATHER IN EGYPT.

A FEW days previous to my arrival in Egypt, two Germans, who travelled about with an electrical machine, had made some experiments at Alexandria, Rossetta, and Cairo. They had imagined, that this would be a method of picking up a great deal of money ; but, except a small number of Europeans residing in these three towns, with a few Greeks and Syrians, they had not many spectators. They were even advised not to attempt to display the effects of their machine, and excite the astonishment of the people, who would infallibly raise against them an outcry of forcery, which might be attended with very unpleasant consequences to the electrifiers, and perhaps to the other Europeans.

I made some inquiry relative to the activity of the electric fluid in this country, but I could obtain no precise information on the subject. However, by interrogating the persons who regularly attended the experiments of the two Germans, I was induced to believe, that the electric fluid is not so powerful in Egypt as in our northern climates.

It is difficult, and indeed almost impossible, for a traveller to make an uninterrupted series of meteorological observations, which require an uncommon degree of attention, even from a sedentary man. However, I availed myself of the short stay I made at Cairo and Rossetta, to minute down with all possible accuracy the temperature of the air, as well as the state of the wind and weather, which I observed several times in the course of the day. If observations of

this nature possess any utility, it is principally when they are made in foreign countries, with the climate and state of vegetation of which they bring the reader acquainted. Besides, this knowledge is connected with other branches, both physical and moral. These reflections, as well as the certainty that few persons have made meteorological observations in the same places, have induced me to publish the following fragments. Although they are of no great extent, and not in a regular series, they will hereafter serve to complete the natural history of the climate of Egypt, and, as I have already said, that is all that, in this respect, can be expected from a traveller.

In making these observations I used mercurial thermometers: one constructed by Cappel and Moschi, philosophical instrument-makers to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, was, on one side, graduated according to the scale of Fahrenheit, and on the other, according to that of Deluc. The graduation of the other thermometer, made by Affier Périca, was according to Reaumur. These two instruments discovered a very small degree of variation, and I employed every precaution in my power to ensure the accuracy of my observations. But before I communicate those which I made myself, it may not be improper, in order to afford a more correct idea of the climate of Lower Egypt, to give an account of those made by Greaves at Alexandria, in the months of January and February, 1639. Thus, sufficient data will be furnished respecting the temperature of the principal places in that country. These observations I have transcribed from Shaw*; who says that he “copied them out of Mr. Greaves’s pocket-book, “that is deposited in the Savil study.”

* Shaw’s Travels. Collection of papers serving to illustrate his observations, p. 55.

*An Account of the Weather at ALEXANDRIA in EGYPT in the
Months of January and February, A.D. 1639.*

- “ Jan. 1. Faire, the wind little and fouthery.
- “ 2. Faire.
- “ 3. Faire ; at night it rained a little.
- “ 4. Clowdy and rainy in the afternoon, and at night.
- “ 5. Clowdy, rainy, and windy, N.W.
- “ 6. Sunday, very rainy and windy, N.W.
- “ 7. Rainy and windy, N.W. all day and night.
- “ 8. Rainy in the morning, very windy all day and night ; at the
“ latter end of the night very rainy ; the wind was N.W.
- “ 9. The morning very rainy and windy ; at night very rainy
“ and windy, N.W.
- “ 10. All day very rainy and windy, N.W. The rain falls in
“ fudden gufts, afterwards a little faire, then again clowdy and
“ rainy. At night it rained very much, and in the morning fnowed.
- “ 11. Friday, it rained ; the afternoon faire ; at night rainy, N.W.
- “ 12. Saturday, in the morning, rainy, the afternoon faire, and
“ at night little wind.
- “ 13. Sunday, faire, a little wind, N. N.W.
- “ 14. Monday, little wind, S. E. faire.
- “ 15. Faire, little wind, S. E. the air full of vapours, fo that al-
“ though no clowds, yet the body of the fun fhined not bright.
- “ 16. Faire, little wind, S. E.
- “ 17. Faire, little wind, S. E. Thefe four days, efppecially the
“ two laft, although no clowds, yet a caligo all day and night ; fo
“ that the fun gave but a weak fhadow, and the ftars little light ;
“ this caligo or hazy weather arofe partly from the rains that fell
“ before, and partly from the overflowing of Nilus.
- “ 18. Friday like Thursday, or rather worfe, E. S. E. wind g^{te}.
- “ 19. Saturday like Friday.

- “ 20. Sunday, the wind N. and cloudy, night faire.
- “ 21. Monday, the wind N.W. faire.
- “ 22. Tuesday, faire, the wind N.W.; it rained a little towards
 “ night; the wind great.
- “ 23. Wednesday, faire day and night, the wind N.W. The
 “ wind fomewhat great.
- “ 24. Cloudy, at night it rained much, N.W.
- “ 25. Sometimes faire, fometimes cloudy, N.W. About 4 P.M.
 “ it rained, fo likewise at night very much.
- “ 26. Saturday, very windy, N.W. and often rainy.
- “ 27. Sunday; in the day very windy, N.W. fometimes rainy,
 “ at night faire, no great wind; but fall of vapours, fo that the pole
 “ ftar nor the yards could be clearly feen.
- “ 28. In the day a dusky fky all over, yet not many clouds; the
 “ fun could not be feen, fo at night; in the night it rained a little;
 “ the winds east.
- “ 29. The fky full of vapours, but not fo obfcure as the 28th.
 “ A quarter of an hour before fun-fet, the fun being immerft in
 “ the vapours, about the horizon feemed for a while like burning
 “ iron, or like the moon as I have feen fometimes in an eclipfe, as
 “ ſhe grew low, or half, more or lefs, appeared, and fo by degrees
 “ till the upper edge; at laft ſhe was quite loft, though not below
 “ the horizon. This may fomething ſerve to ſhew the manner of
 “ theſe vapours above. 4 P. M. the N. N. W. begun to blow; all
 “ night faire.
- “ 30. Faire, N. N. W.
- “ 31. Faire, fo till 10 at night, then it grew dusky from ftore of
 “ vapours by the eaſt wind.
- “ Feb. 1. Cloudy at night, faire, fometimes cloudy, a very great
 “ N. W. wind and ſome rain.
- “ 2. Cloudy, faire, rainy. N. N. W. Wind great, Saturday, at
 “ night.
- “ 3. Sun-

- “ 3. Sunday, very windy, N.N.W. often rainy day and night,
 “ very cold.
- “ 4. Monday, very windy, N.N.W. day and night, often rainy,
 “ very cold.
- “ 5. Tuesday, very windy and cloudy.
- “ 6. Wednesday, little wind, N. at night obscure.
- “ 7. Thursday, obscure and dusky, little wind.
- “ 8. Faire, little wind; at night the wind northerly, and it rained
 “ much.
- “ 9. Saturday, morning rainy, afternoon faire, wind east at
 “ night.
- “ 10. Very faire, day and night wind north.
- “ 11. Faire, rainy, N.W.
- “ 12. { Faire, day and night, }
 “ 13. { }
 “ 14. { Very faire, } Little wind northerly.
 “ 15. { }
 “ 16. { }
- “ 17. I saw two spots in the sun.
- “ 18. I went to *Cairo*.
- “ 19. Very faire.
- “ 20. Faire and obscure.
- “ 21. Obscure, at night it rained much, being at *Schimome*, a
 “ great village some 50 miles from *Cairo*, on the outside of the river
 “ for fear of rogues, and there I saw boats of leather, and two men
 “ failing upon 225 pots.”

From a series of inquiries concerning the mean heat of different degrees of latitude where observations have been made, Citizen Cotte, an indefatigable observer, has given the following table, as the result of remarks made at *Cairo**:

* Journal de Physique for the month of July 1791.

“ Number of observations, 3. January $11^{\circ} 0'$. February $10^{\circ} 9'$.
“ March $14^{\circ} 5'$. April $16^{\circ} 5'$. May $20^{\circ} 5'$. June $22^{\circ} 7'$. July $23^{\circ} 7'$.
“ August $24^{\circ} 2'$. September $21^{\circ} 6'$. October $19^{\circ} 4'$. November $17^{\circ} 4'$.
“ December $12^{\circ} 5'$. Mean heat of the year $17^{\circ} 9'$.”

But I shall now proceed to the observations I myself made in the capital of Egypt.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS,

MADE AT CAIRO DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 1777.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Thermometer of Cappi and Moffi.		Therm. of Affier Périca.	Wind.	State of the Sky.	OBSERVATIONS.
		Deluc.	Fahr-enheit.	Reaum.			
18	8 morn.	23°	82°	23½°	N. E.	Covered with blackish clouds, except in that arc of the horizon comprehended between E. and S.W. which is almost entirely clear.	The wind was rather high during the course of the day; it blew in squalls, and increased in the evening.
	Noon.	26½	91	27	N.	Clear.	
	6 even.	26	89	26½	N. E.	Clear, except in that arc of the horizon comprehended between E. and S. W. which is foggy.	
19	8 morn.	22	81	22½	N. E.	Several large blackish clouds spread all over the sky, except the eastern quarter	The wind was rather high during the whole day.
	Noon.	25	88	25½	N. N. E.	Clear.	
20	6 even.	25	88	25½	N.	Clear.	The wind, which was rather high during the whole day, blew exceedingly hard at 6 o'clock in the evening; and then the northern quarter was darkened by the sand that the wind had raised.
	8 morn.	23	82	22½	N. N. E.	A few large flying clouds.	
	Noon.	26¾	91¾	27½	N.	Clear.	
21	6 even.	26¾	91¾	27½	N.	Free from clouds.	The wind very high.
	8 morn.	21¾	80½	22¾	W. N.W.	The whole sky scattered over with blackish clouds, of little thickness, which fly with great rapidity.	
	Noon.	26	90	26½	N. N.W.	Free from clouds.	
22	6 even.	27	92	27½	N.	Clear.	The wind not so high as in the morning. Less wind than at noon; it afterwards abated, and was very moderate at 8 o'clock in the evening. A few flashes of lightning were then seen in the eastern quarter, without any thunder being heard. The sky was still perfectly clear and serene.
	8 morn.	22½	82	23	N.	Clear.	
	Noon.	25½	89	26	N. N. E.	A few small flying clouds.	
22	6 even.	26	90	26¾	N. N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze. Fresh breeze. Fresh breeze, which abated after sun-set; and during the night the weather was calm and serene.

TRAVELS IN UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT.

Day of the Month	Hour.	Thermometer of Cappi and Moffi.		Therm. of Affier Périca.		Wind.	State of the Sky.	OBSERVATIONS.
		Deluc.	Fahr-enheit	Reaum.				
23	8 morn.	21 $\frac{3}{4}$ ^o	80 $\frac{1}{2}$ ^c	22 $\frac{3}{4}$ ^o		E.	Several flying clouds.	Fresh breeze.
	Noon.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25		N. E.	A few small flying clouds.	High wind.
	6 even.	26	90	26 $\frac{1}{2}$		N.	Clear.	Wind high, and blowing, now and then, in hard squalls.
24	8 morn.	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	79 $\frac{3}{4}$	22		N. E.	A few flying clouds.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	22 $\frac{3}{4}$	82	23 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. E.	Clear	Light breeze.
	6 even.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	85 $\frac{1}{2}$	24 $\frac{3}{4}$		N. by E.	A few flying clouds.	Wind very high; and the horizon, though not covered with clouds, is so remarkably hazy, that it is dark and appears foggy, especially in the western quarter.
25	8 morn.	20 $\frac{1}{2}$	77	21		N. E.	Clear and serene, only a small number of light clouds on the horizon, chiefly in the eastern quarter.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25		N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.
	6 even.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25		N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze. After sun-set the wind increased, and continued to blow strong during the whole night.
26	8 morn.	22	81	22 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. N. E.	Flying clouds.	Wind very high.
	Noon.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. N. E.	Clear.	High wind.
	4 even.	25	88	25 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. E.	Clear.	High wind.
	6 even.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25		N. E.	Clear.	High wind.
27	8 morn.	21	79	21 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. N. E.	Clear.	During the whole of this day there was little wind; but about two hours after sun-set it freshened, and blew strong till daylight.
	Noon.	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	84 $\frac{1}{2}$	24 $\frac{3}{4}$		N.	Clear.	
	6 even.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25		N.	Clear.	
28	8 morn.	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	80	22		N. E. by N.	Almost entirely covered with thick clouds.	Although the wind is but faint, the clouds fly with swiftness from the quarter whence it proceeds.
	Noon.	25	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	6 even.	25	88	25 $\frac{1}{2}$		N.	Clear.	Light breeze.
29	8 morn.	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	80	22		N. E.	Almost entirely covered with clouds.	Light breeze during the whole day.
	Noon.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. by E.	Clear.	
30	6 even.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. by E.	Clear.	
	8 morn.	21	79	21 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	84	23 $\frac{3}{4}$		N. E. by E.	Clear.	Very fresh breeze.
	6 even.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. E. by E.	Dappled in the eastern quarter.	High wind. It moderated at sun-set.
31	8 morn.	21	79	21 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		N.	Clear.	Steady breeze.
	6 even.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$		N. N. E.	The horizon very misty, particularly to the westward.	Light breeze.

Result of the preceding Table.

FROM the 18th of August to the 31st inclusive, the hottest day was the 21st. The thermometer of Cappi and Moffi indicated, in the afternoon, 27° , according to the scale of Deluc, and 92° , according to that of Fahrenheit. The thermometer of Reaumur was at a little more than $27\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. In the morning there were some clouds that were soon dispersed by the violence of the W. N. W. wind, which gradually moderated on its getting round to the north, and the sky remained clear the rest of the day. The blackish clouds which the westerly wind had driven to the eastward, and the heat of the day, produced in that quarter, in the evening, some small though very bright flashes of lightning, but unaccompanied by thunder. This was the only lightning that I saw in the course of this month.

The coolest day was the 24th. The thermometer, in the afternoon, stood as follows: by the scale of Deluc, $22\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$; by that of Fahrenheit a little more than 82° , and by that of Reaumur $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. In the morning and evening the sky was scattered over with a few flying clouds; but in the middle of the day it was clear. There was a light breeze from the N. E. during the whole day, but it blew very strong towards sun-set. The horizon was covered with a thick mist, which was more dense to the west, the opposite quarter to that of the wind.

The difference then between the hottest day and the coolest was, according to the scale of Deluc, $4\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$, and the mean term of the heat $25\frac{1}{5}^{\circ}$.

By Fahrenheit's scale, the difference was about 10° , and the mean term 87° .

By Reaumur's scale, the difference was about 4° , and the mean term $25\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$.

During these fourteen days the wind was constantly to the northward, and always varied from north to east, except on the 21st, the hottest day, when the wind, in the morning, shifted to the

W. N. W.

W. N. W. At noon it came round to the N. N. W. and in the evening settled again at north. The W. N. W. wind, which, with respect to Cairo, crosses a great extent of dry and burning sands, must be, *cæteris paribus*, much hotter than the N. or N. N. E. wind, and even than the N. E. which come all from the sea, and pass over cultivated spots, different branches of the Nile, canals, several lakes, and other inundated lands.

Month of September, 1777.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Thermometer of Capi and Mofii.		Therm. of Affier Périca.	Wind.	State of the Sky.	OBSERVATIONS.
		Deluc.	Fahr-enheit.	Reaum.			
1	8 morn.	21°	79°	21 $\frac{1}{2}$ °	N. N. E.	The horizon covered with thick black clouds, particularly to the westward.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	23	83	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	6 even.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Thick clouds to the westward.	Light breeze; after sunset it increased.
2	8 morn.	21	79	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	A few clouds, thicker and in greater number to the westward.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	23	83	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.
	6 even.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.
3	8 morn.	20	76 $\frac{1}{2}$	20 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	A few large, black, and very thick clouds.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	82	23	N. N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	6 even.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Clear.	Calm.
4	8 morn.	20 $\frac{1}{2}$	77	21	N. N. E.	The arc of the horizon comprehended between the N. and the W. S. W. covered with thick black clouds.	Calm.
	Noon.	23	83	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	6 even.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.
5	8 morn.	21	79	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	The whole sky covered with very black and very thick clouds. Dreadful weather.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	84	24	N.	Cleared up.	Fresh breeze.
	6 even.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.
6	8 morn.	22	81	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Some clouds, particularly in the northern quarter.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	84	24	N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	6 even.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25	N. N. E.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.
7	8 morn.	20	76 $\frac{1}{2}$	20 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	Noon.	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	83	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	6 even.	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	82	23	N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.
8	8 morn.	19 $\frac{1}{2}$	75	20	N.	Clear.	Calm.
	Noon.	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	80	22	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.
	6 even.	22	81	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Thermometer of Cappi and Moffi.		Therm. of Affier Périca.		Wind.	State of the Sky.	OBSERVATIONS.
		Deluc.	Fahr-enheit.	Reaum.				
9	8 morn.	18½°	73°	19°	N. N. E.	Small clouds scattered here and there.	Light breeze.	
	Noon.	21	79	21½	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.	
10	6 even.	21½	80	22	N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.	
	8 morn.	19	74½	19½	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.	
11	Noon.	21½	80	22	N.		Light breeze.	
	6 even.	22	81	22½	N.		Fresh breeze.	
12	8 morn.	19	74½	19½	N.	Some small and not very thick clouds, but distant from each other.	Light breeze.	
	Noon.	21	81	22½	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.	
13	6 even.	22½	81½	22½	N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.	
	8 morn.	19	74½	19½	N.	Some clouds to the eastward.	Light breeze.	
14	Noon.	21	79	21½	N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.	
	6 even.	22	81	22½	N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.	
15	8 morn.	19	74½	19½	N. N. E.	Clear.	Gentle breeze.	
	Noon.	21	79	21½	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.	
16	6 even.	22	81	22½	N. N. E.	Clear.	High wind.	
	8 morn.	19	74½	19½	N. N. E.	A great many large black clouds, especially in the eastern quarter.	Light breeze.	
17	Noon.	22½	82.	23	N. N. E.	Clear.	High wind, which still increased in the afternoon.	
	6 even.	23	83	23½	N. N. E.	Clear.	Very high wind.	
18	8 morn.	19½	75	20	N. E.	Clouds all over the sky.	High wind.	
	Noon.	23½	82	23	N. N. E.	Clear.	High wind.	
19	6 even.	23	83	23½	N. E.	Clear.	Very high wind.	
	8 morn.	20½	77	21	N.	The whole sky covered with thick and very black clouds.	High wind. The clouds are flying with great rapidity.	
20	Noon.	22	81	22½	N.	Clear.	Very high wind.	
	6 even.	23	83	23½	N.	Clear.	Very high wind.	
21	8 morn.	20	76	20½	N. E. by N.	The whole sky covered with clouds, except in that part of the horizon from which the wind proceeds. These clouds are gathering in the S.W.	High wind.	
	Noon.	22	81	22½	N. N. E.	Clear.	High wind.	
22	6 even.	22	81	22½	N. E. by N.	Clear.	High wind.	
	8 morn.	19½	75	20	N. E.	Loaded with clouds.	Calm.	
23	Noon.	23	83	23½	N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.	
	6 even.	23	83	23½	N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.	
24	8 morn.	19½	75	20	N. E.	Some small clouds in the northern quarter.	Light breeze. The clouds, however, fly very swiftly.	
	Noon.	21½	80	22	N. E.	Clear.	Light breeze.	
25	6 even.	22	81	22½	N. N. E.	Clear.	High wind.	
	8 morn.	20	76	20½	N.	Clouds to the northward.	Calm.	
26	Noon.	23	83	23½	N.	Clear.	Light breeze.	
	6 even.	23	83	23½	N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.	
27	8 morn.	21	79	21½	N.	Black clouds over the whole surface of the sky.	High wind.	
	Noon.	22	81	22½	N.	Clear.	High wind.	
28	6 even.	23	83	23½	N.	Clear.	Very high wind.	

N. B. Having at this time left Cairo, I was unable to complete the Month.

Result of the preceding Table.

THE month of September was much cooler than the month of August.

The hottest day was the 5th, on which the thermometer of Cappi and Mossi indicated, in the afternoon, 25° by Deluc's scale, and 88° by that of Fahrenheit; Reaumur's thermometer was at $25\frac{1}{2}$. There was a light breeze from the northward in the morning; the sky was entirely covered with thick black clouds, which seemed to announce the most dreadful storm; but the wind having increased in the morning, gradually dispersed all these clouds, and in the evening the sky was quite clear.

The coolest day was the 9th. The first thermometer gave me, in the afternoon, $21\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ by Deluc's scale, and by Fahrenheit's 88° ; Reaumur's thermometer 22° . In the morning the wind was at N.N.E. and before noon it shifted to N. blowing a light breeze, and the sky was fine.

The difference, then between the hottest day and the coolest was, by Deluc's scale, $3\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, and the mean term of the heat $23\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$.

By Fahrenheit's scale the difference is 8° , and the mean term 84° .

By Reaumur's scale the difference is $3\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, and the mean term $23\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$.

During these twenty-one days the wind varied from N.E. to N. from which point it blew the most frequently, and never got to the westward of it.

It is well known that land winds do not blow with equal strength or with uninterrupted continuance; but perhaps there is no part of the world where they are more unequal and more unsteady than at Cairo and in all Upper Egypt; this country being nothing more than a tongue of land shut in between two chains of elevated mountains that break the direction and strength of the winds, which being pent up in the gorges of these mountains, burst forth with violence
and

and a whirling motion that very frequently raise in the plains vast pillars of sand.

It may also have been remarked, by the two preceding tables (and this is a constant observation, almost without an exception, which I made during my whole stay at Cairo and in Upper Egypt), that in the morning the sky is covered with clouds more or less dense, and more or less numerous, which fly with great rapidity, although frequently no wind is to be felt at the time upon the surface of the earth. In the forenoon these clouds disperse as the sun rises. In general, the wind also increases, and by ten o'clock in the morning it is uncommon for the sky not to be entirely clear for the rest of the day. In the evening, at sun-set, the horizon is loaded with vapours, and especially in the western quarter, where they are more dense. At night, the sky is clear and serene, and the clouds only appear with the dawn of day. It very seldom happens in this climate that the atmosphere experiences other changes, or varies from this sort of uniformity.

From the end of September to November I was no where sufficiently stationary to continue my meteorological observations, and it was not till the beginning of November that I was able to resume them at Rosetta. In this interval I lost my thermometer by Deluc and Fahrenheit. Before my arrival in Egypt I had lost a similar one. I only mention this to shew how difficult it is for a person who travels in distant countries to take care of different instruments for which he may have occasion; and how many precautions must be taken to prevent those instruments from being broken to pieces by the awkwardness of the people about him.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

PROJECT OF A JOURNEY INTO ABYSSINIA.—THE MANNER IN WHICH THE AUTHOR SUPPLIED THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THE MEANS FURNISHED HIM BY THE GOVERNMENT.—DISGUST WITH WHICH TRAVELLERS ARE OVERWHELMED.—PREPARATIONS FOR A JOURNEY INTO UPPER EGYPT.—FACILITY OF THE ORIENTALS IN SPEAKING LANGUAGES.—SYRIAN INTERPRETER.—BOULAC.—CURLEWS.—BATHS.—EMBABÉ.—BUTTER—LUPIN.—OLD CAIRO.—JOSEPH'S GRANARIES.—AQUEDUCT.—NILOMETER.—GIZAH.

TO penetrate into Abyssinia; to visit immense and interesting countries in the interior of that part of the globe which is the least known; to do honour to my nation by an important expedition, which an Englishman, aided by all the assistance and by all the means that a government can command, had recently attempted with success; in short, to compensate, by a bold and glorious enterprise, for the narrow conception and the niggardly ideas with which the old government of France accompanied missions of this nature, as well as to increase the still more niggardly means that it appropriated to their execution, was a project ever uppermost in my mind; and I left nothing unattempted that could ensure its success. Having at my disposal only a moderate sum, and such as would have been barely sufficient to make a journey through some parts of Europe, I followed the plan I had adopted in the other expeditions with which I had been entrusted, and which I was unwilling to relinquish; that is, I made an addition from my own purse to the allowance I received from the hands of parsimony, which was then the ordinary attendant upon useful enterprises; while the excess of liberality and profusion covered with a fatal splendour the caprices of luxury, or the attempts of a delusive glory, and not unfrequently those of the most shameful immorality.

I call to witness all those who, like myself, were sent abroad; there is not one of them who has not had reason to complain, and has not suffered from the spirit of covetousness which directed their mission; there is not one of them who has not become the victim of his zeal; there is not one of them who has not been encouraged by promises before his departure, and been left unsupported in the course of his travels; in a word, there is not one of them who, after having been the dupe of deceitful promises, after having endured the inquietude of penury and the horrors of dereliction, in the midst of enterprises equally painful and glorious, has not also, on his return, been reduced to the humiliating necessity of soliciting in vain the slightest indemnification; even frequently the reimbursement of the sums he had himself advanced; and of fruitlessly dancing attendance upon an insolent clerk in office, who overwhelmed him with haughtiness and disdain.

This sort of contempt, in which great and disinterested undertakings were affected to be held, was one of the vices that infected the atmosphere of the court. Self-love, which transforms the statesman into the mean slave of his passions; intrigue, which, sometimes supported by ambitious opulence, sometimes gracefully carried on by the most seducing as well as the most unbridled depravation of manners, had rendered it an abode inaccessible to the man whose soul, elevated and enlarged with the love of his country, disdained to stoop to those shameful resources of corruption, and to sully the nobleness of his sentiments, and the lustre of commendable actions, by vile expedients, although they were the most direct means of his obtaining justice. Accordingly, the man whose only merit consisted in utility was sure to be repulsed. He was sickened by a succession of disgusting treatment, and the most undisguised efforts were employed to excite his regret, and make him repent of his labours. He who had claims upon the national gratitude, was slighted by a government which had long renounced the office of being its interpreter; and

and a just recompence was so difficult to obtain, their fordid parsimony contrasted in so grievous a manner with that prodigality with which favour paid the train of its adorers, that a man, possessed of the smallest degree of pride, preferred abandoning his claim to supporting it by solicitations too frequently ineffectual, and always degrading.

From this line of conduct I never deviated. Proud of having, in the prosecution of my labours, no other incentive than the love of my country, I have disinterestedly pursued a career in which I might have met with some success, had I been better seconded, had my inclinations been turned to better account, and more advantage been derived from a zeal which, far from being damped, was only stimulated by obstacles. Never have I been seen teasing the man in power with my importunities, or servilely paying my court to underlings; and if a just remuneration did not follow the simple exposition of my claims, I withdrew, and spoke of them no more. Better satisfied with generously devoting my services to the public good, than with a recompence that would have lessened their merit, I congratulated myself on having, at least endeavoured to be useful, if I had not been so in reality, without my exertions having been biassed by any view of personal interest. My conscience made me enjoy, at the expense of my purse, that real satisfaction which can never be felt by an interested mind. But this spirit of pride and independence, although injurious to my fortune, procured me, at least, some consequence, and I often received praises in return for my money.

I therefore endeavoured, at my own expense, to find means to penetrate into Abyssinia. The route by the Red Sea appeared to me the least difficult: I proposed to go first to *Dsjedda*, and from thence to *Souaquem* and *Arkiko*. Accordingly I requested a French merchant to conduct me to the Copts who traded with India by way of Suez, and who were owners of the miserable craft in which men and merchandise are conveyed, with great delay and risk, through the rocks

and shoals that skirt the coast of Arabia, of which these kind of vessels never lose sight. But I must have waited a long time for a passage to *Dsjedda*, and should probably have been detained there still longer, before I could have met with an opportunity of landing upon the shores of Ethiopia. These reflections determined me to take the route of Upper Egypt, though it was not perfectly safe. A party of Mamalûks attached to Ismael Bey, whom Murad had just put to flight, had retreated thither, and deranged the organization of the governments of these districts, which was, no doubt, always very imperfect, yet was sometimes capable of affording protection. Besides, the troubles, though ever so trifling, opened a door to the depredations of the Arabs, and to the robberies of the *fellabs*; and such dangers ever existing, even in times of tranquillity, became inevitable, when the country was convulsed by an uninterrupted succession of disorder and tumult.

But these circumstances did not deter me; and if the desire of visiting a country with which I was unacquainted had not induced me to surmount difficulties, the tiresome life I led at Cairo would have been sufficient to have determined me to persevere. I was anxious to quit a city where the traveller was confined to a narrow space, the limits of which he could not pass without exposing himself, as well as others, to danger; and where the name of European was a title of infamy, and an excitement to insult and vexation.

I obtained from Murad Bey orders, addressed to all the commanders of Upper Egypt, directing them to afford me assistance and protection. To these he added a letter to *Ismaïn-Abou-Ali*, a very powerful Arabic prince, by whose aid Murad had been restored to the office of *sheick el belled*. He wrote to his friend, that understanding his health was impaired, he had sent him a skilful physician, with whom he would be satisfied, and whom he recommended to him as a person whose welfare he had at heart. Thus was I transformed into a physician, and a physician even to princes; and

to this character I am indebted for my good fortune in escaping from the dangers that awaited me in Upper Egypt.

I also procured letters from the superior of the missionaries of the *Propaganda*, as they are styled, who have four houses for the reception of monks in Upper Egypt. What effect this recommendation produced upon these monks, who were no less contemptible than those of the desert of Nitria, will appear in the sequel.

A French physician, who was come from Aleppo to Cairo, with the intention of proceeding to India by the way of the Red Sea, was detained by some unforeseen obstacles in the latter of these two cities. He had brought from Aleppo a Maronite Christian, who spoke seven languages with much facility, though without understanding their principles. This Frenchman, having apparently relinquished his journey, was prevailed on to part with the Syrian, whose unsettled disposition had induced him to wish to come into my service. I conceived that he would prove to me a very valuable acquisition, but he turned out to be a stupid and dangerous villain.

It is truly surprising with what fluency the Orientals, except the Turks and Arabs, whose superstitious pride prevents them from learning any other language than that of the Koran, speak the different idioms, even those of the nations of Europe. I have often envied this natural talent of the Orientals, and the facility with which they acquire the use of it, never having myself had an aptness for the study of languages. It was by no means uncommon to meet with some who were as good linguists as the Syrian I had made my interpreter, and who spoke French very well, as indeed he did, although he had learnt it only by keeping company with the small number of our merchants residing at Aleppo.

I made a bargain with the *reis*, or master of a little *kanja*, to carry me to Upper Egypt. The boat was to be wholly at my disposal; no other person was to be admitted on board, and I was at liberty to proceed or to stop at my pleasure. On these conditions I
agreed

agreed to pay the *reis* and his boat's crew, at the rate of a patacke and three quarters, about nine livres, a day.

The period of our departure was fixed; but on our arrival at *Boulac*, we found it impossible to think of ascending the Nile. The wind blew so very hard from the southward, that every attempt to proceed against its violence would have been fruitless. Happy at having quitted so gloomy and uncomfortable an abode as Cairo, and not being inclined to return thither to wait for more favourable weather, I preferred spending the day at *Boulac*. The better to disguise my European appearance, I had left off the *feste à la Druze*, and adorned my head with a red turban, so that, with the other parts of my dress, I passed for a Turk, and was at liberty to go every where, without attracting any particular attention. This precaution had been suggested to me before my departure by Murad Bey himself: "Disguise thyself carefully," said he; "dress in such a manner that the most discerning may not be able to know thee for a *Nazareen*. Thou must be such in the presence of my *kiaschefs*, and of all those who have authority, and whose duty it is to afford thee protection; but before those *dogs of fellabs*, appear to be a Mussulman; even pass thyself occasionally for one of my officers; this is the only way of escaping from their wickedness and barbarity."

I continued the whole day, with my pipe in my hand, walking along the banks of the Nile, where a multitude of people, employed in moving bales of goods, exhibited all the stir and bustle of commercial ports. Tiers of boats were gradually brought down in the water as they received their lading; others, whose cargoes were discharging, rose above the rest; while all of them, tossed about by the waves raised by a boisterous wind, kept their long lateen yards in continual motion. The busy and diversified scene which the port of *Boulac* offered to my view, made the moments that I was obliged to pass there glide away unperceived.

Notwithstanding the noise upon the banks of the river, some wild ducks, which, however, were not very wild, were swimming upon a part of the water where the surface was unruffled by the wind. I also saw two curlews, of a deep green plumage, with cupreous reflections. This, I presume, is the species of which Buffon has given an account, under the denomination of the green, or Italian curlew*. These birds, which, upon the whole, bear a great resemblance to the *wood curlew* of Guiana†, are migratory in Egypt, where they follow the course of the Nile as far as the cataracts. The Arabs call them *schéléck*.

In the evening I went to the baths, which, at *Boulac*, are very handsome. I had accustomed myself, at Cairo, to the use of baths of this sort, and I was fond of frequenting them. There was one near the quarter of the town in which the French resided, and I seldom missed going thither for many days at a time. It is well known that these baths of the East, described by all travellers, and a bad imitation of which I have seen at Paris, are very extensive buildings, where people bathe without water, and where warm and humid vapours moisten the body, and mingling with the sweat which they occasion, run down in large drops from every limb. The person intending to take a bath, extends himself upon the heated marble, rendered slippery by its humidity, when a servant, whose hand is covered with a little square bag of coarse camlet, rubs him pretty roughly, loosening and rolling over the skin the accumulations of vapour impregnated with sweat. The bather gives him notice, by gentle strokes with the palm of his hand, to turn on one side, on the other, on the back, or on the belly. He squeezes, and seems to knead gently, every part of the body, giving a jerk to the members

* Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 819.—*Tantalus falcinellus*, L.

† Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 820.—*Arquata viridis sylvatica*.—*Flamand des bois*, Barrère, Franc. Equinox. p. 127. et Ornitholog. p. 74.

one after the other, and making the joints crack, and even the muscles of the chest. After the person bathing has been well cleaned, and had his limbs suppled, the same man conducts him towards a basin into which warm water is running, and having covered him with a thick coat of soap, throws water over him in large quantities, which, in falling upon the body, carries off the lather of the soap. Of all the process of these baths, this was the part that incommoded me the most. The quantity of water thrown upon my face checked my breath even almost to suffocation, and often obliged me to call for quarter from my pitiless soufer. The person bathing is then taken back into the first room where he had left his clothes, and there laid down and wrapped up in dry cloths, which are changed as soon as they imbibe the humidity from the body, young boys softly pressing every part of it, in order to dry it perfectly and by degrees. The same boys afterwards rub the soles of the feet with a piece of pumice-stone. During these operations, which cannot be more delicately performed, I generally enjoyed a delightful repose, and found it impossible to help yielding to a sort of voluptuous languor.

The little bag or rubber of the Orientals has been substituted for the currycomb of the ancients, to which it is certainly preferable. Being made of stuff, it is much softer, and draws from the pores all the humours that obstruct them, far better than the metal instrument with which the Romans scraped their skin. But although the baths in Turkey, and particularly at Cairo, are very handsome buildings, they are, in point of grandeur and magnificence, far inferior to those constructed by the Romans in the time of their emperors. The ruins of them which remain, strike us with astonishment. Vitruvius has given a description of these superb buildings, which were of so prodigious an extent, that Ammianus Marcellinus compares them to provinces*. All the most brilliant productions of luxury, all the

* *Potius provinciarum instar quam ullius edificii forma.*

most voluptuous inventions of effeminacy, were there collected. Every agreeable sensation which air and water are capable of affording was there to be enjoyed; and the bathing machines being moveable, and suspended in the air, to the pleasure of bathing was added that of being balanced and swung.

More simple, and, perhaps, more agreeable, the baths of Turkey and Egypt are very much frequented by the Orientals in general. They had also many attractions in my eyes, and were, indeed, the only thing at Cairo in which I took a pleasure. The most perfect tranquillity, and the strictest decency, reigned within their walls. Although several persons were assembled there, no conversation was suffered in the dressing-room, round which the beds or sofas were placed. Every one is allowed to enjoy, in stillness and silence, those sweet and truly inexpressible sensations which delicate pressures produce.

The women have fixed days and hours for bathing. No man then approaches the baths. Other females, appointed to attend them, make them successively go through all the ceremonies practised in places of this sort, but which are performed, if possible, with more care and delicacy than upon the men. Rose water is not spared; and the smoke of perfumes is mixed with humid vapours. The women not having, like the other sex, renounced one of the most beautiful ornaments of nature, the attention paid to their head of hair is, in the toilet of the baths, carried to the utmost pitch of refinement. To clean the hair, they make use of a kind of clay which is brought from Turkey on purpose; and they also sprinkle it with odoriferous waters. But it is not solely from motives of health, or the desire of cleanliness, that they are induced to visit the baths; they likewise make here their parties of pleasure. Peaceful silence ceases to reign; the young and beautiful captives give a loose to gaiety, and indulge themselves in mirthful pranks, which, if scandal may be credited, are not always innocent.

Opposite

Opposite to *Boulac*, upon the west bank of the Nile, is the small village of *Embabé*, famous for the excellent quality of the butter that is there made. This is the only place in Egypt where butter can be eaten fresh; every where else in that country it is good for nothing.

The fertile plains which surround *Embabé* on the western side, are enriched with several kinds of culture. In particular, they produce a species, or rather a variety of lupins*, of the seeds of which there is a great consumption in Egypt. These are boiled with salt and water, and eaten, after being stripped of the thick and hard skin with which they are covered. They are sold ready dressed in the streets and markets. The village of *Embabé* supplies Lower Egypt with them, where they are called *Embaben*, from the name of the place whence they come; however, the general appellation of this sort of lupin is *termesfs*. They can neither be used in soups nor in ragouts, on account of their being so hard; but when boiled with salt, they are very much liked by the Egyptians. Every where in the streets people were to be seen shelling *termesfs*. The Christians of the East, by no means emulous of imitating their tyrants in abstaining from strong liquors, eat lupins, as a stimulus for drinking brandy, which they frequently do to excess. Flour is also made from them, which is used like that of farinaceous plants; it is particularly well calculated for cleaning the hands and softening the skin. The stalk of the lupin, reduced to ashes, is preferred to other charcoal in the composition of gunpowder; so that in the different parts of this plant several kinds of utility are combined.

The fourth wind having moderated, we left *Boulac* on the 21st of March, 1778, at eight o'clock in the morning; but our voyage was of short duration. The *reis* having pretended that his boat stood in need of some repairs, we stopped at Old Cairo, the *Mafr el Atik* of the

* *Lupinus termis; calycibus alternis, appendiculatis, labio utroque integro, acuto.*
Forsskal, Flora Egypt.-arab. p. 131.

Arabs, at half a league from *Boulac*. This town, which indicates the site of the Babylon of Egypt, is the port for the boats that come down from the Saïd, as *Boulac* is that of the Delta. Here, in the midst of the Mahometan mosques, the Jews have a synagogue, and the Catholics a convent and a church; but the Copts, as being upon their own ground, have reserved to themselves that which is reckoned by the devout the most precious spot; this is a grotto, or low chapel, in which, according to a pious tradition, the Virgin lived some time with the infant Jesus, when they were obliged to flee into Egypt. Such traditions are never unprofitable to the monks. When the Roman Catholics wish to visit this chapel, they pay the Copts for admission; and if devotion carries them so far as to have masses celebrated, they also pay the Coptic monks for this complaisance, and, in their turn, take care to be paid by those who employ them.

At Old Cairo are to be seen Joseph's granaries, if the name of granaries can be given to a large space of ground, surrounded by walls twenty feet high, and divided into sorts of courts, without any roof or covering, in which is deposited the corn brought from Upper Egypt as the fiscal duties, and where it becomes the food of a multitude of birds, and the receptacle of their dung. The walls of this enclosure are badly constructed; their appearance by no means announces an ancient building, and nothing but the love of the marvellous could have attributed their erection to the patriarch Joseph.

Another work of the Arabs, but which is remarkable for the boldness as well as the beauty of its construction, and the only one worth seeing in the ancient city of Cairo, is the aqueduct that conveys the water of the Nile into the castle. It is supported by three hundred and fifty narrow and very lofty arcades. The water is raised by a chain pump with four wheels, which is worked by oxen.

In front of Old Cairo, the Nile leaves, in the middle of its bed, an island of about five hundred yards in breadth, where is built the

the *mekkias*, which signifies *measure*. It is there, in fact, that upon the graduations of a pillar the rise of the river is measured, and from the observations made thereon, public criers go about the streets of Cairo, proclaiming the successive heights of the water, in which are centred all hopes of fertility and abundance. It is thought that this *Nilometer* was built by the Arabs. The island is called *Roudda*, or *gardens*, because it is laid out in gardens, and inhabited only by gardeners.

On the other side of the islet of *Roudda*, the town of *Gizah* extends along the west bank of the Nile. The numerous date-trees by which it is surrounded, interspersed with the lofty turrets of the mosques, and the river, whose waves wash the very foundation of the houses, give it at a distance a very pleasing aspect. The French merchants at Cairo there had a villa, close upon the bank of the Nile, and they sometimes went thither to breathe a pure air, instead of the infectious exhalations in the midst of which they usually lived, and to seek some recreation, as well as to relieve their mind from the state of inquietude that oppressed them in the city. *Gizah* recalls the recollection of great events. Memphis stood in its environs, and it is still the nearest spot to the most valuable monuments which ancient Egypt has left behind of her glory and her power. The pyramids are at the distance of only two or three leagues, and they are indiscriminately called the *Pillars of Memphis*, or the *Pillars of Gizah*.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

DEPARTURE FROM OLD CAIRO.—SHEICK ITMANN.—QUARRIES.—MONASTERIES.—FISHES AND BIRDS.—WHIRLWINDS AND PILLARS OF SAND.—WATERING OF THE GROUNDS.—PARTICULARS OF THE VOYAGE.—HOUSES OF THE VILLAGES OF UPPER EGYPT.—CARTHAMUS.—A SOUTHERLY GALE.—BENISOUEF.—ACCIDENT ON THE VOYAGE.—MOUNTAINS.—MANNER IN WHICH THE WOMEN OF UPPER EGYPT CARRY WATER.

WITH no small difficulty I collected my *reis* and his sailors, who were engaged in conversation with their acquaintances, and never thought of the repairs necessary to the boat. I had still more trouble to make them determine to set off. A fresh breeze from the northward having succeeded the hot and contrary south wind, we left Old Cairo on the evening of the day of our arrival. Two immense lateen sails, drawing on different sides of the masts, so as not to becalm each other*, rapidly drove on our light *kanja*; and her prow, whitened by foaming waves, easily opened itself a passage, notwithstanding the resistance of the stream. We stopped towards night, at about eight leagues from Old Cairo, opposite to *Sheick Itmann*, a small village, the houses or huts of which are built of mud. Its appearance is not the less pleasing. It is surrounded by groves of date-trees, whose verdant tops are supported by straight and slender stems, while others, bent down by the wind, and intertwining apparently to shade the flat roofs of the houses, enliven the gray and obscure tints of the village, and render it a very picturesque and interesting landscape.

* This disposition of two lateen sails is, by French seamen, called *oreilles de lièvre* (hare's ears), one of the sails being set so as to draw on the starboard side of the main mast, and the other on the larboard side of the fore mast, or *vice versa*.

Several egrets came to pass the night upon these date-trees, the beautiful green leaves of which, contrasting with the dazzling white of their plumage, produced a most charming effect.

From Old Cairo, the east shore of the Nile is skirted by the same chain of mountains which begins at New Cairo. In them are seen great cavities, formed by the digging out of stone; and in the opposite side of the mountain which overlooks the Nile, excavations have been made nearly over its whole surface. It is probable, that, from this place, in ancient times, the stones necessary for the construction of Memphis and its pyramids were extracted. The masses of which these monuments were built, are exactly of the same texture as the calcareous rock of the mountain; and this circumstance would have been sufficient to overthrow the opinion of some moderns, who imagined that the pyramids were composed only of factitious stones, if Herodotus, the most ancient of the historians who have written on Egypt, had not positively asserted, that upon the mountain of Arabia (the chain which is on the side of the Red Sea) may be seen the quarries from which the pyramids of Memphis were hewn*.

At a full quarter of a league on this side of *Sheick Itmann*, upon the east bank of the river, is *Toura*, which has retained something of its ancient name of *Troja*. On each side, and at intermediate distances, are seen those useless buildings which, under the name of monasteries, contain societies of men still more useless. They were inhabited by Coptic monks.

Opposite to *Sheick Itmann*, a village called *Mazara* (a press) appears on the same side as *Toura*, but at a greater distance from the water-side. Above the former place there is a rather narrow canal, which extends not very far to the westward.

I purchased some small *bennis*, fishes of which I have spoken in Chapter XXXVI. They were caught by a fisherman with a sweep-

* Liv. ii. § 8. trad. de Larcher, tome ii. p. 7.

net, which he cast from the bank of the river: he had taken no other sort. But, if the different species of fish were scarce in the waters of *Sbeick Itmann*, its vicinity was enlivened by numerous flocks of birds. The lively and restless wagtail was running about the fields, and vibrating its long tail; while the ignoble kite, the same bird which at Cairo is a denizen of the city, interrupted with his shrill and mournful cry the amorous cooings of the turtle-doves that were perched upon the date-trees; and swallows, with pointed wings, rapidly skimmed through the air.

On the 22d, towards noon, we continued to ascend the Nile. I soon discovered up the country the pyramids of *Saccara*, as well as the town of that name, celebrated for the mummies of men and animals that are preserved in its vast catacombs. We passed in front of *Schim*, a village situated at some distance from the west bank. A little higher up, we saw, on the opposite side, a place named *Berdrifgè*, and, at six o'clock in the evening, we stopped facing *Kafr Iaïat*, a village of mud houses, like those I have just mentioned. It is the residence of a *kiaschef*. The west shore of the Nile is, in this place, high and steep, and the village that is built on it may be seen at a great distance.

We had made about seven leagues in the course of this day; the northerly wind had continued to favour our progress, though it sometimes blew in violent squalls and whirlwinds. But for the usual precautions which I was careful should be taken, and about which the Egyptian sailors would not have troubled themselves, our voyage might have been rendered extremely dangerous. These whirlwinds are pretty frequent upon the Nile; they communicate their motion to the part of the river on which they blow, and cause it to bubble up. In the plain of *Saccara* I had the satisfaction of seeing some pillars of sand, raised by the wind to an immense height, so that they seemed lost in the clouds, yet, at the same time, preserved the perpendicularity of a perfect cylinder.

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The chain of mountains which, behind *Toura*, was close to the bank of the Nile, recedes at this spot, and leaves a greater space for cultivation. Here were no longer the low plains of the Delta, and of the other cultivated parts of Lower Egypt, which are fertilized by an easy mode of irrigation. The river was flowing in its natural bed, between two steep shores. In order to moisten their grounds, the inhabitants are obliged to employ machines for drawing water. These are a kind of swinging levers, placed upon a horizontal cross bar, and to which leathern buckets are fastened. A man, half covered with rags, and diverting himself with dismal rustic ditties, spends the whole day in keeping one of these levers in motion, and pouring the water into troughs or trenches which convey it to the plantations. To raise the water to the level of the ground, it often requires four or five of these machines, among which there are some double ones, that is, having two levers, supported by the same cross-bar. The east shore is high and perpendicular; the west shore has an imperceptible declivity; but, owing to the length requisite for the conduits, still greater labour is necessary in order to distribute the water to advantage.

The clumsiness of these hydraulic machines, the nakedness and misery which render hideous the indolent and half-savage beings who work them; wretched hovels, the low walls of which are built of no other materials than mud, are objects that sadden and disgust the mind, when, on looking back to former periods, the ancient state of this country is compared to that which disgraces it at the present time.

Two numerous flocks of ducks made their appearance in the course of this day's progress; while upon the shore, egrets, gulls, and wild-geese were watching for their finny prey.

With people like the Egyptians, I could not hope for a voyage without frequent disputes. Greedy and knavish, whatever favour is

conferred on them, they are never contented; and the more that is given them, the more they think they have a right to exact. I had with me an ample provision of coffee and excellent *Latikea* tobacco; and from the moment of my departure I shared it with my boat's crew; but these insatiable fellows insisted that I did not give them enough; and, as if my liberality had been a debt, they required that I should give up the coffee and tobacco to be used at their discretion. However, to convince them that their claims, expressed in the most insolent tone, made no sort of impression, and how greatly they were deceived in thinking to intimidate me, I ceased to distribute to them the little favours which till then I had chosen to confer. They broke out into murmurs and threats, which lasted a considerable time, and which they only discontinued when they perceived that they derived from them no advantage whatever.

At eight o'clock in the morning of the 23d, we left *Kafr Iaiat* with a light breeze from the northward, which at noon increased to very violent squalls. After having proceeded the distance of five leagues, we stopped at *Riba*, a village on the west shore, and nearly opposite to which is *Atsieb*, situated at the foot of the east mountain, upon a narrow canal formed by a pretty large island. Boats do not pass through this canal, unless they are to land at *Atsieb*. This was formerly a town consecrated to Venus, under the name of *Aphroditopolis*.

I saw a pyramid of very considerable size inland, at four or five leagues from *Riba*. The course of the river is divided from *Kafr Iaiat*, by a string of islots, among which there are some pretty extensive, and which sometimes approach one shore and sometimes the other.

A multitude of birds of different species were to be seen in the environs of *Riba*. Among them were herons, spur-winged plovers, other plovers, of the species which I described when speaking of *Meballet-Abou-*

Ali

Ali in the Delta*, and a great many hoopoes seeking for worms by the water-side.

In the evening the gale subsided, and was followed by a dead calm, which lasted till the morning of the following day, the 24th. There not being the slightest breath of wind to fill our sails and forward our voyage, the crew were obliged to track the *kanja*. A light breeze from the north-east sprang up in the morning, but it was not of long duration; and we stopped at *Zoule*, a pretty large village upon the east shore, at about two leagues from *Riba*. In the afternoon the wind shifted to the west, and afterwards to the south-west; it consequently was directly contrary to the course we were steering. I therefore made the sailors again take hold of the tracking-line, and we at length arrived at *Zavoui el Mansloub* (the Watering-place of the Cross), a small town, built upon the west bank of the Nile, opposite to *Géziret-Barreké* (Blessed Island), an islet upon which are seen a village and some cultivated grounds †. We had proceeded only one league beyond *Zoule*. These denominations of *crosses*, *benedictions*, &c. assembled near the same spot, are very remarkable in a country where crosses and benedictions are held in abhorrence.

In the evening, one of my companions caught with a ground-line a small eel of the Nile ‡. The upper part of its body was of a lightish green, no doubt because it was young.

On the 24th it being equally impossible for us to make use of our sails, we were under the necessity of continuing the tedious and fatiguing operation of tracking. I walked along the Nile, and shot several wild pigeons, the tough and dry flesh of which was far from

* See page 383.

† Mr. Bruce has very unreasonably reproached Norden with having said that *Géziret Barraké* means the Watering-place of the Cross. It is *Zavoui el Mansloub* that Norden has said bore that signification.

‡ See page 274.

being a relishing dish. I also saw a great many spur-winged plovers, as well as some of the species I have before described.

Having proceeded about a league, our sailors rested themselves at *Komrigé*, a town on the west side of the river, where there are several mosques, indicating a numerous population. We left it again in the afternoon, and moored our *kanja* for the night at *Schment el Arab*, a village built on the same side as *Komrigé*. The houses of this place, like all those of Upper Egypt, are of a square form, and on their flat roofs are built dove-cotes, which look like architectural ornaments: this, at a distance, gives the villages a handsome appearance; but on a nearer view, nothing is to be seen but mud walls, and every sign of misery.

During this whole day, we had made no more than about three leagues. In this extent of country, the east bank of the river is one continued tract of barren and uninhabited sand. The west bank, on the contrary, presents to the eye plains embellished by culture and fertility. I there observed large fields covered with carthamus *, or bastard saffron, which the Arabs denominate *asfour*. Its seeds are sometimes called by Europeans *parrot-seeds*, because they are the favourite food of birds of that species, but they are known in Egypt by the name of *cortom*, of which we have made *carthamus*. Under a hard, thick, and glittering white skin, these seeds, which are nearly of the shape of a quince, contain an oily almond of an acrid and bitter flavour. From these almonds the Egyptians extract an oil fit for burning; and with the husks they make a paste, which has the colour, though not the flavour, of chocolate.

But the flower is the most useful part of this plant, and is, indeed, an indispensable ingredient in the dying of woollen cloths. It is of a beautiful saffron red colour, but has a strong and disagreeable smell,

* *Carthamus tinctorius*, L.

When dried, it is sent to Europe, and in the Levant trade is distinguished by the name of *safranum*.

Carthamus is one of the most productive articles of culture in Egypt; it there occupies whole plains. Safranum was exported in great quantities, and bought by the European merchants. Under a clear and warm sky, the flowers in a short time acquire the brilliancy of that beautiful colour by which they are distinguished, and no rains fall to tarnish their lustre. In our northern countries, on the contrary, the rains will always operate against the cultivation of the carthamus; not but that it might thrive there, for I have, for several years, cultivated this plant in *La Meurthe*, one of our coldest departments, but without deriving any advantage, at least from the flowers. In fact, the slightest shower of rain is sufficient to soil them, or make them fall, and destroy the crop. The climate of Egypt agrees with it perfectly, and this would be an important branch of commerce for the new colony.

We again proceeded on our voyage on the 26th, but the wind continuing to blow from the southward, were still obliged to have recourse to the tracking-line. The whole morning was spent in getting as far as *Boufch*, a town at a quarter of a league from the west bank, upon which, at the time of our passing, was held a considerable market for cattle and provisions.

At *Boufch*, we met with one of those gales of wind from the south, which are so famous, and at the same time so dangerous in these countries. Woe to those who may happen to be then crossing the immense sandy solitudes with which Egypt is bordered! Intrepidity is of no avail, and the most valorous armies might be there overwhelmed by clouds of sand driven impetuously along by the wind, perish from suffocation, and die in despair. The atmosphere seemed as if on fire, and yet was darkened by whirlwinds of dust. Reaumur's thermometer stood at twenty-seven degrees. Both men and animals inhaled nothing but scorching vapours, mixed with fine
and

and burning sand. The plants were parched up: in short, all animated nature was withered.

This gale of wind still continued on the 27th, and it even appeared to have increased in violence. My sailors were quite dejected; and it was by dint of promises alone that I could prevail on them to set the *kanja* again in motion, by tracking it along; but the impetuosity of the wind soon rendered their efforts fruitless, and we were forced to stop behind a sandy point that sheltered our boat from the current, the roughness and rapidity of which was increased by the strength of the gale; but we were not here protected from the inconveniences resulting from the southerly wind. The heat was still greater than on the preceding day; the thermometer had risen to twenty-eight degrees. Sweat ran from every pore; and the sand, which the wind carried with it, adhered to our faces, and formed on them a sort of mask. Our sole employment was to keep bathing our eyes every moment with the water of the river, in order to rid them of the sand, and to endeavour to keep them open. The air was darkened by a thick fog of subtile dust as red as fire, which found its way into every thing. Our *caffas*, our closest shut trunks, could not exclude it; and if we attempted to eat, our mouths were filled with it as much as with food.

At length, towards the evening, this fiery wind abated, and we were enabled to get near a small town called *Benisouef*, built on the west side of the Nile, four leagues from *Schment el Arab*. The houses, constructed of brick, cemented with earth, and the turrets, which seemed to vie in height with the surrounding date-trees, render the aspect of this village less unsightly and less dismal than that of the other villages I had hitherto seen. Of all the places situated along the Nile from Cairo, that is, for the space of upwards of thirty leagues, this is the largest, as well as the most affluent. A manufactory of coarse carpets renders it a commercial town. The neighbouring plains are fertile and smiling, and the people who cultivate them

them appear less distressed and less wretched than those who live nearer the capital. A *kiaschef* commanded at *Benisouef*; but not choosing to make any stay there, I dispensed with paying him a visit.

On the 28th a dead calm succeeded to the burning gale from the south. However, about four o'clock in the evening, there came a light breeze from the north-east; we availed ourselves of it to continue our route, and arrived in the night at *Bébé*, a large village, the residence of a *kiaschef*, and situated upon the same side of the river as *Benisouef*, from which it is not distant more than three leagues. Here are to be seen a mosque and a convent of Copts.

In the course of this night's run, we incurred the greatest danger, through the negligence and unskilfulness of our boatmen. In the middle of the most rapid current, we ran foul of one of those large craft called *masch*, which come down from Upper Egypt very heavily laden. I cannot conceive how our slight *kanja* could withstand such a terrible shock, without being dashed to pieces. Nor was this all: for, as if we had been destined to perish at that very moment, after having struck so violently against the other boat, there came on a heavy squall, which taking our sails aback, put us in danger of oversetting, and half swamped our *kanja*. We spent the remainder of the passage to *Bébé* in baling out the water with which it was almost filled.

On the morning of the 29th we set sail with a fine breeze from the north-east. The weather was beautiful; and the atmosphere, cleared of the clouds of dust with which it had been loaded the preceding days, displayed its resplendent azure canopy. Lofty and perpendicular mountains, of sand and of rock, here contract the course of the Nile, and form, on its east bank, a chain of impregnable ramparts. With vast and frequent interfections, they extend to a great distance into the desert, the horror of which they considerably augment; and the river washing them with its stream, imperceptibly

undermines their base. These high masses of stone sometimes project into the Nile, so as to render the straits which they form, very dangerous to navigation. In other places, they resemble natural fortresses, and would indeed be very well calculated to defend the passage of the Nile. Inaccessible as a habitation for any human being, these barren and frightful mountains are the domain of a multitude of birds which have there established their abode, where they are never disturbed, and from whence they spread along the waters, and all over the country, in order to seek for prey and food. The name of *Dsjebel el Teir* (Mountain of the Birds), which is given to this chain of rocks, indicates with what sort of inhabitants it is peopled.

After having proceeded about five leagues, we cast anchor in the evening off *Sheick Zaïar*, which is a pretty large place upon the west bank of the river.

On the 30th we continued our route, and arrived at another well-built town, on the same side, called *Senon-Seni*. The wind blew fresh at north, and the atmosphere was gloomy and loaded with vapours. An innumerable flight of ducks passed by us in the course of this day.

At *Senon-Seni* I took particular notice of the manner in which the women contrive to lay in their stock of water from the Nile. They could not well carry a heavier load: it consists of three earthen vessels; one, very large, is placed upon the head; the second, not so big, and supported by a cord passed across the forehead, hangs behind their back; and the third, which is of a somewhat smaller size, is placed on the left shoulder, and held by the right hand.

On the 31st the weather cleared up, and a pleasant breeze from the north soon carried us to *Miniet*. The same chain of mountains which I have just mentioned, extends along the bank of the Nile that looks towards Arabia; and its perpendicular position gave it the appearance of a lofty wall constructed by art.

CHAPTER XL.

MINIET.—BARDACKS.—ANCIENT CITY.—METHOD OF REDUCING FRACTURED LIMBS.—RAIN AND GALES OF WIND.—SHEICK ABADÉ.—ANCIENT CITY OF ANTINOOPOLIS.—CATACOMBS.—MELLAVOUI.—MOUNTAIN OF ABOUFEDA.—MANFELOUT.—CONVENT OF THE PULLEY.—LARGE BOAT.—SIOUT.—JACKAL.—CAVERNS IN THE MOUNTAINS.—BIRDS OF SIOUT.

IF, in this part of Upper Egypt, the east bank of the Nile presents a hideous aspect, by its sands and barren rocks, the west bank attracts attention by its cultivated fields and numerous habitations. Among these, *Miniet* deserves to be particularly distinguished. It is a small but rather pretty town, compared with the other places in the same country. Narrow and dusty streets, houses built of unbaked bricks cemented with mud, and clumsy and irregular edifices, are undoubtedly not very ornamental objects in a town. However, when the eye has long been habituated to behold only cities and villages, the appearance of which excites pity, the town of *Miniet* cannot fail to please. The house occupied by the *kiaschef*, as well as those of some other of the principal people, were built of stone, and their whiteness relieved the monotony of the reddish gray of the rest. The *bazars*, or places where the merchants meet, are tolerably commodious; and the crowds which frequent them announce a numerous population, as well as some briskness of trade. Government has here established a toll for loaded vessels, which is easily collected, as the Nile is not very wide at this place. Here are likewise manufactured earthen vessels, called *bardacks*, in which the water acquires a degree of coolness very desirable in a burning climate, where it is so often necessary to quench the thirst. The clay of which they are

made is procured immediately in the neighbourhood, and they constitute a branch of industry very profitable to the town of *Miniet*.

Columns of granite, broken and thrown down, and some yet standing, besides heaps of rubbish, indicate that *Miniet* occupies the place of a more ancient city; but respecting its name authors are not agreed. Some have asserted that it was the site of *Hermopolis*, meaning, no doubt, *Hermopolis the Great*, a celebrated city, so called to distinguish it from two others of the same name, formerly existing in Egypt. Others are of opinion, that these ruins are those of *Cynopolis*, where the dog was worshipped: lastly, Mr. Bruce supposes *Miniet* to be the ancient *Philæ*. However this may be, the modern town is near fifty leagues from Cairo.

I brought from Cairo two letters of introduction; one to the *kiaschef* of *Miniet*, who is named *Attas*; the other to a man of large property, a friend of the French merchants, who was then residing upon his estates. Both of them were absent; the *kiaschef* was making the tour of his district to levy contributions, and the Turk of Cairo was at one of his villages not far from *Miniet*. Having forwarded to him the letter entrusted to me, he next day sent me his compliments, with a present of five sheep and two large pots of butter; begging me to accept them as a trifling compensation for that hospitality, which he regretted he had not had it in his power to shew me in person.

The second in command at *Miniet*, having been informed that I was, or that I must be a physician, sent for me to his house. He had broken his leg three days before; it had been set by a Copt, who had treated the case in a manner truly curious. The patient was laid upon the ground, without either mattresses, mat, or carpet, but merely upon a bed of sand. His leg and thigh were extended and fixed between stakes, driven into the earth, which also supported a small brick wall, raised on each side in such a manner that the fractured limb was confined in a piece of mason-work, where it was

to remain till the completion of the cure. In order to promote the formation of the callus of the fracture, the *doctor* had made a sort of cement of earth, oil, and the white of eggs, which he every day applied to the leg.

In the evening of the 2d of April the weather was dreadful. Showers of rain, a very uncommon occurrence in Upper Egypt, were accompanied with violent squalls from the south-west. Whirlwinds of sand obscured the rays of the sun, and short breaking waves agitated the surface of the Nile. The weather having moderated on the afternoon of the 3d, we quitted *Miniet*, and stopped three leagues farther on, at *Maulaba*, a village in the *kiaschetric* of *Miniet*, and built upon the same shore as that town. In the evening the wind shifted to the north, and blew so extremely hard, that we were very much incommoded all the night by the motion of our boat, which was continually striking against the bank.

The northerly gales still continued on the 4th, and carried us, with a dangerous rapidity, as far as *Sbeick Abadé*, a resort of banditti on the east side of the Nile. Immense ruins, and a long tract of ground covered with rubbish, announce that a large city had formerly stood upon this spot. It was built in consequence of a shameful passion, which ill disguised the appearance of gratitude affected by Adrian its founder. It is well known that this prince, renowned for his political and military talents, was, at the same time, contemptible on account of his passion for Antinous, the perfection of whose form is proved by one of the finest statues that antiquity has bequeathed us. Equally superstitious and depraved in his manners, Adrian, while he was in Egypt with his court and army, consulted the soothsayers, whose answer made a deep impression upon his mind. The oracle declared, that he was threatened with great danger, unless a person who was dear to him, and by whom he was beloved, was immolated for his preservation. Antinous offered himself as the victim, and the cowardly emperor had the cruelty to accept the sacrifice.

crifice. The beautiful and generous Antinous precipitated himself from the summit of a rock into the Nile, and the vile despot thought to efface his ingratitude and disgrace by building, in honour of his favourite, whom he likewise looked upon as his deliverer, a city which, under the name of *Antinoopolis*, has perpetuated at once his barbarous cruelty and his criminal passion. He embellished it with all the most valuable productions of art. The statues of Antinous were here considered as sacred images; Adrian not only erected temples in honour of him, but instituted games and sacrifices, and himself regulated the worship that was to be paid to his memory.

Antinoopolis had been built on the site of the ancient Egyptian city of *Abidus*, in which was worshipped a divinity named *Bes*. This god delivered oracles, and for a long time supported his celebrity. The ancient city of *Abidus*, and that of *Antinoopolis*, are both fallen to the ground. The vestiges of the latter excite regret for its destruction. There are not to be seen among its ruins the heavy and gigantic monuments, nor those prodigious masses of stone which the ancient Egyptians erected, to astonish rather than to charm the eye; but the most regular proportion was observed in every part of the buildings, which exhibited the graceful contours and elegant forms of the finest Grecian and Roman architecture.

My *reis* made a number of difficulties about approaching the shore, which is covered with the ruins of *Antinoopolis*. It is inhabited by the worst people and most determined robbers in Egypt. They attacked Mr. Bruce, when, in crossing the Saïd, he wished to stop at this place*. I took every precaution that prudence suggested, and landed with my draughtsman. The extent of ground strewed with the most beautiful remains of antiquity threw me into astonishment and admiration. To survey them all would require a considerable time. It was growing dark, and it would have been equally

* Travels to discover the Source of the Nile.

imprudent to pass the night on this dangerous bank, or to stray too far from the boat.

The savage people who live near the ruins of Adrian's city, make it their business to pull down those parts of the buildings that remain standing, in order to gratify their barbarism by the habitual practice of destruction. In the time of Vanleb *, and of Paul Lucas, there were existing a number of pieces of architecture altogether entire, which I could not find. Most of the edifices had been constructed of large bricks, the red colour of which was in perfect preservation. What appeared to me most remarkable was a triumphal arch, or magnificent gate decorated with fluted pillars: its front was fifty yards in length; an incorrect drawing of it is given in Paul Lucas's Travels; the capitals of the columns, in particular, are very badly represented †. A better idea may be formed of it from *Plate XXI*. It was my intention to have had a complete drawing taken of this triumphal arch, which probably was the gate of the city; but while my draughtsman was employed in his sketch, and I was engaged in observing the other parts of the ruins, the report of a gun fired by one of our companions placed as a sentinel, warned us of the approach of a troop of banditti. We had only time to reach the boat, which was immediately pushed off; and we made our escape, followed by the threats and challenges of these barbarians.

There are yet to be seen, on each side of the gate, the holes made for the hinges which supported the folding-doors. The people of the country say that these doors are now at Cairo, having been conveyed thither by a devil. Paul Lucas saw them in that city covered with plates of iron, and made use of to shut a vault near the palace of the *grand prévôt* ‡, meaning undoubtedly the *Quiali*, an officer, at Cairo, entrusted with all the affairs of the police.

* Nouvelle Relation d'Égypte, p. 386 et suiv.

† Voyage fait en 1714, tome ii.

‡ Nouvelle Relation d'Égypte, p. 384.

A considerable number of columns were yet standing at the other end of the city of Antinoopolis towards the mountains. The remainder consisted only of a confused mass of pieces of architecture broken and thrown down.

On the other side of the mountain, which terminates, towards the east, the site of the ancient Antinoopolis, are to be distinguished a great number of apertures made in the rock. These kinds of grottoes were undoubtedly burial-places, or catacombs. There are some of the same kind throughout all Thebais, and particularly in the environs of large towns, along the two chains of mountains which border and occasionally confine the Nile. The inhabitants, too grossly ignorant to comprehend the advantages which their ancestors derived from the arts, imagined these excavations to be made by demons. Superstition produces similar effects in the most opposite characters; for the missionary Vansleb seems to have been of the same opinion with the present Egyptians. It appeared to him equally impossible that such caverns could have been the work of man; but he mollifies his opinion by the pious supposition, that the devils had been compelled to become such good workmen by means of exorcisms*. On the other hand, the Christian legends consider this immense number of grottoes in the mountains of Thebais nothing more than the solitary retreats of holy hermits, whose laziness was ill disguised under the mask of contemplation, a high-sounding word, but which, when applied to the life of this class of people, is entirely devoid of meaning.

The mosque of the village which is near *Antinoopolis*, and the appearance and population of which forms so striking a contrast with the superb edifices and elegance of the ancient city built by Adrian, contains a tomb, and the relics of a faint from whom this place has obtained the name of *Sheick Abadé*; but what is truly

* Nouvelle Relation d'Egypte, p. 384.

ludicrous, is, that while the Mahometans regarded this faint as a zealous defender of the Koran, he was at the same time claimed by the Christians, as one of their bishops, who enjoyed the painful honour of martyrdom at *Infiné* *. But it is unnecessary to say more of the absurd chimeras, of which, at all times, and in all places, mankind have been the dupes.

We left the formerly happy, though now desolate shore of the city of *Antinoopolis*, and cast anchor opposite to *Mellavoui*, three leagues from *Sbeick Abadé*. *Mellavoui* is a small and tolerably handsome town, situated half a league from the west bank of the Nile, and is the residence of a *kiaschef*. The plain surrounding it is very fertile, particularly in corn; a great quantity of which is exported to Arabia.

On the 25th of April we set out from *Mellavoui* for *Manfelout*, where we arrived in the evening. The distance between these two places is about ten leagues. Two leagues below *Manfelout*, on the east bank of the Nile, is a chain of very high mountains formed entirely of barren rock. The waters of the river have undermined them, so that their summit projects considerably beyond their base. This chain of rocks is called the mountain of *Aboufeda*, from the name of a Mussulman faint who is there buried, and in honour of whom a small chapel has been erected. By the side of this monument of the piety, or rather of the absurd superstition of the Mahometans, some men of the same religion, devout worshippers of *Saint Aboufeda*, and, at the same time, determined robbers, live in retreats dug in the rock, and formerly, it is said, inhabited by anchorites. But these excavations, as well as those in *Sbeick Abadé*, and in the two chains of mountains between which the Nile runs, in the upper part of Egypt, are probably burial-places and ancient tombs; for no person, however great may be his pious credulity,

* Vanfleb, Nouv. Relation d'Égypte, p. 387.

can believe that the thousands of caverns which are there dug have been the work and abode of so many anchorites, whose favourite passion was not, as is well known, the love of labour. That they are ancient monuments is the more probable, because in several of them are to be found, at this day, incontestable proofs which evince their remote antiquity. Be this as it may, the robbers by whom they are at present inhabited, are the most formidable pirates that obstruct the navigation of Egypt, and also the most difficult to be exterminated, as they take refuge in the inaccessible cavities of these mountains.

Besides the danger of being pillaged in passing by the mountain of *Aboufeda*, boats also there run the risk of being lost. The Nile is narrow and rapid at this place, and by the strength of the current, or the violence of the wind, they are often driven against the rocks, and wrecked. When we passed here the wind was boisterous, and there was a great swell in the river.

The town of *Manfelout* is tolerably large, and much handsomer than that of *Miniet*. The streets are wider and better planned. It is agreeably situated in a country that furnishes in abundance productions of every kind; and its walls are shaded by fruit-trees, overtopped by a number of lofty palms. Its commerce consists of all sorts of grain, and of cloths which are here manufactured in great quantities. The name of *Manfelout*, or *Manfallot*, as it is written by Father Vanfleb, signifies, in Arabic, *the place of Lot's exile*, because, according to the account of that Jesuit, who builds his opinion upon the very suspicious tradition of the Copts, a person of the name of *Lot* was banished thither by his brother, one of the ancient kings of Egypt*.

The *kiaschef* of *Manfelout* happened to be at Cairo when I left that city; one of our merchants who had some dealings with him,

* *Nouv. Relat. d'Egypte*, p. 360.

having

having apprized him of my journey, the honest Mamalûk offered to give me a letter to his superintendent, and insisted upon my lodging at a house he had at *Siout*. The person to whom this letter was addressed was not at *Manfelout*; but I met with a very cordial reception from the *kasnadar*, or treasurer of the *kiaschef*.

Facing *Manfelout*, on the east bank of the Nile, stands a large monastery of Copts, entirely enclosed with high walls, and into which the only mode of admission is that of being hoisted up in a basket by means of a pulley, whence it has obtained the name of the *Convent of the Pulley*.

In the harbour there was a large vessel of a handsome construction; she was pierced for sixteen guns, and her stern was ornamented with carved work: but for her masts, which were rigged in the same manner as the other vessels on the Nile, that is, with lateen sails fixed to yards of an enormous size, she might have been taken for a corvette. She had been built by a Bey of the name of *Achmet*; but there was not a sufficient depth of water to navigate her, except at the greatest height of the river.

On the 6th we reached *Siout*, which is somewhat more than five leagues distant from *Manfelout*. At this place the Nile is sinuous, and its navigation is difficult and dangerous. I found here the agent of Ali, *kiaschef* of *Manfelout*; he was a fat countryman, full of frankness and good-humour. He carried me to his master's house, and insisted upon my there taking up my abode: in short, he paid every attention to my wants, and promised to come and see me often. This house was very large and well laid out, having before it an extensive enclosed court. No person lived in it, except a porter. We could not have been better accommodated, nor at the same time more quiet and secure, the *kiaschef*'s house being a respected asylum.

I had no reason to be satisfied with my boat's crew; and having also an intention of passing some time at *Siout*, I dismissed the *reis*.

He behaved like all bad servants, who are incessantly complaining of the services required of them, and yet make entreaties to be continued, when the person who has employed them seems to enter into their views in giving them their discharge.

Siout is one of the largest cities in Upper Egypt; it is built upon an artificial eminence, and near a steep mountain, a quarter of a league from the west shore of the Nile. The water of the river is conveyed thither by a canal, over which is a tolerably handsome Gothic bridge of three arches, built of hewn stone: it stands upon the site of the ancient city of *Lycopolis**, where the inhabitants worshipped, as a sacred animal, not the wolf, for there are none in Egypt, but the *jackal*, which was clearly meant to be designated by Herodotus, when he observed that the wolves of this country were little bigger than foxes †; and upon this subject there cannot remain the smallest doubt, on reading the passage of Eusebius ‡ quoted by Citizen Larcher, in his notes on the translation of Herodotus: “Others say, that the Ethiopians, having undertaken an expedition against Egypt, were put to flight by a great number of wolves, and that this occasioned the name of *Lycopolitus* to be given to the nome where this event happened.” In fact, it is well known that it is the nature of the jackals to assemble in great packs.

I waited upon the *kiaschef* in command, whose name was *Daoud*, with the letters of Murad Bey, and he received me in the kindest manner. Being desirous of procuring as much consequence and protection as I could in a city where I meant to make some stay, I waited also upon *Ibrahim*, the *kiaschef*, overseer of the collection

* Pococke thought that *Siout* was the site of *Antæopolis*, though Ptolemy has placed it on the east bank of the Nile, p. 75.—Mr. Bruce conceives *Siout* to be built of the ruins of the ancient city of *Ifu*.

† Livre ii. § 67. translated by Cit. Larcher.

‡ Prepar. Evangel. lib. ii. tom. i. p. 50. B. C.

of the duties payable by the caravans from Nubia: he was really one of the best kind of men in the world.

This *kiaschef* lent me his horses to take an excursion to the mountains that form, behind *Siout*, an amphitheatre of barren rocks, the foot of which is a full quarter of a league from the town. The other side of these mountains, overlooking the Nile, appears at a distance as if pierced full of holes of different forms; they are the inlets to excavations made in the rock, which is calcareous. Some of these entrances are in the form of an arch, and others in that of an oblong square. They are of handsome workmanship, and ornamented with symbolical devices, among which I observed, both without and within, the figure of a man as large as life, leaning with one hand on a stick. Most of the cavities form very spacious chambers, about thirty feet high. The inside of some of them is charged with figures and hieroglyphics, which time has, in a great measure, effaced. There are still to be distinguished the remains of painting on the ceiling and in the hollow parts of the figures. These chambers are lighted by air-holes made in the rock. There are also in them deep wells cut out in a square form; but into these it was not possible either to see or to descend. I visited four or five of these immense caverns, which are all that I believe are to be found on the back of the mountains near *Siout*; but they are surrounded with a great number of smaller grottoes, the entrances of which are arched, while those of the large ones are all straight.

These excavations, so numerous in most of the mountains of Thebais, have appeared very extraordinary to travellers of a somewhat ancient date. Paul Lucas supposed them to be the habitation of the first men after the deluge, and consequently the first built towns in the world*. Vansleb, always delighting in the marvellous, and inclined to believe in sorcery, heard in them strange noises,

* Voyage en 1714, tome ii.

and could not be brought to believe them to be the work of man *. Nothing, however, appears more easy to be conceived, than the purpose of these subterraneous caverns. It is well known with what care the ancient Egyptians preserved their dead, and the pains they took in order to keep them from corruption. The plains, so much more valuable for the purposes of agriculture in Upper Egypt, as they were there less extensive, were improper for the burial-places of men whom piety wished to eternize, even after their annihilation. The humidity there diffused by the irrigation necessary for fertility and the labours of culture, would produce corruption and confusion, which the religious system of the Egyptians made it their duty to prevent. The dry and arid mountains with which the plains were enclosed offered a certainty of preservation and of repose; and it was natural there to deposit the inanimate, but carefully embalmed remains of persons respected or beloved. The stone of these rocks is soft when it is not detached from the mountains and exposed to the air, which gives it a greater degree of consistency: it was not very difficult to dig into it; and what was procured from these excavations served as materials for the erection of dwelling-houses. It is also observable, that it is in the vicinity of large towns that the backs of the mountains contain such numerous apertures. It is therefore beyond a doubt, that these are so many open quarries made use of as burial-places for the inhabitants of ancient Egypt; and that the beautiful grottoes of the mountain of *Siout* were the catacombs of the Lycopolitans.

At the foot of the mountain is an enclosure set apart for the cemetery of the Mahometans. It was newly white-washed, and its zig-zag construction, full of interfections, gave it a very agreeable and picturesque appearance.

I again met with, at *Siout*, the same sorts of birds as have taken up

* *Nouv. Relat. d'Égypte, passim.*

their abode in the other towns of Egypt, that is, kites, sparrow-hawks, aquiline vultures, hoopoes in great numbers, turtle-doves remarkably tame, a pair of which built their nest on the ledge of a small window of the apartment I occupied; and sparrows still more familiar, for they come into the houses, enter the chambers, and almost alight upon persons in search of food. These different birds formed at *Siout* a second population, not less numerous, but far more peaceable than the human inhabitants.

CHAPTER XLI.

PRACTICE OF PHYSIC IN EGYPT.—ITS PECULIARITIES.—EGYPTIAN PHYSICIANS.—SPECIES OF LEPROSY.—VIOLENT OPHTHALMIA WITH WHICH THE AUTHOR IS AFFLICTED.—RENT OF HOUSES IN EGYPT.—CIRCUMCISION.—RAIN IN UPPER EGYPT.—SEARCH FOR TREASURES.—PERFIDY OF THE SYRIAN INTERPRETER.

MY fame as a physician had made a great deal of noise. People from all quarters came to consult me, and the great called me to their houses. Every one wished to try the skill of a physician of a *sultan* of Europe, patronised by Murad Bey, and who, by the order of the *sheick el belled*, was travelling to the Saïd, on purpose to attend an Arabic prince, the most powerful in Egypt. Another attraction which failed not to increase the crowd, was, that consultations, visits, and even medicines, were all to be had gratis.

The curative art is, in these countries, practised in a very different manner from what it is among us; and a medical professor, held in the greatest estimation by the first of the faculty, would pass there for an ignoramus, and would even find himself considerably embarrassed. In fact, what would he say to a patient who would only present him his pulse to feel; who would answer none of his questions, but refuse even to point out in what part of his body he felt any pain? If the learned doctor appeared to hesitate respecting the nature of the disease upon the mere beating of the artery, if he ventured to interrogate the patient, or wished to enter into fine and long disquisitions, sometimes as unintelligible to the hearer as to the deliverer, he would infallibly be considered a man destitute of knowledge, and be dismissed as unworthy of confidence, and of the name of a physician. What, if, adhering to the principles and exercise of

his art, he should prescribe those remedies so much used in Europe, which are not taken by the mouth? He would be attacked with violence, and might deem himself happy if, in attempting to escape, he could come off with his life. The Egyptians, as well as the Turks, hold remedies of this sort in abhorrence, and a proposal to make use of them is, in their eyes, the greatest insult that can be offered. I shall never forget an adventure which happened to a French surgeon belonging to a vessel that came to an anchor in one of the ports of Caramania. He was sent for by the Turkish Aga in command at that place, who told him that he suffered a great deal from a pain in his head. The surgeon had the imprudence to prescribe to him what no practitioner dares to mention in that country. In an instant, the Mussulman, enraged that, in order to cure a pain in his head, an operation was to be performed upon the opposite end of his body, seized hold of his sabre, rose from his divan, loaded the Frenchman with imprecations, and would have cut him down, had not the attendants favoured his escape.

These are not the only dangerous mistakes attending the practice of physic in Egypt. If it happens that the disease carries off the patient, the physician must not expect the same indulgence which, in Europe, charitably exempting him from every kind of reproach, is satisfied with attributing the death of the patient to the incurable nature of the disorder, or to the patient's own conduct. Here he is considered as an assassin. The family and relations of the victim, the populace even, always disposed to rise against foreigners, whom they abhor, assemble together; the murder of the physician follows close upon the loss of his patient, and he is sacrificed to the manes of the dead and the vengeance of the living.

On the other hand, if the physician has the misfortune to be sent for by a man in power, that which would, in our country, be the source of satisfaction, consequence, and riches, is here a source of perpetual inquietude and danger. He should take care to shun so perilous an

honour, and if he cannot avoid it, he must either cure his too unreasonable patient, or expect to lose his own life: a cruel alternative, but which undoubtedly prevents the multiplication of quacks, so common wherever patients allow themselves to be killed with the most desirable resignation. Should a remedy administered to one of these great men occasion him any pain, the physician is ordered to attend, and he is compelled to stay in the room during the operation of the medicine; he is, at the same time, informed that his head must answer for every unpleasant consequence. In the midst of pain, furious looks are darted at him, and the unfortunate physician, trembling, and more disordered than the patient, awaits, in mortal agonies, the result of the action of his medicines, for which his conjectural knowledge does not enable him to be responsible.

It may be supposed that I took every precaution to avoid the dangers attendant upon the practice of physic in a barbarous country, where it is imagined that the cure depends entirely upon the physician, and where there is none of that commendable consideration which, among us, makes the profession of a physician, of all others, the most agreeable and pleasant. I knew that, except in particular disorders, the symptoms of which are at once seen from the appearance of the person, the Arabs and Egyptians admitted but three sources of disease; bile, *saffra*; blood, *dem*; and cold, *berd*. It is to no purpose to enter into farther discussions with them, and, above all, to attempt to reason. It is enough to feel their pulse in silence, as it is presented, and, after some mute and often very embarrassing reflections, to pronounce one of the three words, characteristic of their disease. If the physician guesses right, the patient's admiration of his profound knowledge is expressed by loud exclamations. If, on the contrary, he does not succeed in this sort of divination, a negative motion of the head, accompanied with a look of disdain, expresses these words: *Begone; march off; thou art an ignoramus*.

Distinctions so little complicated in the practice of physic, are fortunately

unately not very difficult to comprehend. The face of the *consulteur* generally bears a certain indication. A yellow complexion denotes *bile*; a red one, *blood*; and a pale one is the symptom of *cold*. Under these three divisions alone, the Egyptians class all diseases; and a practitioner has no occasion to perplex himself with their gradations, their names, or their numerous subdivisions. I was so well versed in the forms of Egyptian practice, that after having gravely felt the wrist which was presented to me, I could pronounce boldly, and it very seldom happened that I guessed wrong. To this mode of proceeding I added a little finesse. I pretended not to understand a word of Arabic. My interpreter was always by my side; but, however, I knew enough of the language to avail myself of any particulars incautiously mentioned in my presence, under the persuasion that they were not understood. This conduct is certainly very allowable, when a person's character is at stake, and the most dangerous consequences are sure to ensue from the commission of an error. Such artifice, although it favours a little of quackery, which the slanderers of the art will not fail to say is inseparable from the profession of a physician, was of great service to me at *Siout*, on an occasion when my skill was there purposely put to the test.

One day the *kiaschef* sent to request me to come to his house: he was in his audience-chamber. Twenty other Mamalûk officers were ranged on each side of him on the floor of his divan, all apparently in the enjoyment of perfect health. As soon as I was introduced, the *kiaschef* announced that I was the physician of Murad Bey, and of *Ismaïn-Abou-Ali*, and that he wished to make a trial of the extent of my knowledge, at the same time telling the persons present, that they might converse with all freedom before me, as I did not understand Arabic. He began himself by observing, that having been in the practice of losing a little blood every year, and having for the first time neglected this precaution, he found himself indisposed. The person next him said that he had caught a sudden cold, from

passing the night in a boat, and that it occasioned him great pain. Another was choked with bile. They all explained aloud, and each in his own way, the true or supposed cause of their indisposition, in order that the rest of the company might judge if my skill enabled me to discover, or rather to guess, the nature of their complaints.

The *kiaschef* made me approach him, and held out his wrist, waiting my opinion with anxious impatience. I delayed no longer the oracular response than was necessary to have the appearance of considering his case, and told the *kiaschef*, by means of the interpreter, that he required to be let blood. I informed the officer next to him, that his violent pains were the inevitable consequence of a cold he had lately caught. The third I advised to get rid of the bile which choked him; and thus, making the tour of the company, and feeling all their pulses, each of them received the proof which he considered most convincing of my incomparable skill: The astonishment this excited was unanimous. All their fists closely clenched, and held in a perpendicular position, a little before the body, the mark of applause among the Turks, manifested their general approbation; and encomiums, very laconic, but extremely expressive, among a people not prodigal of their words, were repeated from one to another. So brilliant an adventure very much enhanced my medical reputation, and spread the fame of my extraordinary abilities throughout *Siout* and its environs.

Not but that in Egypt some of the natives dealt in empiricism; they were, however, held in little estimation, and their needy condition sufficiently evinced that they carried on an unprofitable trade. Wherever I made my appearance, the persuasion that a foreigner must possess greater talents than themselves, soon occasioned their dismissal, and their patients forsook them to have recourse to my superior skill. But I must say, to the honour of the physicians of all nations, that there is one country where jealousy never enters their mind, and where the success of another is the source of satisfaction
and

and confidence. Not only did the Egyptian physicians betray no envy on account of my extensive reputation, but they came ingenuously to consult me, and to impart to me the uneasiness they experienced from the state of some of their patients.

One of the methods of cure most in vogue among the physicians in Egypt, is to burn the part affected. This sort of cauterization is the grand specific employed by the Orientals. It was known to the ancient Greeks, and practised by their physicians, who gave it the appellation of *Arabic burning*; but they used it sparingly, and in their hands it was a very efficacious remedy. The Egyptians, on the contrary, recur to it on every occasion, without regard to the parts to which it is applied. For instance, I saw a person have his eyelids and eyelashes burned with a hot iron, in order to cure an inflammation in his eyes. Another, who was seized with a pain in his stomach, underwent this cruel operation: to the pit of his stomach, and the opposite side of his back, was applied a hot iron as large as a crown piece. The operator must, however, have had here a very heavy hand, for the stomach and back of the unfortunate patient were laid open, so that his body was in a manner perforated. The great heat, and neglect of dressing the wounds, brought on gangrene, which was infinitely more dangerous than the stomachic complaint. A man troubled with a disorder in his lungs had his chest covered with external sores; and a person affected with a dropsy, unnecessarily bore on his belly more than fifty wounds, of the size of a crown piece, made by cauterizations by fire.

It is by no means astonishing, that the Egyptians, with their three divisions of diseases, should be frequently deceived as to the nature of those with which they are affected. A young and handsome man, a Mamalûk officer, came to consult me. He was so completely infected by that dreadful disorder which corrupts the sources of life, and is so widely diffused in this country, that he was in a frightful state, and had almost entirely lost the power of pro-
creation.

creation. I informed him of the nature of his complaint, but he grew very angry, insisted I was deceived, and that it was nothing more than *bile*.

Sometimes the practice of physic procured me extraordinary discoveries and proposals. I received a visit from a rich man at *Siout*, who called me aside, with a great deal of mystery. He would hardly suffer my interpreter to be present, to which however he was obliged to consent. After a great deal of circumlocution, he told me, that a beautiful slave of a *hareem* carried within her the most evident proofs of a clandestine and indiscreet amour. The master, a man in power, who had been for a long time at Cairo, had given notice of his intention to return. Fear and inquietude reigned through all the house; every person in it dreaded the anger of the owner; and the most fatal calamities must inevitably be the consequence of an accident, very natural, but which is never pardoned in this country. He concluded by proposing to me to remove the approaching cause of these great misfortunes, and by promising me a considerable reward. "My profession," said I, "is to cure people, and not to kill them. Go, if thou darest, and offer to others thy proposal and thy rewards." Notwithstanding the determined tone in which I delivered my answer to the interpreter to be repeated to him, this man persisted, and thought to persuade me by an argument which he considered irresistible. "The return of the master," said he, "will not fail to be the period of the massacre of eight or ten persons, among whom will be the unfortunate slave; and is it not true, that it is better to take the life of a being who is insensible of it, than to expose several who enjoy it to a certain death?" Quite astonished that such reasoning could not induce me to become myself an assassin, in order to prevent the deed from being perpetrated by others; and above all, that I was not tempted by his handfuls of gold, my gentleman quitted me in a very bad humour, and I never learned if the fears he manifested were well founded; indeed it would

would have been highly imprudent in me to have made any farther inquiry.

Among the number of disorders for which I had occasion to prescribe, I observed a singular one in the skin of an inhabitant of *Siout*. Like all the natives of these southern districts of Egypt, the colour of his body was a dark brown. But for five or six years, a part of this blackish skin had been replaced by another perfectly white. These white spots were spreading more and more, so that when I saw this man, his face, hands, and arms, and indeed his whole person, were covered, and in a manner marbled with large patches of brown and white; the blackish tint was gradually diminishing, and it is probable that his whole body would become as white as milk. In other respects he felt no pain or inconvenience.

This disorder is a species of leprosy. It is, to all appearance, the same as the *bokak* or *behaq* of the Arabs*. When it spreads all over the body, the Arabs, according to Forskal, call it *barras*. The same author adds, that the spots of this sort of leprosy do not come on the hands or about the navel, but my observation convinced me of the contrary, for the man at *Siout* had these very parts covered with white patches. This disease is neither contagious nor fatal. Niebuhr mentions, that a negro seized with it at Mocha had been relieved, but not cured, by the use of sulphur.

While I was engaged, very much against my inclination, in taking care of the health of others, I was, in my turn, attacked by a violent ophthalmia, of the species which the Greeks denominate *chemosis*. The ball of one of my eyes projected from its orbit; it was entirely covered by the membranes, which were swelled and excessively inflamed; none of my party could bear to look at it, it had so frightful an appearance. I was seized with a burning fever, and suffered intolerable

* See La Description de l'Arabie, par Niebuhr, p. 120. and Forskal's note on the following page.

pain : my eyelids were so swelled that I could get no sleep ; I was not even able to lie down, for in that situation the eye bearing upon the abscess which was formed under its orbit, increased my sufferings.

It is upon such occasions that the traveller, remote from every sort of assistance, must muster up at once all his knowledge and all his fortitude. Nearly blind, my other eye, although less disordered, being very much inflamed, I was not now able to bleed myself as I had done on other occasions. There was an Italian missionary in the neighbourhood, whom I requested to render me this service. He employed that sort of spring-lancet in use in several parts of Italy and Germany, known under the name of a *fleam*. To add to my misfortune, the awkward monk, in attempting to bleed me, broke his lancet, and left its point sticking in my arm. He protested to me that this was the first time such an accident had happened to him ; a circumstance from which I received neither consolation nor benefit. I was obliged to submit to a pretty long operation, in which my detestable surgeon slashed my arm, in order to extract the fragment of his fleam. At length, the urgent necessity there was for my losing blood, determined me, though with great reluctance, to let him try a second time to bleed me, with a better instrument, and, if possible, with more skill. The monk, not without a delay which made me dread some still more unfortunate accident, at length succeeded in bleeding me copiously, which however afforded me no relief.

My sufferings were as little mitigated by emollient cataplasms, torrents of cooling drinks, and other medicines employed in these disorders. Instead of diminishing, they daily increased. Tired of my situation, I sent for some poppy-heads, which I ordered to be boiled in water, and drank the decoction in the beginning of the night. I soon experienced the effect of this narcotic : it was not long before I fell asleep ; and whilst sleeping I threw down the cushions I had to support

support me in my feat, and fell at my length; when, after a sleep of fifteen hours, I awoke, altogether free from pain, my eye having returned into its socket, entirely cleansed, and, in a word, completely cured. There only remained in my eyes, a weakness, which was of no long duration; and my sight became, in a short time, as good and as clear as before.

During my convalescence, I was obliged to change my lodging, *Ali kiaschef*, the owner of the house in which I resided, having arrived with his *barem* and all his suite. I then hired a small house, having in front a court, which was not indeed very spacious. I occupied the whole premises, and the rent which I paid was only two *medines*, or little more than two *sous* a day; and it is to be presumed that, being a foreigner, I was made to pay an extraordinary price.

I often saw passing in the streets of *Siout*, processions which accompany the ceremonial of the circumcision of children. The young Mussulmans are carried with great pomp and parade, through all the city, dressed in the most splendid suits, and mounted upon horses magnificently caparisoned. Each of the children is supported by two men, while the horse is led by a third, and they are followed by crowds of people. The cavalcade is preceded by hautboys and cymbals; next come several flags of different coloured silk; some of them black bordered with red, and others black or green with a white border. In the middle of these flags, the name of God, and the Mussulmans' creed, are imprinted in Arabic characters, and they are surrounded by priests chanting passages of the Koran: behind these walks a man bearing a sort of tabernacle, adorned with diamonds and streamers, and no doubt containing the sacred book. He precedes the group of the circumcised, behind whom are led several camels, carrying a pair of kettle-drums, the bowl of one of which is considerably less than the other, and the tone of them, and style in which they are played, is altogether monotonous. Women,

who close the proceſſion, inceſſantly mingle with the noiſy muſic of the inſtruments, a ſhrill ſound, accompanied by long quavers of the tongue, which is the cry of joy among the Egyptians.

During my ſtay at *Siout*, a circumſtance occurred conſidered there as extraordinary; this was rain, ſo uncommon in the ſouth of Egypt, that it may not improperly be ſaid never to rain in that part of the country. However, on the 15th of April 1778, there blew a hard ſoutherly gale, the ſky was overcaſt during the whole day, and from time to time there fell ſome ſhowers; but in the evening a ſtorm aroſe, with a torrent of rain, attended with lightning, and ſome claps of thunder.

Daoud kiaſchef, commandant of *Siout*, the perſon who had made a trial of my medical ſkill, of which he had conceived a high opinion, had ſuppoſed that I muſt alſo deal in magic, and that the moſt carefully hidden treaſures not being able to reſiſt the influence of my art, would iſſue from the moſt ſecret receſſes, and find their way into my pocket. The Mamalûk was very deſirous of at leaſt participating in the immense profits which I muſt inevitably derive from this valuable ſcience. It was a notion of the inhabitants, that a particular moſque in the town contained vaſt riches, concealed from every eye. *Daoud* ſent for me privately, and would have me go to this temple, in order to diſcover, by my ſpells, in what part of it was to be found the gold of which we were to make a diviſion. All that I could ſay to undeceive him was to no purpoſe, and perceiving that he grew angry, I allowed myſelf to be conducted to the temple, and on my return aſſured him, that all the reports that were ſpread in regard to the pretended treaſures there hidden were falſe, for that it did not contain a ſingle particle of gold.

I availed myſelf of this opportunity to reproach the *kiaſchef* with having attempted to deprive me of my Syrian drogueman. With a view of having this matter explained, I had taken with me a young Alexandrian ſervant, who, underſtanding the *lingua Franca*, was able,

able, though with some difficulty, to serve me as an interpreter. *Daoud* appeared very much surprised, and sent after the Syrian, but when brought before the *kiaschef*, he had not the assurance to persist in the charge of which he had accused him to me in so perfidious a manner. He had had the effrontery to assure me that *Daoud* wished to have him in his service, and had made him the most flattering promises, even in writing. He was obliged to confess the imposture; and the irritated *kiaschef* would immediately have ordered him to receive the bastinado on the soles of his feet, had I not interceded for his pardon, which I obtained with some difficulty, and only under the condition, that if this fellow should give me any fresh cause of complaint, I should apprise him, in order that he might inflict a proper punishment.

My companions and I had more than once remarked, that we were betrayed by this Syrian. I had just had an evident proof of his base and dangerous spirit of intrigue, and it was not long before I was convinced of his complete villainy. It was in fact by accident that I escaped an abominable plot which he laid to murder me and my companions, as will be seen in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XLII.

PREPARATIONS FOR A JOURNEY TO SENNAAR. — PLOT BETWEEN THE CHIEF OF THE CARAVAN OF NUBIA AND THE SYRIAN INTERPRETER, TO ASSASSINATE THE AUTHOR, WHO IS OBLIGED TO RELINQUISH HIS INTENDED JOURNEY INTO ABYSSINIA.—NUBIAN CARAVANS. — MONKIES. — PARRAKEETS. — NUBIANS. — VISIT TO A CAMP OF BEDOUINS.—AQUILINE VULTURES.—COPTS.—REPAST.—RUBBERS FOR THE FEET.—APRICOTS.—WATER-MELONS.—MUSK-MELONS.—DATES.—HEMP, ITS INTOXICATING QUALITY.

I HAVE already said that one *Ibrahim kiaschef* was employed in the collection of the duties due from a Nubian caravan that had arrived at *Siout*. I saw him frequently; he was of a mild disposition, and expressed for me a great regard. The important service which he rendered me is a proof of the friendship of this honest Mamalûk.

The journey into Abyssinia still occupied my mind. I found at *Siout* the most favourable opportunity of undertaking it; a caravan of negroes being ready to set off on their return to *Sennaar*, the capital of Nubia: from thence I intended to penetrate into the country of the Abyssinians. Every necessary preparation was made; all my arrangements were concerted with the black chief of the caravan; in short, I was upon the point of proceeding upon this long journey, when there occurred an event which forced me to relinquish it for ever.

Ibrahim's office gave him some authority over the Nubians of the caravan. I prevailed on him to use his interest in settling the price I was to pay the chief, or *kabir*, for my journey. *Kabir* is the name given in Nubia to men in power, from the Arabic word *kebir*, which signifies *great*. The Nubian at first demanded an exorbitant sum. We had several conferences on the subject at *Ibrahim's* house, through
the

the medium of my Maronite interpreter. But the *kabir*, not choosing to make any abatement, I quitted him without coming to terms. A few days after, the same Nubian called upon me at my house, and was much more reasonable in his demand. His price, however, although considerably diminished, was still excessive. At last he wished to speak to me in private. After having made every body withdraw, except the interpreter, he asked me, in a very mysterious manner, whether I was in possession of any drugs that operated as aphrodisiacs, assuring me that medicines of this sort were the only ones suited for his country, where, he said, every action, every thought related to the pleasures of love; and, to complete his gross imposture, he added that his king had expressly charged him to bring back plenty of stimulants of that nature. It was a very unreasonable time for him to think of providing such articles, when the caravan was just upon the point of entering the desert. I did not pay much attention to lies, for which the people of these countries are never at a loss; and I answered the *kabir*, that, charmed with the pleasant and important occupations of his *Sennaarian* majesty, I would employ all the resources of my art, in order to preserve in him, as well as in his subjects, such happy propensities. The negro appeared so well satisfied with my answer, that he immediately came down to half of the sum he had demanded; so that, reckoning the stock I must have laid in, so long and so difficult a journey would not have cost me more than 150 patackes, or about 800 livres.

I flew to acquaint *Ibrahim* with a circumstance that gave so much satisfaction. But he did not appear to participate in my joy: he congratulated me very coldly, and in a tone of disquietude advised me to come to no final agreement without his intermediation.

Affairs now took a very extraordinary turn. It was no longer necessary for me to express the desire I had of setting off to Nubia: the chief himself of this caravan solicited me and persecuted me to accompany him on his journey. He came to me several times in the

course of the day, and his entreaties became more and more pressing. Promises which he thought the most seducing were not spared: he assured me that I should be very well received at the court of his king; and in his description of the pleasures which I was there to enjoy, this barbarous and stupid fellow told me that I should eat the whole day long, and that the most beautiful women would there be constantly devoted to my pleasure. I once spoke to him of the assassination of M. du Roule, whom his countrymen had murdered during the consulship of Maillet. He was at first at a loss what answer to make; he wished to deny that event, then to justify it, by telling me that the French physician was an ignoramus, and that he never reached the capital of the king's dominions. This was false, since it was actually at *Sennaar* that Du Roule lost his life. At length, to remove all difficulties, and to manifest, as he said, his extreme desire to conduct me into his country, and to present me to the black monarch, from whom I was to meet with so gracious a reception, the *kabir*, after having reduced his demand to the moderate sum of fifty patackes (275 livres), for which he engaged to furnish camels and provisions, concluded by declaring that he would require nothing of me for my journey, being convinced that his sovereign would sufficiently reward him for the service he was about to render his majesty by carrying me to his court.

This sudden change gave me indeed some suspicions, which my companions, less anxious than myself to penetrate into the interior of Africa, had not been so slow in conceiving. However, the eager desire I felt of availing myself of this favourable opportunity to execute a project formed for such a length of time, induced me to banish every sort of consideration that might have deterred me from it, and I was on the point of promising the *kabir* to accompany him, when I received from *Ibrahim* a message requesting me to come to his house, without any other attendant than my Egyptian servant.

“ Thou

“ Thou must relinquish, at least for the present,” said the *kiaschef*,
“ thy journey to *Sennaar*. What thou toldest me of the importu-
“ nities of the *kabir* gave me some suspicions. I did not choose to
“ communicate them to thee before I knew whether they were well
“ founded : now I am convinced of the certainty of the plot formed
“ against thee, and against the other *Franks*, thy companions. Hav-
“ ing been informed that the *dog* of a Syrian, who serves thee as
“ interpreter, held frequent conferences with the *kabir*, I had them
“ watched, and their conversation overheard ; and I acquaint thee
“ that the design of these two rascals was to wait till thou shouldst
“ have reached the desert, and then to murder thee as well as thy
“ attendants, and to divide thy property, which the interpreter af-
“ firmed was very valuable. In order that no doubt may remain in
“ thy mind respecting the atrocious treachery of the *dog* that thou
“ hast cherished to betray thee, I will have him brought in, and
“ force him to confess the whole plot in thy presence.”

The Syrian accordingly arrived a moment after. His mouth was extended by the stupid grin which was habitual to him, and his countenance was expressive of satisfaction : he imagined that the young Egyptian not being able to interpret an interesting conversation, we were obliged to have recourse to his talents. The *kiaschef* asked him a few questions, which soon banished his expressions of joy ; he turned pale and trembled ; but when *Ibrahim* concluded by telling him that it was no longer time to dissemble, that the *kabir* had informed him of all the particulars of his perfidy, he fell, as if struck by lightning, at the feet of the *kiaschef*. To the confession of his crime he added some circumstances with which we were unacquainted ; at the same time accusing the *kabir* of being the author of the plot, and of what he called his own misfortune. *Ibrahim*, assuming a most menacing tone, ordered that the wretch should be caned to death. I allowed a sufficient interval for perturbation, terror, and the most cruel pangs to take possession of the soul of this cowardly villain ;

villain ; but when I saw the instruments of punishment prepared, I interceded in his behalf. *Ibrahim*, quite indignant, would not hear a word about forgiveness, and he consented to grant it only upon the promise which he obliged me to make him, that I would myself punish the culprit. I expressed my most lively gratitude to the *kiaschef*, and I drove out of my house the *kabir*, who, ignorant of what had just happened, was again come to solicit me to set off with his caravan. Thus it was that my project of a journey into Abyssinia remained unperformed.

Before I quit this subject I shall say a few words more respecting these Nubians, who bring, from the extremity of Africa, to the capital of Egypt those valuable productions which Nature seems to have placed in their country, as a compensation to them for the almost insupportable heat of the climate, and the burning aridity of an ungrateful soil. And in the first place I must rectify an error of an English traveller, who visited Upper Egypt some years before me, because it affects both history and commerce. In speaking of *Siout*, Mr. Bruce says, that the caravan of *Sennaar* came there formerly, and that those who intended to accompany it assembled at *Siout* and at *Manfelout*, and put themselves under the protection of the resident Bey ; then entering into the desert of Libya by the south-east, it proceeded to *Elouab*, which is the great *Oasis* of the ancients, and from thence traversed the immense desert of *Selima* *. These caravans from the interior of Africa have constantly repaired to *Siout* and to *Manfelout* upon the banks of the Nile ; and what I have just related proves that these were still their places of rendezvous.

Besides gold and other merchandize, these Africans also brought animals, such as monkies and parakeets, which serve for the amusement of the rich at Cairo, and which are one of the means employed there by show-men to attract the multitude. Monkies,

* Travels to discover the Source of the Nile.

which,

which, like a number of other animals, were one of the objects of worship among the ancient Egyptians *, are not indigenious in that country. The inhabitants of those cities where sacred monkeys were kept, went to Ethiopia in quest of this merry sort of divinities. It is still from thence and from *Yemen*, the forests of which, by Niebuhr's account, abound with these animals, that they are brought into Egypt as an article of commerce. I there saw only three species; the baboon, called by the ancients the *cynocephalus*, or dog-headed monkey †; the macaque, or hare-lipped monkey ‡; and the egret §.

The species of parakeets, which the Nubians bring in great numbers to Cairo, is the *rose-ringed* ||. In Arabic it is called *dourra*, which is also the name of the large species of black millet cultivated in Egypt.

The Nubians of *Dongola* and of *Sennaar* are tall and well made. Their skin is of a fine shining black. Like the Turks and the Arabs they wear a beard and whiskers. Upon this subject I must remark, that in France I have met with many very well informed persons who imagined that the negroes had no beard. Although, in general, it grows much later with them than with Europeans, and is not so bushy; they, nevertheless, have a pretty thick one on their face. The chief of the caravan whom I saw at *Siout*, and who was as handsome as he was unprincipled, wore upon his chin a long and thick beard. As he was already advanced in years, this beard, as well as his whiskers, was of a most beautiful white; and their

* *Isis enim Serapisque et longa simia cauda*, says Prudentius, in enumerating the gods of the Egyptians.

† *Le papouin, ou babouin proprement dit*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quad.—*Simia sphinx*, L.

‡ *Macaque*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quad.—*Simia cynomolgus*, L.

§ *Aigrette*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quad.—*Simia aygula*, L.

|| Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 551.—*Pfittacus Alexandri*, L.

colour contrasting with the ebony black of the rest of his face and body, produced a singular and by no means a disagreeable effect.

These negroes follow the religion of Mahomet; but they add to it practices and superstitions of their own. They go almost naked. Among them it is a luxury to wear a long shirt of gray or blue cloth, the sleeves of which are turned up under the arm-pits, so that the whole arm is left bare. In general, they have several little leathern cases fastened to the bend of the left arm; these are so many pockets, in which they keep money, tobacco, and other articles for daily use. Upon the bend of the right arm is fixed a poniard, with the handle and sheath likewise of leather. When travelling, they are also armed with a long sabre, the blade of which is straight and flat. They all go with their head bare, and they plait or friz their hair, or wool, in different ways. I have seen some whose head of hair was arranged so as to give it a complete resemblance to those wigs which were at that time called *perruques à l'Angloise*. The Nubians who carry on trade speak Arabic; but among themselves they have a particular idiom.

The great reputation I had acquired as a physician was spread far and near. A *sheick* of Bedouin Arabs, encamped in the environs of *Manfelout*, wrote to the *kiaschef* of *Siout*, to beg him to prevail upon me to repair to his camp. I promised to go thither, if I were furnished with horses. Two days after, the Bedouins brought me some very fine ones, and we set off in the afternoon under the escort of these Arabs. We directed our route to the north-north-west, and at night reached a village, the *sheick el belled* of which, having been previously informed of our arrival by our guides, gave us a very good reception. Near this village I saw a great many aquiline vultures. I have observed that the colours of the plumage of these birds were not the same in all the individuals. Some, and those were the most numerous, are of a dirty white, others of a cinereous gray;

gray ; and a few had the upper part of the body and the wings of a blackish hue.

The next day, at ten o'clock in the morning, we entered the Bedouin camp where I was expected. A number of tents were pitched upon the sand, at the foot of the chain of mountains parallel to the west bank of the Nile, near a village named *Tetalié*, about four leagues from *Manfelout*. The *sheick* was employed in having different accounts settled by his secretaries, and I waited some time before I could speak to him. It was not for himself that he had sent for me, but for an old Arab who had been blind for two years. It was a matter of astonishment through all the camp, when I was heard to declare that my skill did not extend so far as to work miracles ; and that nothing less than a miracle could restore this Arab to sight. I took leave of the *sheick*, whose name was *Mahmoud*, and, at the same time, of the innumerable quantity of flies with which the tents of his camp swarmed. I never saw so many collected together in any of the countries that I had visited. I then set out for *Siout* by the way of *Manfelout*.

In these two towns the greater part of the inhabitants are Copts. Most of them are employed in the manufacture of blue cloths, in which they carry on a considerable trade. Being the only persons in that part of Egypt who could write and read, they were the stewards, the superintendants, and the secretaries of the rich and great ; and they knew, quite as well as the stewards in any other place, how to avail themselves of the confidence and incapacity of those whose property was entrusted to their management. Several of them acquired great riches ; but they had the good sense to use them with moderation, and only in their own houses. They were too well acquainted with the danger incurred by displaying the appearance of wealth to the eyes of despots, who, being accustomed to consider the fortune of others as their own, cruelly sported with the property and life of those in their power.

One of the rich Copts of *Siout* insisted upon giving me a dinner. The inside of his house was clean and convenient; every thing in it announced easy circumstances; but women were to be seen there no more than in the house of a Mussulman. The repast was served up with profusion; the company drank copiously of excellent date-brandy, which was handed about every moment in small glasses of Venice crystal.

In other respects, the Copts take their meals in the same manner as the Turks and Arabs. They are seated, with their legs across, round a table with one foot, in the shape of a large circular tea-board, on which are placed the dishes, without either tablecloth, plates, knives, or forks. They put the right hand into the dishes, from which they successively help themselves with their fingers, each according to his particular taste. The left hand, being destined for ablutions, is *unclean*, and must not touch their food. Sometimes they collect in one dish what they have taken from several, in order to form a mess, worked up into a big ball, which they convey to their very widely extended mouth. The poultry and the boiled meats are divided and pulled to pieces with the hands and nails. The roast meats are served up in small bits, cut before they are put upon the spit; and no where is better roast meat eaten than in the countries of Turkey. No conversation is carried on at table: as they sit down at it only to eat, they lose no time, but swallow with the greatest precipitation. They are not men assembled for the sake of enjoying the pleasure of society, but animals collected round their food by want and voracity. The grease runs down from each side of their mouth; the stomach emits frequent eructations, which they prolong and render as noisy as they can. He whose hunger is soonest appeased rises first: and it is not considered as unmannerly to remain alone at table, if a person's appetite is not completely satisfied.

During my stay at *Siout* I constantly frequented the baths, to which I had taken a great liking, and which appeared to me to have

a very salutary effect. These baths are neither so handsome, nor kept in such good order as those at Cairo. Besides the different manners of kneading the flesh, of suppling the limbs, and of rubbing the body, the Sybarites of this part of the country take great pleasure in having the soles of their feet rubbed, in their own houses, with pieces of pumice-stone. The sort that is the most esteemed for this use is of a blackish cast; it is shaped like a shuttle cut with a feather-edge on one side, and a flat surface is left on the other. This shape is the most convenient for the hand of the person who applies the friction. The flat side, or the bottom, is striped with deep denticulations, which give it the roughness of a large file, and which scrape the soles of the feet in a superior manner.

The pieces of pumice-stone thus formed are called in Arabic *el bakké*. The best are said to come from Palestine. The operation of having the soles of the feet roughly rubbed is one of the chief pleasures of the Egyptians; but at first it is insupportable to Europeans, and occasions involuntary motions and startings, which are excited by the sensibility of the parts. After a certain time, these too delicate sensations are no longer felt; and at length this operation becomes agreeable, especially when it is performed by an experienced hand.

The plains which surround *Siout* are remarkable for their abundance. The farinaceous plants in use in these parts are to be admired for their quick vegetation and surprising produce. The orchards yield fruits of every kind. I here ate a great many *nebka*, a sort of plums which I have already described, and which are not to be had in the markets later than the beginning of April. Small apricots*, growing upon standard-trees, are here to be seen; they have an agreeable flavour, and are called *mischmisch*: the fruit, when dried, is dressed with different kinds of meat. This dish,

* *Prunus Armeniaca*. Misjmisj. Forskal, Flora Egypt.-arab. p. lxxvii.

which.

which is generally served up at the tables of the rich, is one of the best that Egyptian cookery affords.

But the species of fruit which, by its pulp and its watery and refreshing juice, is the best calculated for allaying the heat that the climate excites in the viscera, is the citrul, or water-melon *. The culture of this plant is one of the most general and most prolific in Upper Egypt. The water-melons are much better there than in the lower part of the country, or even at Cairo; the markets are filled with them, and they are sold exceedingly cheap; so that the poor, as well as the rich, may cool themselves with their aqueous and saccharine juice. Their Arabic name is *battecb*. The water-melons of Egypt are round, and grow to a large size; those of the best quality, when they are thoroughly ripe, have a rind perfectly smooth, and of a deep and blackish green. The divisions are slightly marked; the pulp is white near the rind, and red in the middle: the seeds are flattish, their shell is black, and the inside is of a beautiful white.

At *Siout* I ate water-melons of another species, which are called *battecb Saïdi*. This species differs from that which I have just described, in having the rind less smooth and of a whitish gray, the pulp of the middle of the fruit of the most lively rose colour, and the shell of the seeds hard, almost ligneous, and of a bright yellowish red. It grows to a larger size than that with a green rind, and its pulp, as firm and brittle, possesses an equally agreeable coolness, and the same slightly saccharine flavour. Both these fruits are wholesome and useful in climates where the heat makes the blood almost boil, and renders the humours very acrimonious.

From the beginning of the month of May there were likewise eaten a great quantity of very fine-looking musk-melons, but which are in general of a bad flavour. In the same season there were to be

† *Cucurbita citrullus*. Ægyptius battich. Forskal, Flora Egypt.-arab. p. lxxv.

had very large pumpkins, called in Arabic *barrach*, and also small green dates, the stones of which are quite soft. But these fruits, delicious when they have attained their maturity, are very bad before they are ripe, although in that state they are exceedingly relished by the inhabitants of Upper Egypt.

Hemp is cultivated in the plains of these countries; but it is not spun into thread as in Europe, although it might probably answer for that purpose. It is, nevertheless, a plant very much in use. For want of intoxicating liquors, the Arabs and Egyptians compose from it different preparations, which throw them into a sort of pleasing inebriety, a state of reverie that inspires gaiety and occasions agreeable dreams. This kind of annihilation of the faculty of thinking, this kind of slumber of the soul, bears no resemblance to the intoxication produced by wine or strong liquors, and the French language affords no terms by which it can be expressed. The Arabs give the name of *keif* to this voluptuous vacuity of mind, this sort of fascinating stupor.

The preparation most in use from this hemp is made by pounding the fruits with their membranous capsules; the paste resulting therefrom is baked, with honey, pepper, and nutmeg, and this sweetmeat is then swallowed in pieces of the size of a nut. The poor, who sooth their misery by the stupefaction produced by hemp, content themselves with bruising the capsules of the seeds in water, and eating the paste. The Egyptians also eat the capsules without any preparation, and they likewise mix them with tobacco for smoking. At other times they reduce only the capsules and pistils to a fine powder, and throw away the seeds. This powder they mix with an equal quantity of tobacco, and smoke the mixture in a sort of pipe, a very simple, but coarse imitation of the Persian pipe. It is nothing more than the shell of a cocoa-nut hollowed and filled with water, through which a pungent and intoxicating smoke

is inhaled. This manner of smoking is one of the most ordinary pastimes of the women in the southern part of Egypt.

All these preparations, as well as the parts of the plant that serve to make them, are known under the Arabic name of *baschisch* *, which properly signifies *herb*, as if this plant were the herb, or plant of plants. The *baschisch*, the consumption of which is very considerable, is to be met with in all the markets. When it is meant to designate the plant itself, unconnected with its virtues and its use, it is called *baslé*.

Although the hemp of Egypt has much resemblance to ours, it, nevertheless, differs from it in some characters which appear to constitute a particular species. On an attentive comparison of this hemp with that of Europe, it may be remarked, that its stalk is not near so high; that it acquires in thickness what it wants in height; that the port or habit of the plant is rather that of a shrub, the stem of which is frequently more than two inches in circumference, with numerous and alternate branches adorning it down to the very root. Its leaves are also not so narrow, and less dentated or toothed. The whole plant exhales a stronger smell, and its fructification is smaller, and at the same time more numerous than in the European species.

* This denomination of *herb* has led M. Niebuhr into an error. "The *baschisch*," says he, "is a sort of herb which M. Forskal, and some others who have preceded us in the East, have taken for the leaves of hemp." (Description de l'Arabie, p. 50.) It is nevertheless very certain, that the *baschisch* of the Arabs is nothing more than a species, or a variety, of hemp, of which I have just given a particular account.

CHAPTER XLIII.

TOMIEH.—ABOUTIGÉ.—ROBBERS.—TAHTA.—COPT.—A SICK MAN, AND HOW THE AUTHOR CHECKS HIS ARROGANCE.—CATHOLIC COPTS.—THE PERSECUTIONS THEY UNDERGO.—ENGRAVED STONES AND MEDALS.—APPLES.—MELONS.—DOUM SAÏDI, A SPECIES OF PALM-TREE IN THEBAÏS.—DIFFERENT SPECIES OF LEPROSY.

AFTER a pretty long residence at *Siout*, during a great part of which I was indisposed, I thought it time to continue my route to the south of Egypt; but there not being in the harbour any boat ready to ascend the Nile, I was obliged to alter my mode of travelling. I accordingly hired two camels and six asses to carry me to *Echmimm*. We set out from *Siout* on the 23d of May, 1778, about eleven in the morning; and following a road which sometimes ran near and sometimes led us away from the serpentine course of the Nile, we arrived at *Tomieb* about nine o'clock at night. *Tomieb*, though the residence of a *kiaschef*, is a very small town: it is surrounded by a great number of date-trees and some others; and this enclosure of foliage and verdure here, as well as in the other towns in this country, serves to temper the too intense heat of the sun, and to soften the rustic and miserable appearance of the habitations.

This place must not be confounded with *Tamieb*, a large village, the name of which being so very similar, might occasion some mistake. The latter, which is situated near a canal, is a dependency of the *kiascheflick* of *Fäium*, and five hours journey from *Fäium* itself.

Between *Siout* and *Tomieb* we came to another considerable town called *Aboutigé*. Ruins of ancient edifices and rubbish denote this to be the site of the ancient city of *Abotis*. But all is laid waste

and destroyed; there are here no monuments, nor even remarkable fragments, in preservation; every thing is thrown down and heaped together in confusion.

We had considerable difficulty to procure accommodation at *Tomieb*, and indeed we should not have been able to obtain a shelter for the night, had I not had recourse to the authority of the *kiaschef*. In the mosque there is shewn a camel in stone, which is seen to turn towards Mecca at the time when the caravan of pilgrims sets out from Cairo, and to turn back towards Cairo when it leaves Mecca. Such is the fable related by the inhabitants of *Tomieb*; and this gives some celebrity to their town. I had not an opportunity of examining this miraculous statue.

We left *Tomieb* on the 24th, at six o'clock in the morning, and had not proceeded above two leagues before we observed four men on horseback coming towards us. A peasant informed us they were robbers; and, in fact, they had the look and every appearance of banditti. They followed us a long time, without saying a word, continuing to ride round us; they stopped occasionally, and couching their lances, and setting their horses at full gallop, threatened us with an immediate attack. As we were prepared to bring down all the four, in case they should approach too near us, they caused us no uneasiness, and we were exceedingly entertained with their manœuvres. Perceiving, at length, that, so far from inspiring us with fear, they only afforded us amusement, they left us, and disappeared with the velocity of the wind.

At ten o'clock in the morning we arrived at *Tabta*, a town about twelve leagues from *Siout*. The *kiaschef* who commanded there was then encamped in the environs of the village. He was under orders to march against some Arabs who refused to pay the accustomed tribute. We stopped here, in order to take a momentary rest, intending immediately to proceed on our route; but a very rich Copt, the secretary and intendant of the *kiaschef*, being ill, requested me

to

to call at his house. I thought that after prescribing some remedies I should be at liberty to pursue my journey, but he entreated me to remain near him till he was perfectly recovered. It was in vain for me to urge as a pretext for hastening my departure, that the Arabic prince *Ismain-Abou-Ali* expected to see me. The sick man assured me, that, being very well known to the prince, he would write a letter to inform him that he had occasioned the delay of my journey. This, however, I begged him not to do, as the Arab *Ismain* was perfectly ignorant of my existence. Thinking that interest would have more weight with the Copt, the people of that nation being debased by meanness and avarice, the sad effects of habitual slavery, I represented to him, that as I had a pretty numerous retinue, the residence of such a number of strangers at his house could not fail to put him to considerable expense and inconvenience. I received from the brute an answer worthy of an insolent upstart: "Dost thou think," said he, "that the Orientals have no more generosity and greatness of soul than you *Franks*, to whom the expense of an additional inmate is a heavy burden? Were there a thousand of you, I could, without inconvenience, afford you lodging and board." I was therefore under the necessity of remaining with my patient, whose name was *Mallim-Mourcous*.

His complaint appeared to me serious; it was a very violent erysipelas, or Saint Anthony's fire, which covered entirely one side of his breast. That part of the body appeared as if it had been burned, and the patient felt as much pain as he would have done from the actual application of fire. He could not bear near it the thinnest clothing or linen; and if his shirt, which was very fine, happened to touch it, he screamed aloud. He had been afflicted with this acute disease for some time. The Italian missionaries at *Echmimm* had been called in as physicians; they had bled him again and again; still, however, the malady had not subsided, and they had discontinued their attendance. If not more skillful, I was, at

least, more fortunate; for at the end of ten days *Mallim-Mourcous* was completely cured.

He could not sufficiently express his joy and gratitude. The most delicate attentions were lavished upon me all the time I remained at his house. The evening before my departure, he sent me, by another Copt, some *rouleaux* of sequins: I had not forgotten the arrogant manner in which he had at first treated me, and assuming, in my turn, a haughty tone, I returned the money to the bearer, charging him to let the master of the house know, that a Frenchman rendered his services solely for the pleasure of being useful, but that he could never think of living at the expense of another; that I must therefore request him to present to *Mallim-Mourcous* a fine telescope, as a grateful return for his hospitable entertainment. The present was accepted, and I left the Copt impressed with a more just opinion of Europeans than he appeared to have entertained on my arrival.

Among the number of the Coptic inhabitants of *Tabta*, there were several Catholics. The Copts, it is well known, are one of the sects which the Roman church condemns as heretical. I frequently visited the most respectable among them, and, to my great satisfaction, I there found their vicar an Egyptian who had passed fifteen years in a seminary at Rome. He spoke Latin and Italian pretty well; and I took a pleasure in conversing with a man whom I considered as an European. He informed me that the Egyptians attached to the Roman church were cruelly harassed and tormented by those of their numerous countrymen, who followed the *heresy* with which they were infected, and that their most determined and implacable persecutor was the very man in whose house I resided. Enjoying the confidence of the *kiaschefs*, he thence arrogated to himself an authority to impose extortions on those of his nation who had adopted a religious doctrine preached by foreigners, in consequence of which they were often obliged to collect considerable sums in order to avert the effects of his animosity. Accordingly, these Catholics

were, with very few exceptions, poor and distressed, and lived in a state of the most abject misery. Not a single Bey, *kiaschef*, or Mahometan in office, although unable to dispense with the assistance of the Copts in the management of their affairs and in the exercise of their functions, placed any confidence in them, or ever employed them on any occasion. With a promise of happiness after death, these Catholics were kept miserable during life; and philosophy is not at a loss to appreciate the services rendered them by our monks.

The vicar procured me a few small antique stones, the engraving of which was not destitute of merit. It was less difficult to collect these works of antiquity in the Saïd than in Lower Egypt, which being daily frequented by travellers, they are there become exceedingly scarce. In the north of Egypt, the engraved stones and medals are most commonly found after the heavy winter rains, and in the south, after the inundation of the Nile. It is well known that good medals are rare in Egypt, though it is not uncommon there to find valuable engraved stones.

At this season apples, of a very indifferent quality, are to be met with at *Tabta*: their Arabic name is *tefba*. There are also here raised a prodigious quantity of musk-melons, of the species known in Egypt under the name of *agour**.

In the plains of *Tabta* are to be seen the first plants of the species of the corypha, or fan-palm tree, peculiar to the upper part of Egypt, called here *doum* and *doum Saïdi*†. This palm, which is very common in Thebais, shoots out several naked stems, of a middling thickness. They are deeply marked, all their length, with circular rings; and their top is terminated and adorned with large palmate fan-shaped leaves. The fruit of this, like that of other palms, grows in bunches or clusters. A clump of these trees pro-

* *Cucumis foliis palmato-sinuatis, pomis globosis echinatis*.—*Cucumis anguria*, L.

† *Borassus flabelliformis*, L.

duces a fine effect. By disposing their stems in the form of elegant vases, Nature seems to have taken a pleasure in enlivening, with the verdure of these grand and beautiful nosegays, plains frequently sterilized, and always parched up by the rays of a burning sun.

It is easy to perceive, that this species of palm has no other affinity to the date-tree, than the general characters which constitute their genus, and which differ in great and numerous specific dissimilarities. The Jesuit Siccard was therefore mistaken when he asserted that the *doum* was a species of wild date-tree *; and this observation is not unseasonable, because I have heard the same error repeated by several persons otherwise well informed.

Another erroneous opinion propagated in regard to the *doum*, is, that the species of resinous gum which we import from Africa and India under the name of *bdellium*, and which is nothing more than the common myrrh in an imperfect state, exudes from its stems; for it is very certain, that there is extracted from the palm-tree of Thebais neither gum nor any other analogous substance.

The *doum* bears twice a year. The fruit is rounded and somewhat elongated, of the size of an orange, but of an irregular shape. It is one of the articles of food of the wretched part of the people of Upper Egypt. They peel off the outer skin, which is red, and eat the spongy, and almost dry, substance covering the kernel. Although the Egyptians consider this as a well-flavoured fruit, I found it very unfavourable. I cannot give a better idea of it than by comparing it to bad gingerbread, having all that sort of disagreeable ficcidity and insipid sweetness. In America I have eaten a fruit, the taste of which very much resembles this, and which grows on the *courbaril* †, a very large tree of the southern parts of the new continent. The pithy

* Mem. des Missions du Levant, tome v. p. 222. Granger has also confounded the *doum* with the wild date-tree.

† *Hymenæa courbaril*, L.

substance of the *doum* is also used medicinally in Thebais. An infusion of it in water is made with dates; and this beverage, which is cooling and gently aperient, is well calculated, not only to temper the heat of a fever, but to effect a cure.

At this place I met with a loathsome and horrible disorder, of which I had seen the negroes become the unfortunate victims in the French colony of Guiana, where it is known under the denomination of *mal rouge* (red disease). An Egyptian afflicted with it came to me to be cured. He had lost the greater part of the metacarpal and metatarsal bones, which had successively dropped off. The commencement of this species of leprosy, which the Arabs call *madsjourdam*, declares itself by the numbness, redness, and swelling of the fingers; and the redness and swelling of the ears. It is the *leprosy of the joints*, described by Hillary*.

Leprosy, whatever may be its nature, is not in Egypt considered as a contagious disorder: it is, however, most prudent to have no communication with persons infected. Lepers of every kind, which, although not common, are far from being scarce, are not there, as in Turkey, secluded from society. The Egyptians take no precaution to preserve themselves from contagion, nor do they consider that this indifference is attended with the smallest danger.

The leper at *Tabta*, who was a man in easy circumstances, lived, as usual, with his family and friends, and ate at the same table. The bones which he had remaining on his fingers, and the greater part of which were ready to drop off, enabled him to seize hold of the meat out of the dishes, and carry it to his mouth as well and as quick as those whose fingers were perfect; and it was only in consequence of my advice that his friends left off this communication with so disgusting an associate.

* William Hillary's Observations on the Change of the Air, and the concomitant epidemical Diseases in the Island of Barbadoes. London, 1759.

In other respects, this man, who was sixty years of age, had all the appearance of good health: he slept soundly, had an excellent appetite, and suffered no pain whatever. He felt only a violent itching in his fingers and toes, when the articulations of them began to ulcerate. None of his family had been attacked with this disorder, and he himself had not perceived any symptoms of it till within the last three or four years. His situation gave him no uneasiness; notwithstanding his age and his complaint, he had preserved his vivacity, and was exceedingly cheerful. When I informed him that his cure was beyond the reach of my skill, he did not appear at all affected, but, as if I had communicated to him the most agreeable intelligence, cried out, in a joyful tone, *Allab k rim*, God is great!

From a variety of observations it appears, that persons afflicted with the leprosy have ardent dispositions towards the physical pleasures of love. An instance is quoted of a leper, who, on the very night of his death, was several times hurried away by the warmth of his temperament. I have seen at Canea, in the island of Candia, great numbers of lepers, both men and women, banished without the gates of the city, in miserable hovels, where they abandoned themselves to the greatest excesses of voluptuous irritation. They were sometimes to be seen satisfying their disgusting and impetuous lust in open day, by the side of the roads leading to the town near which they lived. The leprosy to which they were a prey, is the leprosy properly so called, denominated by the Greeks *lepra*, and the same as that with which the Jews were infected, and which, among them, was very common, and even contagious. It was also, according to Galen, an endemical disease at Alexandria.

Curious to know if the leper at *Tabta*, although attacked by a different species of the disorder, felt the same voluptuous transports as those in the isle of Candia, and in several other countries in Turkey, I questioned him particularly upon the subject. He ingenuously related to me the most secret particulars of his matrimonial

monial intercourse. His advanced age had not in any respect weakened his temperament. Burning with continual desires, not a day passed but his wife more than once experienced its effects. While he was talking to me, his countenance seemed full of expression, his eyes became animated, in a manner that left no doubt, in my mind, of the truth of what he said. But yet his wife, notwithstanding an intimate and habitual connexion, felt no symptom of his disease, nor any inconvenience whatever; and three children, the fruits of their union, enjoyed likewise the best state of health. This important fact was confirmed to me by all those who were most intimately acquainted with the leper's family.

However, the *leprosy of the joints*, the *mal rouge* of the American colonies, is there considered as a very contagious disorder, and all those who are infected by it are kept apart. Having been introduced by the negroes from the coast of Guinea, it extends its ravages among the negroes from all the other parts of Africa, as well as those born in America, and also among the Europeans who have connexion with the black women. The mildness which a disease, cruel in its effects in other climates, preserves in Egypt, is there an exception in favour of the leprosy of that country, already privileged in other respects. It appears even that this influence of the atmosphere is not confined to Egypt alone, but extends to other parts of the East. In fact, M. Niebuhr has remarked, that at Bombay, where the leprosy is by no means uncommon among the Indians in general, it cannot be malignant, as those who are diseased are, without hesitation, allowed to work along with those in good health*.

As I am speaking of one of the most dreadful maladies with which mankind is afflicted, and mean not to resume the subject, I shall add, that I have also had occasion to see, in Thebais, two persons eaten up by another sort of leprosy, which I have since met with in the island of Scio, where it is more common than the ordinary

* Description de l'Arabie, page 121.

leprosy of the Jews. This species the Greeks there call *lovvia*. Those who are afflicted with it have a raucous voice, are tormented with a cough, their eyebrows fall off; large fleshy excrescences appear all over their body; their nerves are contracted, and their hands and feet shrink up in an extraordinary manner; but the bones of the fingers and toes do not drop off, as in the leprosy of the joints. This is, probably, the species which Hillary has distinguished, in the work before quoted, under the denomination of the *leprosy of the Arabs*. It is by no means uncommon in the East, but it is not, like the former species, considered as very contagious. I observed at Scio, that the persons attacked by it were not secluded from society.

These last lepers are not tormented with the same desires as the others in regard to the physical effects of love. It is from the circumstance of proper attention not having been paid to the different species of leprosy, and their different symptoms, that so many contradictions have occurred with respect to the temperament of the leprous. It is certain that the latter sort have no disposition to venery. The sufferings occasioned by the violent spasms with which their disorder is accompanied, and which cause the contraction of all their members, deprive them at once of every kind of desire, as well as of the means of gratification, supposing they possessed the power; besides, it generally happens at a very advanced period of life.

Neither the Egyptians, nor any other of the Orientals, were acquainted with a preservative against the leprosy, or a remedy for its cure. A Frenchman, who called himself a physician, and rambled over the Levant, pretended to be in possession of a secret, but infallible specific, against this malady. Among other places, he visited Canea, where the number of lepers afforded him a wide field for establishing the virtue of his valuable discovery. But as experience did not realize his fine promises, his nostrum had no more repute than the other panaceas which this quack hawked about from place to place. I very much regretted that I had not provided myself

self

elf with some hemlock pills; it would have been easy for me to have made a trial of them, and there is every reason to presume that it would not have been unsuccessful after the experiments of M. Ratlau, a physician of Amsterdam, who succeeded in curing the elephantiasis of Europe with these pills, which are used with advantage as a remedy for excrescences*.

I have never, either in Egypt, or in other parts of the Levant that I have visited, heard of the leprosy attached to houses, and which is mentioned in Leviticus †. Michaelis is of opinion, that by a metaphor taken from the leprosy of the body, the Orientals had given the same name to certain *strakes* which eat into the wall and spread by degrees; and he suspects that this leprosy of the walls must have been more common, and much more perceptible in the East, where saltpetre abounds ‡. These are certainly very learned conjectures, but they are totally unfounded. The present Orientals, in fact, no longer pay any attention to the leprous *strakes* of buildings, admitting that such strakes do still there exist. Those people are as little acquainted with another sort of leprosy which was in the garments, on the subject of which the Jewish legislator has recommended very minute precautions §. These diseases of inanimate things, which served only to form the Jews to habits of cleanliness, have disappeared in the East with the dirty people for whom they were intended.

Men with red hair and beards are as uncommon in the Levant as in Egypt. But this colour is not, as some persons have imagined ||, an indication of leprosy, nor a motive for suspecting its existence. It is not in the Levant, and particularly in Egypt, that so many precautions are taken; as in the last of these countries, the lepers,

* Michaelis, Voyageurs savans et curieux, &c. &c. Quest. 11.

† Chap. xiv. ver. 34, &c.

‡ Work quoted, Quest. 12.

§ Levit. chap. xiii. ver. 47, &c.

|| Work quoted, Quest. 28.

whatever be the nature of their disease, are never sequestered; and in the Levant the inhabitants never think of sending them away, or shutting them up in enclosures without the towns, until the leprosy has shewn itself so as to be evident to every eye. On the other hand, some of the Egyptian Arabs dye their beard of a reddish colour, by means of the *henné* powder; and it may be well conceived, that if the idea of leprosy were inseparable from the red colour of the beard, they would not be at pains to have it thought that they were seized with so loathsome a disorder.

It would be shewing little knowledge of the Arabs and Egyptians, to imagine, like Michaelis, according to the opinion of a German physician, that *in order to remove every idea of leprosy, they have rendered universal that colour which could give rise to such a suspicion.* Carrotty people, adds he, *have introduced this fashion, and been the first to paint themselves with the henné, in order to disguise the redness of their hair. In like manner patches, at first used to hide pimples, have, by degrees, become an article of dress. This, I am inclined to think, is the true solution of the difficulty**. All these reasonings, collected in the closet, are contradicted by facts. Egypt is not the land of fashion; nor does frivolity there daily dictate new customs or continual changes in dress. There, clothes and manners remain as they have been for centuries. A variation in them, which is a proof of levity of disposition, is no part of the character of the inhabitants of Egypt. Besides, it is a mistake that the custom of dying the beard with *henné* is there universal. I have never seen it adopted but by two or three Arabic princes. Lastly, would the red have occasion to paint themselves red, in order to disguise their colour?

* Work already quoted, Quest. 28.

CHAPTER XLIV.

SOUHAJE.—ITALIAN RECOLLECTS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE PROPAGANDA; THEIR INCIVILITY; THEIR MODE OF LIFE; THEIR CONVENT.—LETTER FROM THEIR SUPERIOR.—CATHOLIC COPTS.—ECHMIMM.—PANOPOLIS.—CATHOLIC PRIEST.—ANTIQUÉ FIGURE.—MOSQUE.—PLAINS OF ECHMIMM.—MELONS.—COURTESANS.—CHRYSOMELA.

LEAVING *Tabta* on the morning of the 1st of June, we continued to travel to the southward, upon the west bank of the Nile, which in its course makes here great sinuosities. Tired of following the flow and heavy pace of the camels, and relying on the assurance that had been given me respecting the safety of the roads, I went on before with two of my party. Having made some progress, I stopped for my other companions, but they did not make their appearance. After having spent the best part of the day, which was excessively hot, in waiting for them, in vain, I proceeded to *Soubaje*, in the persuasion that the rest of my party had been attacked and stripped by a gang of robbers, perhaps by those who, before our arrival at *Tabta*, had watched our motions and followed us for some time.

Soubaje, seven leagues from *Tabta*, is a large village, built near a quarter of a league from the bank of the river. Above it, the waters of the Nile flow into a great canal, which conveys them into the plains to the westward. The *kiaschef* of *Soubaje* insisted that I should sup with him, and sleep at his house. His civilities did not tranquillize me, or remove the uneasiness with which I was cruelly agitated from the idea of the loss of my companions, as well as of my baggage, in a country where I was deprived of every hope of resource.

I fet off the next morning before daybreak, in order to crofs the Nile, and repair to *Echmimm*, which is fituated upon the east bank. I learned from the mafter of the ferry-boat, that my companions and their camels had arrived there the evening before at a very early hour. The camel-drivers had conducted them by a much fhorter route than that which I had taken, and which I had rendered more circuitous by penetrating too far into the country.

Upon my arrival at *Echmimm*, a town built at a full half league from the Nile, I flew to the convent of the Italian Recolleets of the *Propaganda*, where I had appointed to meet my companions. I found them, in their turn, very uneasy about me, and upon the point of recroffing the river to endeavour to find me out. They informed me of the reception they had met with: it could not well have been more rude and unhoſpitable. It was not without making a great many difficulties, that the monks allowed them to paſs the night within the walls of the convent, and it had been intimated to them, that they, as well as myſelf, muſt provide another lodging.

I was received in a manner equally rude. When I entered the court, in the middle of which our baggage was thrown, one of the monks was walking in a gallery; he pretended not to perceive me, and withdrew into an apartment. I went up, and ſaw a young man, a complete monkish puppy, whoſe fair and florid complexion ſhewed that his apoſtolic zeal did not often expoſe it to the heat of the ſun. His chin was ſhaded, yet not encumbered, by a little beard, nicely combed, and ſymmetrically tapered; and every thing about him announced the moſt refined attention to dreſs, as well as the conceited manners of a coxcomb. My ſun-burnt face appeared to ſtartle him; the wrinkles of ill-humour furrowed his feminine forehead, while with a look of diſdain he ſurveyed me from top to toe. The paltry wretch ſcarcely deigned to raiſe himſelf from the ſoſa on which he was reclined rather than ſeated, and he ſuffered me to remain
ſtanding

standing before him, telling me at the same time, that the community had been pleased to receive my attendants and my baggage, and that nothing would be demanded of me for this act of hospitality. Before I made any reply to so great an exertion of generosity, I presented to him the letter which their Superior general had given me for this convent, and in which he recommended me to the attention of these monks. He read the letter with a smile of contempt, and told me that he was not himself the superior, but would go and look for him; and then, without condescending either to speak to me or look at me again, he turned himself about upon his sofa.

The letter of the superior, a real *capucinade*, could not, however, have been more precise nor more pressing. It is as follows :

“ *Reverendissimo Padre Procuratore eccellentissimo ed Amico carissimo.*

“ Essendosi a noi presentato l’honoratissimo signor Sonnini, ufficiale di marina delle truppe reggie Francese, et avendoci notificato
 “ il suo desiderio, che è per portarsi in queste parti dell’ superior
 “ Egitto, per osservare quelle antichità ed insinuarli ove si trovano, e
 “ per tal’ effetto avendoci anche parlato l’illustre signor Carlo Magalon quivi mercante Francese, nostro carissimo amico e ben affetto :
 “ per ciò prego le loro P. P. R. R. usarle tutte quelle cortesie, e carità al nostro stato, e poverta seraphica, convenevoli, e possibile
 “ con dirigerlo ancora accio ottenga il suo intento, e di darle il modo
 “ di presentarsi ai capi degli Arabi, per i quali tiene lettere raccomanditizie da questi Sanagieck, e cio afinchè li prestano tutta l’assistenza e li diano tutte le necessarie guide, etc. E tanto sperando
 “ dalle loro innate bonta ed attendendone un buon excito, ai loro
 “ comandi sempre pronto, ed arriccommandandomi alle loro sante
 “ orazioni, abbraccindole di vero cuore, li do la seraphica benedizione,

“ tione, e fono di sua procuratione reverendissima suo umilissimo et de-
 “ votissimo servidore,

“ Frate GERVASIO D'ERMEA, *Presidente.*

“ Cairo, 12 Marzo 1778.

“ *A Rev. Pad. Gedeone de Baviera, Presidente, Achmimm*.*”

For fear of losing all patience, I quitted this insolent fellow, and went down into the court in which we had been allowed to remain. I sent after a lodging in the town; and as this was not easy to be found, I continued waiting the event till the afternoon, without seeing either the superior or any person belonging to the house; neither did any of the monks make their appearance when my baggage was loading on the camels. Upon leaving the house, however, I sent them a patacke as payment for my companions' night's lodging;

* Translation of this letter.

“ *To the Right Reverend Father, Gedeon of Baviera, President at Achmimm.*

“ M. Sonnini, a naval officer in the French king's service, having presented himself
 “ to us, and communicated to us his desire of travelling into Upper Egypt, in order to
 “ examine the antiquities in that part of the country; M. Charles Magalon, a French
 “ merchant of this city, our well-beloved friend, having also spoken to us to the
 “ same effect, I entreat you, my reverend fathers, to shew him all the civilities, affi-
 “ duities, and charity that your profession and seraphic poverty will admit of; to direct
 “ him, besides, so that he may fulfil his intentions; to enable him to present him-
 “ self to the chiefs of the Arabs, for whom he has letters of recommendation from
 “ the Sangiacks, that he may receive from them every possible assistance, and that
 “ they may furnish him with all the necessary guides, &c. &c.

“ Hoping all this from your natural goodness, and expecting a prosperous issue,
 “ I am always at your command; I recommend myself to your holy prayers; I em-
 “ brace you with all my heart; I give you my seraphic benediction; and I am your
 “ reverence's most humble and most devoted servant,

“ Brother GERVAISE D'ERMEA, *President.*

“ *Cairo, 12th March, 1778.*”

but

but they did not venture to carry their incivility so far as to accept it, and thought proper to send it back.

If the reception I met with from these pretended missionaries be compared to that which I daily experienced from the Arabs, the Mamelûks, and other inhabitants of Egypt, the hospitality of the one and of the others may be easily appreciated. The stranger was admitted with frankness, and even with disinterested cordiality, into the house or tent of the half-civilized native of this country; and he was exposed to the humiliation of being slighted by Europeans, among whom he might naturally expect to find that affability which makes friends and countrymen of those who meet in distant climates, whatever might be the part of Europe from whence they originally came. The evening before, an austere Mussulman, who, from superstitious pride, considers an European as almost unworthy to approach him, had compelled me to share the comforts of his house and table; and the next day, the only *Franks* resident in a great city, where, like myself, they were foreigners and only tolerated, gave me the most contumelious reception.

But, debased by their institution, these Italian monks, of one of the orders characterized by sloth and ignorance, and the most scrupulously observed rule of which is to wallow in abundance at the expense of others, and by the abject means of mendicant collections, were in general taken from the lowest and most vitiated class of the people.

There were no more than three Recollects in the convent at *Echmimm*. From what I could observe of their habitation, I conceived a high opinion of it, not having seen so handsome a one for a long time. Equally spacious and well-built, it might pass for a palace, when compared to the houses of the natives. The employment of these men, whom Mr. Bruce has represented as perfectly destitute both of understanding and knowledge*, is the same as that of the

* Travels to discover the Source of the Nile, vol. i. p. 99.

monks in Europe ; namely, to make dupes, and amass riches ; and it is not to be doubted, that the fear of exposing to the discerning eyes of Europeans a mode of life that would have rendered them contemptible, was one of the principal motives for their behaving to me in so rude a manner.

At *Echmimm* there are a great number of Catholic Copts. I was told that they formed one half of the population of the place. By the dissemination of falsehood and deception, these monks drain the people of their money. It appeared to me, however, that they are held in no great estimation among their flocks. One of the most respectable Copts of *Echmimm* came to pay me a visit in the house which I occupied ; and he spoke to me of the *Franciscans* in very contemptuous terms. They had, he said, a great deal of money ; this was the reason of their disdain to receive me ; though, in former times, they would have been glad to have had me for an inmate. This Egyptian complained heavily of their spirit of avarice. The poor were forsaken by them, while the rich continually saw them at their doors. I was likewise informed that they made bitter complaints of Bruce, the English traveller, who, having stopped for some time at their house, had probably not consented to satisfy their rapacity, by paying them for their venal hospitality, at an exorbitant rate.

Here, as well as at *Tabta*, the Catholics had a priest of their nation. He also had spent ten years at Rome ; he spoke Italian fluently, and Latin tolerably well. But, less artful than the missionaries, he was in the greatest distress. Jealous of his profession, of the confidence reposed in him by his countrymen, and of the practice of physic to which he had applied himself, these *evangelical* men tormented and persecuted him to the utmost of their power ; and, like faithful observers of *seraphic* charity, they omitted no opportunity of traducing him, and of doing him every possible injury.

Were the houses of *Echmimm* better built, it would be a handsome town.

town. The streets are wide and straight. This disposition of the streets, without which no city can have any pretensions to beauty, is, in general, not to be met with in the other towns of Egypt; the streets of which are very narrow, crooked, and inconveniently laid out. But the houses of this town, like those of the other considerable places in the southern part of Egypt, are built with bricks, not burnt, but simply kneaded with mud, and dried in the sun. These bricks are cemented with earth. This sort of mason-work, which gives the buildings a grayish tint, forms a dull and gloomy prospect. Should a change take place in the seasons, and were it to rain in this country, as in that part of Egypt which borders upon the sea, the cement of the bricks would soon give way, and the houses tumble down. Those belonging to persons of consequence either from their employment or their riches, are more solid, being constructed of bricks half burnt. The walls are ornamented with several rows of large earthen pots of different shapes and sizes, which serve as an asylum to pigeons; and almost all the dwellings have on their flat roofs a pigeon-house in the form of a spacious square tower.

The town is surrounded on the eastern side by a chain of steep and barren mountains, which reflect the heat in such a manner as to render it sometimes insupportable. I never felt it so violent as on the 3d of June, the day after my arrival at *Echmimm*. At four o'clock in the afternoon, the mercury in Reaumur's thermometer, placed in the shade, rose to 36°. The wind was at north-east; but though it blew strong, it inflamed instead of cooling the air, the sandy plains over which it had passed having made it contract an intense degree of heat.

Panopolis and *Chemmis* are the same city, under two names, one of which is Greek, the other Egyptian; and the Egyptian name still subsists at this day in that of *Echmimm* *. Remains of the an-

* Danville, Mémoire sur la Différence des Latitudes et des Longitudes entre Alexandrie et Siene. Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, tome xxix.

cient city are yet to be seen to the eastward, and near the walls that surround the modern town. I there observed an enormous mass consisting of a single block of stone. Upon one of its sides was engraved, in large characters, a Greek inscription which is almost entirely effaced, and I could distinguish clearly no other part of it than the word **TIBERIO**. A portion of this remarkable stone, and consequently of the inscription, is concealed in the ground. That which appears above it is seventeen feet in length, eight and a half in breadth, and four in thickness. Underneath the uncovered part of this large block, the earth is excavated; this affords the facility of seeing the paintings with which the surface facing the ground is covered. In the middle is distinguishable a sphere with the twelve signs of the zodiac. The colour which has best withstood time and devastation is an azure blue; the other colours are scarcely visible.

This stony mass is white and of a calcareous nature; it contains a great number of fossil shells. It is the same sort of stone as the rocks of the neighbouring mountains. But having been exposed to the air for a great length of time, it has acquired a hardness which the rock does not possess, when first taken from the quarries.

By the side of this block is to be seen another, but of a smaller size; this is almost entirely covered with earth. The women of the country have perforated in it a small cavity or aqueduct, in which, by secret and natural irrigations, they pretend to procure fecundity.

A little farther, the ruins of an ancient edifice are to be observed; but no part of their general plan is now distinguishable; all is overthrown. Large stones, similar to those which I have just mentioned, exhibit the remains of hieroglyphics and paintings.

The priest of the Catholic Copts had the goodness to point out to me the curiosities of *Echmimm* and its environs. On our return from one of these excursions, this inoffensive man took me to his habitation. His apartment, which was very confined, was simple but clean; he had there collected several pieces of antiquity, which he regretted

regretted that he had it not in his power to offer me, having promised to send them to a Venetian merchant at Cairo. In fact, he possessed nothing of any great value. A number of fragments of emeralds, pierced for amulets, some idols of porcelain, one of alabaster, but entirely spoiled, and a wooden figure two feet high, composed the whole collection of this worthy Copt, who, while I was at his apartments, loaded me with civilities.

In *Plate XXI.* is represented the wooden figure, in better preservation than any of those which the Copt had collected. Upon some parts of this image, the remains of the painting with which it had been covered, were still to be seen. It is a musician, a *trumpeter*; but the figure is not Egyptian: it relates to the Greek or Roman customs; and there is every reason to presume that it was made at the time when the Romans were masters of Egypt.

An ancient mosque is still the object of the veneration of the Christians, who pretend that it was formerly one of their churches. The Copts assert that it had been built upwards of a thousand years: this is a falsehood. Indeed the edifice is falling in every part; but its construction, as unstable as that of the most modern houses, sufficiently demonstrates that it is not the workmanship of a period when buildings possessed greater solidity. This temple is spacious, and has several entrances; its periphery is lighted by a line of contiguous windows. The interior, similar to that of all the mosques in this country, is a large, empty, and naked enclosure; but the small granite pillars by which it is supported, and which were taken from among the ruins of *Panopolis*, excite admiration.

The cultivated grounds in the environs of *Echmimm* enjoy a high reputation for fertility. They produce the finest corn in Egypt, as well as sugar-canes, and cotton which serves for the supply of a manufactory of coarse calicoes. Gardens, where different species of plants grow under the shade of the fruit-trees, there afford an abundant provision for the support of life, and furnish an agreeable shelter

ter against the scorching rays of the sun. The date-trees and palms of Thebais are likewise to be found there in great numbers. The apple-trees yield larger and better fruit than those of *Tabta*; but the water-melons are small, and of a quality very inferior to those I had eaten at *Siout*. The markets were filled with a prodigious quantity of musk-melons (*agour*), among which I saw some of an enormous size. These fruits do not assume any regular form; some are round, others oval, and some are by no means thick, though much elongated like a large cucumber. In other respects, the melons of this species are, generally speaking, of a bad quality; their pulp is insipid and not at all sweet. It is a rarity to meet with any that are tolerable, and good ones are not to be had: nevertheless, there is a prodigious consumption of them, as the people in Upper Egypt find in these musk-melons a very cheap aliment, which allays the thirst and mitigates the acrimony of the humours occasioned by the heat of the climate; but good water-melons produce a more certain and far more agreeable effect.

The town of *Echmimm*, like all those of Egypt, contains a crowd of priestesses addicted to the worship of a disgusting sensuality; they are, consequently, devoted to the gratifications of only the most brutish of mankind. In some celebrated works the pencil has delineated, in a magical style, the graces and the seductive manœuvres of these nymphs of pleasure; but, however brilliant the colouring with which such a picture may be animated, it vanishes under the sponge of rigid truth.

In fact, though it may be true, as has been asserted, that in all the places of any consequence in Egypt there are a great number of courtesans, it is false that, destined to the enjoyment of travellers, the latter are not obliged to pay them; that they have been bequeathed, by charitable souls, for the purposes of prostitution; and that messengers of gallantry are in waiting to conduct the traveller to the temple where the young priestesses so disinterestedly offer up their sacrifices.

sacrifices. The panegyric that has been made on their charms, their easy shape, their beautiful hips, the fascinating and elegantly tapering slope of their waist, in short, on their sole wish of pleasing and exciting desire by their attractions, is also a tissue of errors; but what is not less false, is the kind of generosity with which such authors have been pleased to honour the improper conduct of these girls, by asserting that, satisfied with being beloved and preferred to their companions, they never had any design upon the traveller's purse.

The poor creatures that are to be seen in the public places of the cities of Egypt make, like our street-walkers in Europe, a trade of selling the semblance of pleasure. They endeavour to attract the men by every means in their power, extort as much from them as they possibly can, and often fleece them with as much address as the most artful of our courtesans. On the other hand, among those of Upper Egypt, the ravishing details of that beauty which has been so unjustly ascribed to them would be sought for in vain. None are there to be seen but wretched beings, in general ugly, badly clothed, and forbidding by the excess of their effrontery, which is so much the more remarkable in these countries, as they are the only women who go with their faces uncovered, and speak to men in public; more disgusting still on account of the numberless and frightful disorders with which they are infected; in a word, uniting all the horrors of libertinism, without possessing the least of its allurements. Such are, in truth, these women, who can have no attractions but in the eyes of the most brutal. Let those youths who, seduced perhaps by the flattering picture that has been drawn of the Egyptian *Venuses*, might wish for an opportunity of adoring them, banish all cause of regret. They would find them only disagreeable objects, in comparison with whom most of the courtesans of Europe might pass for angels.

In order to eradicate every false impression that may have been left by the perusal of such misstatements, I must not omit to mention,

that associations of women of pleasure, far from being a legal establishment in Egypt, are not so much as tolerated: the commandants of the towns expel all those against whom there is any complaint. I have even seen some of the more rigid *kiaschefs* who would suffer none of these unfortunate wretches to enter the limits of their jurisdiction.

Returning one day from the gardens of *Echmimm*, I found a chrysomela attached to the tuft of my turban; it stuck so closely, that I could not disengage it but at the expense of its tarfi. The length of this insect was five lines and a half, and its breadth rather more than two lines; its eyes were large and elliptical; the upper part of its head was speckled with very small spots, as well as its corselet, which was marginated. It had a clypeus between its elytra. Rows of small spots, between which were other speckles irregularly distributed, were distinguishable upon the elytra which covered the wings.

No colours could be richer than those of this chrysomela; above, it was of a shining green mixed with a dazzling gold colour; underneath, this golden green was shaded with brown; its large eyes were like globular particles of the finest gold, the brilliancy of which was still heightened by a black stripe crossing them longitudinally in the middle. The thighs and legs were of the same mixed colour as the under part of the body; lastly, the tarfi and antennæ were black.

The Nile, in the vicinity of *Echmimm*, furnishes fish in great abundance. The species that I saw there most commonly is the *bayatte*, which grows to a very large size without its flavour acquiring any great improvement*.

* See page 475, and *Plate XVI. Fig. 2.*

CHAPTER XLV.

ITALIAN MONKS. — COPTIC PRIEST. — EXCESSIVE HEAT. — BARDIS. — DOUM. — MONKS OF FARSCHOUT. — ARABIC PRINCE. — FARSCHOUT. — THE AUTHOR'S BOAT PUT IN REQUISITION. — THE JUSTICE WHICH THE ARABIC PRINCE CAUSED TO BE RENDERED HIM. — AVANIE IMPOSED BY A MAMALÛK. — DEPARTURE FROM SAHET. — RAFTS OF WATER-MELONS. — CROCODILE. — HOU, DIOSPOLIS PARVA. — KAFR ESSAÏD. — RAFTS OF EARTHEN VESSELS. — BIRDS. — DOGS. — A DANGEROUS PART OF THE NILE. — ACCIDENT THAT HAPPENED TO THE AUTHOR'S BOAT. — EL BAB, ANOTHER DANGEROUS PLACE.

BEFORE I quitted *Echmimm*, I was obliged to have a concise correspondence with the Italian missionaries, of whom I had never once thought, and whom I had not seen during my whole stay. The master of the boat who had brought me to *Siout* was returned to Cairo, where he was to take in a lading for Upper Egypt. He had promised to bring me whatever should be entrusted to him for my use by my countrymen in that city. We had agreed, that the convent of the monks of *Echmimm* should be the place where he would find me, or at least get intelligence of my route; I therefore wrote to the superior, that I expected from him a service, which I should have been sure of receiving from the meanest of the *fellahs*, namely, to send the *reis* to me at *Farschout*, whither I was about to proceed. I added, that I should not fail to make known in Europe his shameful behaviour to me, and thereby to confirm the bad opinion which Mr. Bruce had propagated respecting their community. My letter was in Latin, which he answered in the same language, in a style of dulness, perfidy, and meanness, the true characteristics of monks. His answer was in these words:

“ *Achmim, die 7 Junii.*

“ CUM venerit conductor navis, illico mittam Farschutum, quia
 “ fervire suæ illustrissimæ dominationi, non servitutum dico, sed
 “ honorem. Quod autem sua illustrissima dominatio non fuerat
 “ recepta illo honore, qui debebatur suæ conditioni, non fuit ex
 “ parte mea inurbanitas, sed casus et error, de quo errore veniam
 “ petii coram interprete illustrissimæ suæ dominationis; quam, quod
 “ impetraverim sperare me jubent sua innata clementia et generositas;
 “ quod autem non adierim in propria persona suam illustrissimam
 “ dominationem, me confusio faciei meæ prohibebat; interim gra-
 “ tiosis suis favoribus me perenice commendans, persisto illustrissimæ
 “ dominationis suæ humillimus in Christo servus,

“ FR. JOSEPHUS A BAVARIA *.”

If I had reason to complain of men, who are fit for no sort of good, to whatever part of the world they go, but from whom I had still a right to expect the common marks of civility, which it was not my intention should be gratuitous, I cannot sufficiently ex-

* *Translation.*

“ Upon the arrival of the master of the boat, I shall immediately send him to
 “ Farschout; for I consider it not a duty, but an honour to serve your most illustrious
 “ *Lordship*. If your most illustrious *Lordship* was not received with the honours due to
 “ your station (1), it did not proceed from a want of politeness on my part, but from
 “ accident and a mistake (2); for which I asked pardon in presence of your most
 “ illustrious *Lordship's* interpreter; and I had no doubt but I had obtained it from
 “ your natural generosity and goodness. The reason that I did not personally wait
 “ upon your most illustrious *Lordship*, was, that the confusion of my face prevented
 “ me. In the mean time, earnestly commending myself to your gracious fa-
 “ vour, I remain your most illustrious *Lordship's* most humble servant in Christ,

“ BROTHER JOSEPH DE BAVARIA.”

(1) I was not received at all.

(2) It was not possible for me to discover or conceive a mistake in a matter so clear and simple.

press the satisfaction I received from the attentions and politeness of the Coptic priest, who was the pastor of the Catholics at *Echmimm*. He never failed to visit me twice a day; and earnestly sought every opportunity of rendering me service. This contrast of sentiment and conduct has produced in my mind the most opposite impressions; gratitude and friendship for the one, and the most perfect contempt for the others.

The honest Copt did not quit me on the day of my departure, the 9th of June, till the moment I was going to take boat to cross over to the west bank of the Nile, in order to travel by land to *Farschout*. During the whole day the heat was intense, and the wind boisterous; but its violence served only to fill the air with such clouds of dust, that we were afraid to inhale the impetuous and burning blast. Both men and animals were nearly suffocated; they were scarce able to proceed, and all sought a shelter from the fiery atmosphere. Indeed we were, in the middle of the day, the only persons travelling, and we did not meet a single soul upon the road.

We made the tour of the city of *Girgê*, the capital of Upper Egypt, and arrived at *Bardis* about five o'clock in the evening, that is, at the hour when the heat being less oppressive, would have rendered our journey more supportable. A Copt of *Echmimm* had given me a letter to his brother-in-law, a rich inhabitant of *Bardis*, who received us with much civility.

The modern town of *Bardis*, situated near eight leagues south of *Echmimm*, contains nothing remarkable. D'Anville places in its environs the ancient city of *Ptolemæis Hermii*, the largest in Thebais, the particular government of which, according to Strabo, was formed upon the model of the republics of Greece. The plains over which I had just travelled wear the smiling aspect of cultivation and plenty; but when the traveller casts his eye to the east bank, at some distance above *Echmimm*, he is struck by a contrast truly

frightful; the prospect consisting only of barren mountains and piles of rocks, the uninhabitable abode of aridity and horror.

In Thebaïs there are a greater quantity of palms to the south than to the north of *Bardis*. The plains are shaded with them, and with the numerous date-trees they form small woods, which relieve the eye. The *doums* yield a considerable profit to the inhabitants of these provinces. When I was in this part of the country, it was the season of gathering this fruit: at the entrance of every village were to be seen large heaps of it covered by the broad leaves of the palm-tree; and to these sorts of markets in the open air the inhabitants repaired, in order to lay in a stock of it, or to purchase a small quantity.

On the 10th, in the afternoon, I arrived at *Farschout*, where is established another community of Italian Recollects. I had carried to them a similar recommendation to that which I had found of so little use at *Echmimm*, and I wished to see if it would have the same effect at *Farschout*. This I had to expect, after the accounts I had heard Mr. Bruce give of these monks. They were the same who had, with great inhumanity, refused him a pound of rice and a little bread. I left my party, with our beasts, without the town, and proceeded to the house of the monks. A servant refused me admittance, under pretence that the father superior was asleep. I then pressed him to take charge of a letter from the superior general at Cairo; but this he obstinately refused. Out of all patience at such numerous evasions, and exasperated at so many monkish rebuffs, I snatched the letter out of his hand, and went away in a violent passion. I sent one of the natives who attended me, to look for a lodging in the town. We remained upwards of three hours waiting for him, exposed to the excessive heat and dust with which the air was impregnated; and finding that he did not return, I made my interpreter ask the monks to point out to me, at least, a house to which we might retire. The superior came with the interpreter,

and begged me to accept of his. I did not decline his offer, because it was my intention to remunerate him for the stay I should make in this convent ; but I must say, to the honour of the monks of *Farschout*, that they behaved to me with the appearance of civil, though, perhaps, not disinterested hospitality.

There were only two priests in this house, but there was room for a great number ; for although it is not so large as that of *Echmimm*, it is nevertheless spacious, handsome, and commodious. I found there a Christian merchant of Cairo, who had assumed the name of *Mallim Yousef*, the same with which I had disguised my *Christianism*. I had seen him at Cairo, at the house of the Arabic prince *Dervisch*, sovereign of *Farschout*, and of several districts to the westward, when, with his father-in-law *Ismaïn-Abou-Ali*, he accompanied the victorious Murad Bey. This merchant offered to introduce me to *Dervisch*, whose confidence he enjoyed.

The next day I went with *Mallim Yousef* to the house of the prince, which was much inferior to that of the pretended *mendicants*. He immediately recollected me from my having applied to him at Cairo, for his assistance on the journey I was then about to undertake ; and he received me very politely, making me the most gracious offers. But he, as well as every person with whom I had any conversation, advised me again to take boat on the Nile, and abandon the idea of travelling by land, the road being infested by great numbers of banditti. On my retiring, I made my interpreter tell him, that I intended to present him with a few bottles of cordials, which I would send him in the morning. He called me back, and although he was just going to mount his horse, he begged me not to delay sending him a present which would be highly acceptable, and promised that he would not go out till it arrived.

The *Sbeick Dervisch* was the son of *Ammam*, an Arabic prince celebrated in Egypt for his connexion with Alj Bey. He was young and very fat ; and his countenance was expressive of mildness and
good-

good-humour. He was greatly addicted to pleasure ; his prevailing taste was for women and strong liquors ; in other respects he was one of the most affable and well behaved Arabs.

The little town in which *Dervisch* exercises his sovereignty is ill built, and has every appearance of wretchedness. It is situated at more than two leagues from the Nile. Between it and the river lies a town called *Basjoura*, the residence of a *kiaschef*. The harbour of these two places is a small village named *Sabet*. There is every probability that *Farschout* stands upon the site of *Acanthus*, an ancient city of Egypt near which there was a sacred wood. This was the second city so called : another of the same name stood on the spot on which is now built *Daschour*, a little to the south of *Saccara*.

Having resolved to conform to the advice I received on all hands, I gave up the idea of following by land the course of the Nile, and agreed with the master of a *kanja* to carry me to the residence of *Ismaïn-Abou-Ali* ; but as I had also been apprized that the navigation of the Nile was little more secure than the roads, I left a part of my baggage with the monks of *Farschout*, the country higher up being filled with robbers.

I was now informed, that notwithstanding my agreement with the *reis*, the *kiaschef* of *Basjoura* had seized my boat for his own use. Authority in improper hands constantly leads to the same abuses, and is carried to the same excess : in all countries exposed to its absurdity and its violence, it pursues the same measures. The desolating system of requisitions, and particularly of arbitrary arrests, was exercised in Egypt with a degree of cunning and of blind fury which would have disgraced our most hot-headed revolutionists, and our most skilful plunderers.

I ran to the house of *Dervisch*, in order to claim his interposition. Not finding him within doors, I went to look for him in his garden ; he was there alone, under the foliage of some tufted orange-trees growing upon the brink of rivulets, which rendered their odoriferous

shade still more cool and refreshing. The prince no sooner perceived me than he rose up, and when I left him he paid me the same compliment, which, among the Orientals, is the greatest as well as the most uncommon mark of respect. He sent immediately one of his attendants to the *kiaschef* of *Basjoura*. His message had all the success I could wish, and the boat was sent back to be at my disposal. I remained for half an hour in conversation with the prince. All the time I was with him he made me eat delicious grapes and drink sherbet. When I was taking my leave, he asked me for a handkerchief, a few medicines, and some Cairo brandy, which I sent him shortly after.

In return for these trifling presents, *Dervisch* gave the necessary orders to enable me to perform my journey in perfect safety, and sent me letters of recommendation for several Arabic *sheicks*, his friends: he likewise insisted that one of his servants should accompany me, and loaded my boat with all sorts of provisions.

On the 15th of June I left the convent of *Farschout*. During the four days I spent there, I had reason to be satisfied with the civilities and attentions I received from the two missionaries by whom it was inhabited. After having lavished upon the monks of *Echminum* the censure they so well deserve, it gives me pleasure to do justice to the civil and becoming behaviour of those of *Farschout*; and I could wish that both of them had an opportunity of hearing this candid declaration of the very opposite sentiments which they excited in my mind.

Immediately on my arrival at the bank of the Nile I shipped my effects, and went on board; and we were just going to put off, when a Mamalûk who commanded at *Sabet* under the *kiaschef* of *Basjoura* made us come out of the boat, and ordered all our baggage to be carried on shore. I did every thing in my power to oppose this seizure; but the savage Mamalûk, who was surrounded by several soldiers, would listen to nothing. The boat, he said, was
for

for the service of the *kiaſchef*, and no perſon ſhould dare to change its deſtination. I ſhewed him the letters of the Beys : he answered, that he laughed at all the Beys who commanded at Cairo, as long as he was maſter at *Sabet*. Not being able to reſiſt the violence of this man, who, like all thoſe who are unqualified for power, thought himſelf a great perſonage, I had camels brought to reconvey my baggage to *Farſchout*. While they were loading, the Mamalûk called my interpreter aſide, and deſired him to propoſe to me to give him a ſequin, on condition of his letting me have the boat. I ordered him to be told, that I would not give him a medinè. He now contented himſelf with demanding a patacke, then half a patacke, which I likewiſe reſuſed him ; laſtly, he begged me as a favour to make him a preſent of a quarter of a patacke, or about twenty-ſeven *fous*. In order to avoid longer delay, I paid him this ſum, and the vile ſlave received it as the value of an *avanie*, which he had impoſed upon me, and which he had calculated in proportion to the importance of his government.

A great part of the day having been thus loſt, it was impoſſible for us to ſet out, and we paſſed the night in our boat oppoſite to *Sabet*. The *kiaſchef* had been informed of the *avanie* to which his ſubaltern had ſubjected me, and ſent another officer to reprimand him, and force him to return the money he had extorted, and to make me an apology. He accordingly came that night to my *kanja*, and appeared as humble as he had before been insolent. He aſſured me, that what had happened in the morning was the effect of inebriety. I ſent him away very well contented, having left him the twenty-ſeven *fous*.

My difficulties were not yet at an end. Surrounded by a greedy, deceitful, and knaviſh ſet of people, the traveller finds them at every ſtep in theſe remote diſtricts. The *reis*, who till now had been a ſilent ſpectator, wiſhed alſo to have his turn. He ſet up claims, made uſe of a thouſand ſhifts, and it was not till long after ſun-riſe that

that we were able to leave the shore of *Sabet*. There being no wind, the crew were obliged to track the boat along.

We met several rafts formed of water-melons, which were driving down the Nile. This fruit is extremely common in Thebais; and, in order to avoid the trouble and expense of loading it in boats, it is made into rafts, which float very well, and every piece of which is intended to be eaten. When these rafts have only to cross the river, they are constructed of a smaller size, and one man swimming and dragging them along conveys them to the opposite bank. If they are meant to make a long passage, they are made larger, and towed by a boat.

The first crocodile that I saw in Egypt was at some distance above *Sabet*; it lay motionless in the middle of the stream, its head alone appearing above water. Higher up the Nile, these frightful animals become more common, and they are the terror of the inhabitants, who, in some places, are obliged to make a fence of stakes and faggots in the river, in order that the women going to draw water may not have their legs snapped off by the crocodiles.

A small village, off which we stopped, indicates, under the barbarous denomination of *Hou*, the site of *Diospolis*, called *Diospolis parva*, to distinguish it from two other cities of the same name, which were also situated in Egypt. *Hou* still stands upon the eminence, on which, according to historians, the ancient city was built. Rubbish, large bricks, and stones still larger, the remains of a dike, and lastly, an arcade which forms an entrance to a subterraneous conduit, are the sole traces here remaining of the ancient works.

From thence we proceeded up as far as *Kafr Effäid*, another inconsiderable village, situated on the east bank of the Nile, in one of the spots which the rocky mountains, skirting this shore, leave open to culture and to the habitation of men. We this day saw a flotilla of rafts formed of earthen vessels floating down to Cairo.

There passed near us several flocks of birds, among which I distinguished

distinguished the cinereous collared plover *, egrets, aquiline vultures, crows, kites of that species, which, by their number, the dark colour of their plumage, and their plaintive and mournful cry, sadden, rather than enliven, the towns in Egypt. These kites keep in flocks upon the brink of the stream, and remain motionless during a part of the day, no doubt to watch the fishes as they pass. Towards the evening I saw a flight of wild geese.

I observed that the inhabitants of the upper parts of Egypt keep dogs of a species somewhat approaching to that of the shepherd's dog. Their voice is so extremely weak, that they can scarcely bark. This, as is well known, is the effect produced upon those animals by the influence of very hot climates.

The wind had been contrary during the whole day; in the evening it became more favourable, and we took advantage of it to continue our voyage. The night being very dark, we stopped at a sandy island, meaning to wait the rising of the moon.

Below this island the Nile forms a great sinuosity; the stream undermines the west bank, which is very steep in this wide elbow, and there are detached from it enormous bodies of muddy earth. The frequent fall of such masses renders it extremely dangerous to pass this place in boats, which thereby run the greatest risk of being sunk. We had cleared them without any accident, although there were every minute falling ahead and astern of us large pieces loosened from the bank. I was congratulating myself on having escaped a danger against which all resistance would have been vain, but we found ourselves again exposed to it, and in the most disagreeable manner, owing to the inattention of the boat's crew.

The *reis* and the sailors were sleeping on the sand; I had kept a look-out during half the night, and had gone to lie down, leaving the watch to two of my companions, who had likewise fallen asleep.

* See page 383.

The *kanja*, not being properly made fast to the bank, broke adrift, and was carried very rapidly down the stream. We were all asleep; neither we, nor any of the sailors lying on the sand, perceived the manner in which we were drifting. After having floated at the mercy of the current for the space of a full league, the boat, driven along with rapidity, struck with a violent crash against the bank, just below the place where the greatest quantity of earth was falling down.

Awakened by this dreadful shock, we quickly perceived the critical situation in which we were placed. Driven back by the steep and almost perpendicular shore, and at the same time carried towards it by the force of the stream, the *kanja* was turning in every direction, and knocking against the bank, so as to incur the greatest danger of being dashed to pieces. The darkness of the night, the dreadful noise re-echoing from afar, occasioned by the masses detached from the bank falling into deep water, the foaming surges they raised, and the violent motion they communicated to the boat, rendered our situation, when we awoke, truly alarming.

There was no time to be lost; I made my companions seize hold of the oars, which the darkness of the night prevented us from finding so soon as we could have wished. I flew to the helm, and encouraging my new and inexperienced sailors, we succeeded in extricating ourselves from the surf, in which we must have perished; for, after much exertion, we had scarcely reached the middle of the river, when an enormous mass of hardened mud fell down at the very place we had just left, and which must have sent us all to the bottom had we remained there a few minutes later.

We crossed over to the opposite bank, and there fastened the boat as well as we could, in order to wait till daylight should enable us to see where we were, and to find our Egyptian sailors. But we soon discovered them: having missed the *kanja*, they had leaped into the river, and swam over to the other bank, meaning to follow it till

they heard some tidings of their boat. The idea of the danger to which they had exposed us was too recent not to make them feel some effects from our resentment; and I could not prevent my companions from giving them a good number of blows with the same oars which they had been obliged to use in so disagreeable a situation. The *reis*, who was a little behind, hearing his crew cry out, ran away as hard as he could, and it was impossible to catch him. At the dawn of day we again set sail to pass the dangerous place in which the force of the stream washes down the barrier opposed to it by the land on the west bank. In front of a little village we saw the *reis* seated by the river's side. We landed, in order to get him on board, but still fearing to have his share of well-merited correction, he made the best of his way off. I ordered my people to run after him; and they brought, or, more properly speaking, carried him back to the boat.

We once more set sail, and favoured by a strong north-east wind, which blew in heavy squalls, we reached *Dendera* in the evening of the 17th.

Half a league short of *Dendera*, the bed of the Nile is very much contracted, and one of its banks is covered with stones. The Egyptian sailors call this place *El Bab*, the gate. It is one of the most dangerous reaches in the navigation of the river; and the inhabitants, before they venture into it, never fail to offer up a prayer to Heaven.

CHAPTER XLVI.

TENTYRIS. — DENDERA. — EMIR. — TEMPLE OF ISIS. — DESCRIPTION OF SEVERAL REMARKABLE FIGURES. — TROCHILUS OF THE ANCIENTS. — COLOURS. — EGYPTIAN VILLAGE BUILT UPON THE ANCIENT TEMPLE. — EFFORTS OF BARBARISM TO DESTROY IT. — ALARM IN THE BOAT. — FRUITS. — SITUATION OF DENDERA.

TENTYRIS, or *Tentyra*, was formerly a celebrated city of Egypt. It gave its name to the nome *Tentyritis*, of which it was the capital. It was of great extent, and, from its splendour, was reckoned one of the most considerable cities. Isis and Venus were there honoured with public worship; and a temple was consecrated to each of these divinities. But what rendered this place more particularly remarkable was the enmity which the inhabitants had sworn to crocodiles, and the continual war which they waged against those hideous reptiles. The *Tentyrite* pursued the crocodile into the water, overtook him, leaped upon his back, and ran a stick into his mouth, with which, as with a bridle, he brought him to the shore, where he put him to death.

Near the ruins of *Tentyris* is a large village that has preserved nothing of the splendour of the ancient city but its name of *Dendera*, which, in some measure, recalls to mind the antiquity of its origin. It is built at a short distance from the west bank of the Nile, at the extremity of a very fertile plain. The surrounding orchards, which produce excellent oranges, lemons, pomegranates, grapes, and figs, render it a charming place, and afford a delightful coolness in so scorching a country. A forest of palms and fruit-trees, which has been mentioned by the ancients, is still existing in its environs, and furnishes the greater part of the charcoal that is consumed in Egypt.

An Arabic prince, with the title of *Emir*, has a sovereign authority over *Dendera* and the circumjacent country; however, he pays a tribute to the Beys of Cairo. I waited upon the *emir*: he was very meanly lodged; the people about him had the worst appearance; and, in his house, every thing announced rather a miserable state of poverty than simple neatness. The prince, as well as his subjects, was clothed in a long black robe, and in his dress he was to be distinguished from them only by his turban. But what really distinguished him, was the good sense with which he was endowed, and which rendered him very much superior to the other men in power of Egypt. Having delivered to him the letters of the Beys, and that of his neighbour, the Arabic *sheick Dervisch*, I experienced from him the most gracious reception.

The *emir* did not wait till I expressed to him my desire of visiting the remains of *Tentyris*, but anticipated my wishes, by offering me the means of going thither in safety. He talked to me of several Europeans whom he had seen at his house, and I perceived that he spoke of them with pleasure. The absurd opinion, generally spread in Egypt, respecting the motive of the researches of travellers, did not enter into his way of thinking. The *Franks* were not, in his eyes, magicians, at whose voice or spells the most deeply buried treasures instantly issued from the bowels of the earth. One of the Arabs about him having asked him, in my presence, for what we were come into their country, and what was our design in examining the ruins: "You understand nothing of the matter," replied he; "you, perhaps, do not know that the ancestors of the *Franks* were in possession of all our country, and that it is out of respect for the monuments erected by their forefathers, that they come in search of drawings and fragments of these, as objects which remind them of their ancient power." A shrewd and sensible answer, which was very well calculated to remove the absurd notion that these barbarians still preserved with regard to travellers.

Although the *emir* had offered me a lodging at his house, I preferred sleeping in my own boat. The day after my visit, I saw, on my rising in the morning, three fine horses upon the bank of the Nile, waiting to carry me to the site of *Tentyris*, which is little more than a quarter of a league from the present village of *Dendera*, towards the mountains to the westward. I had scarcely arrived there when the prince himself appeared; he conducted me every where, pointing out to me those parts of the edifice of which travellers had taken drawings or admeasurements, and the spots where they had dug up the ground. He proposed to me to have any place dug that I wished; but this operation, performed at random and in haste, might have involved me in some dispute, without being of the smallest utility; I therefore thanked the prince, and declined his offer. He told me, laughing, that the *fellahs*, having imagined that the *Franks* had found a great deal of gold in the ruins, had also begun to dig, and had lost both their time and trouble.

At last, this man, the most rational that I met with in Egypt, remounted his horse, after having shewn me all the curiosities of the place; but he left with me his son and some of his servants, to whom he gave orders not to suffer the country people to approach, and, above all, to take care that no person interrupted me in my proceedings.

I had before me one of the most beautiful monuments of ancient Egypt, which had alike withstood the efforts of time, and the blows of the fatal demon of destruction. In the midst of ruins and rubbish, occupying a great space of ground, and attesting the grandeur and magnificence of ancient *Tentyris*, was still standing a temple, entire and in good preservation. This is one of the most striking edifices that antiquity has endeavoured to impress with the seal of immortality, which the Egyptians had constantly in view in the prodigious works that they executed. It was dedicated to Isis; and this tutelary divinity of Egypt was there worshipped in the shape of a cat.

The

The temple is in the form of an oblong square, and is built of white stones, taken from the calcareous rocks of which the neighbouring mountains consist. The façade is one hundred and thirty-two feet and some inches in length. In the middle of the cornice, a little below the corona, is a globe resting upon the tails of two fishes. The large vestibule is supported by enormous columns, which are twenty-one feet in circumference. Their capitals are of a single piece, and represent, in a certain manner, heads or broad faces placed opposite to each other, and upon a festooned drapery. They have over them square blocks, which project beyond the figures and have some resemblance to pannels. In other respects, *Plate XXII.* will give a more perfect idea than any description of the singular form of these capitals. The interior of the building is divided into several apartments, the walls of which are covered with hieroglyphics and symbolical figures. The exterior walls are alike charged with them; but to trace a representation of them would be almost the work of a draughtsman's life.

I contented myself with having a drawing made of the principal of these figures, the whole assemblage of which, doubtless, formed the history of the edifice, and of the time when it was erected. They are, in general, very remarkable images, and such as are not to be found on any other monuments of ancient Egypt.

In *Plate XXIII.* are seen three persons, forming part of an Isiac procession. The head of the first of these is crowned with that sort of mitre with which the Egyptian divinities are frequently attired; in it are distinguishable the *persea* and two serpents; above the whole is the disk of the moon. In each hand is a branch composed of proliferous plants. My illustrious friend, Citizen Millin, preserver of antiques in the national museum, and a distinguished professor of *archeology*, assured me, that he had never observed any thing similar upon any Egyptian monument, but only upon an Etruscan vase. What is most extraordinary is, that these proliferous flowers put forth
plants

plants of a nature sometimes different. For instance, at the extremity of the stalk, supported by the left hand, is a monopetalous flower, from the centre of which grows out a flower with several petals.

The head-dress of the second personage in this Isiac procession is of a different form; but what he carries in his hand has something still more extraordinary than the branches held by the first. This is an arabesque, which has never yet been seen on very ancient monuments, except on those that are denominated Etruscan. It is well known that these ornaments come from Asia; but very ancient specimens of them are to be found only upon painted vases. Among the flowers of this arabesque there are birds that appear to be aquatic and web-footed, probably geese, which were a favourite dish of the Pharaohs, of the great, and of all those of the sacerdotal order.

Lastly, *Figure 3*, the head-dress of which is also different from that of the two others, holds in both hands round fruits, but of what species it is difficult to determine.

Behind each of these figures is a row of hieroglyphics, which, could they be understood, would afford the explanation of the different attributes by which these personages are distinguished; and among which, the most astonishing is the long tail that they wear. This peculiarity presents a difficulty which it is not easy to resolve. All the Egyptian figures which have tails are *cynocephali* (dog-headed), or other monkeys; but these have really the human form, and no person had as yet observed upon Egyptian monuments human figures with an appendage which assimilates them to animals.

The flowers of *Figure 4* are, in all probability, those of the lotus, or water-lily*, a plant which was famous in Egypt, as a proof of the very necessary overflowings of the Nile, and as one of the most common articles of subsistence of the inhabitants.

* *Nymphaea lotus*, L.

In *Plate XXIV.* the figure seated is that of Osiris, with the head of a sparrow-hawk. He holds in his left hand the *thau*, or handled cross, and in his right, a sceptre terminated by the head of a hoopoe and a lunar crescent. The second figure, with a tail, presenting to Osiris a truncated cylinder, in which is another small figure, cannot be explained, there having hitherto been seen no monument to which this bears any resemblance.

The head-dress of the personage in *Plate XXV. Fig. 1.* is observable on several figures in the Isiac table. It is probably an Egyptian priest. He holds in his hand a branch of a tree, on which a bird is perched. It is difficult to determine to what genus of trees the branch belongs. We may believe, with great semblance of truth, that it is the *sycomorus*, or mulberry-leaved Egyptian fig-tree*, which it was intended to represent. This tree, which is very useful among the Egyptians, is, as has been already seen, the tree they employed in making the mummy-cases. The bird, having neither the form of the ibis, nor of the sparrow-hawk, appears to be the *trochilus*, alike held sacred among the Egyptians. This little bird, the species of which is not yet precisely ascertained, cannot be the wren, as has been imagined, since it is white, and delights in the banks of marshes, lakes, and rivers †. According to the ancients, this was the only bird that durst approach the crocodile, who was very fond of it, because it did him the service to enter his mouth, and eat the leeches that were there sticking ‡; a habit very different from the nature of the wren, which never eats leeches; and this peculiarity, added to other probabilities, gives us every reason to presume that the *trochilus* of the ancients is the king-fisher.

* *Ficus sycomorus*, L.

† Marniol, *Africque*, tome iii. Plutarch de Solertia Animalium, p. 980. See the translation of Herodotus by Citizen Larcher, book ii. note 232, on § 68.

‡ See Herodotus at the place quoted in the preceding note. Elian, lib. xii. cap. xv. Pliny, Aristotle, &c.

In *Plate XXVI.* are represented nearly the same personages as in *Plate XXIV.* The one that is seated is Isis, or Osiris; for it is impossible to determine whether it be a man or a woman. Its head-dress is composed of the sun's disk and the lunar crescent; it holds in one hand the *thau*, or handled cross, and in the other, a sceptre capped with a section of the fruit of the Egyptian arum *, one of the plants most in use for the sustenance of the inhabitants of Egypt. In Egyptian architecture, this fruit was frequently placed on the summit of the pillars, as a substitute for a capital. I cannot pretend to explain the meaning of the person presenting two vases to the divinity; it is, probably, a priest.

In *Plate XXIV. Fig. 1,* and in *Plate XXVI. Fig. 1,* are represented two symbolical figures; but no explanation can be given of them till we are more advanced than at present in the knowledge of the hieroglyphics and allegorical representations of the ancient Egyptians.

All the figures which I have just described are cut out with a chisel, but without skill and without proportion, on the walls or on the pillars of the ancient temple of *Tentyris*; and they are from five to six feet in height. But that which is indicated by No. 4, in *Plate XXV.* is in relievo. It forms a part of several others, likewise in relievo, with which the ceiling of the vestibule is covered; this is one of the first in the front of the vestibule, and to the left of the entrance. It is not possible to imagine that this figure has been carved at a later period than that in which the others were executed. It is intermixed with a profusion of symbolical representations, which have been cut by the same chisel; it is painted of the same colour, the tint of which is equally bright; in a word, it bears, like the rest, the incontestable marks of the same antiquity; and, like them, has existed in this building for thousands of years.

* *Arum colocasia.*

A person would hardly have expected to find, in a monument of the most remote antiquity, and in the extremity of Egypt, a sort of sceptre surmounted by an emblem, which the kings of France had adopted for their coat of arms. The *fleur-de-lis*, such as it was when the emblematic distinction of the French monarchy, is well characterised upon the Egyptian figure. In the immense number of hieroglyphics which I observed in Egypt, I never met with this truncheon with a *fleur-de-lis* but once, at *Dendera*. Although projecting and very conspicuous, no traveller had noticed it; no author has mentioned this Egyptian symbol; but, however singular it may be, as I examined it repeatedly, and with great attention, and as it was drawn under my own inspection, I can attest the reality of its existence at *Dendera*, and the exact resemblance of *Figure 4, Plate XXVI.* by which it is represented.

Besides, the *fleurs-de-lis* are very far from having been adopted as a coat of arms, from the origin of the French monarchy; it is certain that they were not introduced into the arms of France till seven hundred years after its establishment. The most ancient testimony that we have upon this subject, is taken from the *Mémoires de la Chambre des Comptes* in 1179. It is there remarked, that Lewis VII. surnamed the Young, had the clothes of his son Philip Augustus embroidered with *fleurs-de-lis*, when he caused him to be consecrated at Rheims. But if the *fleur-de-lis* was not, in very ancient times, the privileged and characteristic ornament of the crown and sceptre of France, it was, in several countries of the East, the emblem of power among the nations of antiquity. Herodotus and Strabo relate, that the kings of Syria and Babylon formerly bore the *fleur-de-lis* at the end of their sceptre*. Montfaucon also speaks of that of David, found engraved in miniature, in a manuscript of the tenth century,

* Differt. sur l'Origine des Fleurs de Lis, par M. Rainfant, Docteur et Professeur en Médecine à Rheims, 1678.

and which is surmounted by the *fleur-de-lis* *. It is therefore evident, that the ornament called *lis* (lily) was not a symbol peculiar to the kings of France; and it is by no means astonishing that it formed a part of those which were employed in the mysterious antique representations of Egypt, since it was formerly the emblem of power of some sovereigns of that country, or of the bordering territories.

A figure no less extraordinary than any of those which I have just mentioned, is that of *Plate XXV. Figure 2.* Its position, the length of its arms, equal to that of its thighs and legs taken together, the disproportion of all its parts, its head and hands bent downwards, and its head-dress, are so many singularities, of which no other Egyptian monument affords an instance. This truly curious figure is to be seen at the extremity of the inside of the temple of *Dendera*, in a sepulchral chamber nearly square, the sides of which are upwards of ten feet in length. It is carved in relievo, and occupies the borders of three sides of the ceiling of the apartment, the cornice of which it would form, were it upon the top of the walls instead of being confined to the round of the ceiling. In the middle are some other smaller figures, likewise in relievo, and which are encircled by the larger one.

It was not in their architecture alone that the Egyptians displayed that affection for posterity, and that love of immortality, which predominated in all their works; they were also desirous that their paintings should be equally durable. The colours they made use of, the preparation serving to incorporate them closely and immutably into bodies as hard and as solid as stone, are so many proofs of their profound knowledge in the arts, and secrets which our researches have hitherto been unable to bring to light. The ceiling of part of the

* Monum. de la Monarchie Française, tome i. Discours Prélimin. p. 19.

temple of *Déndera** is painted in fresco, of the brilliant azure blue colour, with which, in fine weather, the canopy of heaven is adorned; the figures in relievo, with which this blue ground is interspersed, have been painted of a beautiful yellow; and these paintings, at the expiration of some thousands of years, still possess a brilliancy to which our freshest colours cannot be compared, and they are still as bright as if they had been recently laid on.

I have already mentioned, that the façade of this temple, an admirable and but little known work of the genius and patience which, among the ancient Egyptians, produced wonders, was a hundred and thirty-two feet and some inches in length. I took its other dimensions with the same exactness. The depth of the peristyle is a hundred and fifteen feet three inches, and its breadth sixty feet eleven inches. The two sides of the edifice are two hundred and fifty-four feet nine inches and a half in length; lastly, the depth is a hundred and ten feet eleven inches. The roof of the temple is flat, and formed of very large stones, which are placed from one pillar to another, or from a wall to a pillar, or rest upon two party walls. Several of these blocks are eighteen feet long and six broad. The rubbish heaped up behind the temple, and the sand that collects there, have raised the soil to a level with the roof of the building, and it may easily be ascended from that part, although the façade is still elevated seventy feet above the ground. The inhabitants of the district had availed themselves of this situation, and built a village upon the very top of the temple, as on a foundation more solid than the inconstant sands or muddy earth, upon which they generally erect their habitations. When I was at *Dendera*, this modern village was deserted and overthrown, and its ruins of indurated mud formed a singular contrast with the magnificent remains of the

* For a plan and description of this temple see Poccocke's Travels, p. 86. T.

ancient city of *Tentyris*. It was painful to behold there the most complete proof of the total annihilation of the arts in a country which had given them birth, and where they had acquired so astonishing a degree of perfection; and it was still more painful to contemplate the very deplorable decline of the human understanding.

A settlement of a race of barbarians could not fail to be fatal to a monument, which they profaned by their presence more than they overloaded it by the weight of their light cabins. A number of figures have disappeared under the efforts of the detestation which they have vowed to the arts in general; and, in particular, to representations of animated nature. All the figures within their reach are, in a great measure, destroyed. Those of the ceiling, and on the top of the walls, have been spared, from the impossibility of getting at them. But the *fellabs* have not been the only people that took a pleasure in mutilating one of the most beautiful and interesting works of antiquity; they were assisted in their rage for destruction by the troops of Cairo, who, in order to serve an usurping and sanguinary Mamalûk, went frequently into Upper Egypt, to seek and fight with a fugitive Bey. These savage soldiers exercised their barbarism in firing bullets and cannon-balls against several parts of the temple, with the intention of levelling it to the ground. The beautiful ceiling, the colours of which were still so brilliant, was injured, in different places, by the impression of the balls, aimed by these ignorant and brutal wretches; and in this contest for demolition, the extreme solidity of a building, which had not only to withstand the ravages of time, but also the efforts of stupid ferocity, cannot be sufficiently admired.

The *emir*, with whom I had frequent conferences, spoke to me with regret of the devastations committed by the Mamalûks, when he had the misfortune to see them pass through his little state. This prince came one day to pay me a visit on board my boat, which served me for a lodging; he had sent before him baskets of all
forts

forts of fruits, consisting of excellent grapes, delicious figs, apricots (*mischmisch*) very small and tasteless, pomegranates, the pulp of which had not much flavour, &c. &c. He also gave me a little engraved stone, and a few Greek and Roman copper medals, of no great value. Such medals and engraved stones, as well as other fragments of antiquity, and emeralds, are very commonly found among the ruins of *Tentyris*. In return for the kind and generous behaviour of the *emir*, I presented him with a fowling-piece and a small stock of gunpowder: he made a great many difficulties in accepting my present; but at last he consented to take it; and as soon as he got home, he sent me some sheep and other provisions for my voyage.

On the 20th of June we left *Dendera*; the evening before our departure we had to keep a very sharp look-out in our boat. During the night some robbers were lurking about on the banks of the Nile, and they appeared to be preparing to attack us. I was in a sound sleep, when all at once I was awakened by dreadful outcries. Our Egyptian boatmen, who, apparently, had perceived the robbers coming too near, could devise no better expedient for our defence than to bellow with all their might. I could not divine the cause of this uproar; and I did not know at first whether the boat was sinking, whether it was on fire, or whether it was taken possession of by the pirates. Two of my companions were on the watch; but I was a long time before I could obtain from them any information: they were employed in silencing, by blows, the sailors, whose clamours had prevented them from seizing hold of two men that were on the point of entering the boat. However, a discharge of our pieces soon rid us of our too importunate visitors.

No modern, before Mr. Bruce, had determined the situation of *Dendera*. The latitude of a place formerly so celebrated, and still rendered interesting by the beautiful vestiges of antiquity it contains, has, according to the astronomical observations that he had an opportunity of making, been determined at 26° 10'. But this traveller sharply re-

proves

proves Norden, and without reason, for having said that *Dendera* was to the southward of *Basjoura*, a town which Mr. Bruce places in $26^{\circ} 3'$ *. Norden's opinion, however, is adopted by all those who are acquainted with Upper Egypt; it is conformable to truth; and I cannot conceive how a traveller, so well informed as Mr. Bruce, should have been mistaken so far, as to place to the northward of a particular spot, a town which, in fact, is several leagues to the southward of it, as may be easily ascertained by casting an eye upon the map of Egypt, *Plate XXVII*. Some pages farther on, Mr. Bruce carries *Basjoura* $16''$ more towards the south, by placing it in $26^{\circ} 3' 16''$ †; there is apparently some error either in the original or in the translation.

* "Mr. Norden seems greatly to have mistaken the position of this town, which, conspicuous and celebrated as it is by ancient authors, and justly a principal point of attention to modern travellers, he does not so much as describe; and in his map, he places Dendera twenty or thirty miles to the southward of Badjoura; whereas it is about nine miles to the northward: for Badjoura is in lat. $26^{\circ} 3'$, and Dendera is in $26^{\circ} 10'$." *Travels to discover the Source of the Nile*, vol. i. p. 110.

† "Badjoura is in lat. $26^{\circ} 3' 16''$, and is situated on the western shore of the Nile, as Fushout is likewise." *Ibid.* p. 119.

CHAPTER XLVII.

ABNOUB.—BALLAS.—EARTHEN POTS.—WATER-MELONS.—NÉGUADÉ.—EARTHQUAKE.—
 HYENA.—WILD AND DOMESTIC ANIMALS.—TIGER.—LION.—HIPPOPOTAMUS.—BEARS.—
 COME TO AN ANCHOR BETWEEN NÉGUADÉ AND LUXOR.—ROBBERS.—STORK.—PELICAN.
 —ISMAÏN-ABOU-ALI; HIS PORTRAIT; HIS PLAN OF REDOLESCENCE.

ABOUT four or five leagues to the southward of *Dendera*, upon the east bank of the Nile, stands *Abnoub*, a large village belonging to the Arabic *sheick Ismaïn-Abou-Ali*, the first which we entered in his domains. He there kept a commandant. Three leagues higher up, upon the opposite bank, lies *Ballas*, belonging also to the same prince; it is a commercial village, owing to the great quantity of earthen pots which are there manufactured. These vessels have no other name than that of the place where they are made. They are of a middling size, and have two handles. Their bottom is externally convex, terminating nearly in a point, so that they cannot stand upright. This inconvenient shape was that of the amphoræ, in which the Romans kept their wine: it has been perpetuated in Egypt from the most remote antiquity, for Caylus has given the figure of an antique Egyptian vase, the bottom of which was of the same form *, and Paul Lucas found a similar one in the ruins of *Dendera* †.

In these parts of Upper Egypt are frequently to be met with whole districts covered with water-melons. These are planted in the

* Recueil d'Antiquités, Pl. xv. No. 1.

† Voyage en 1714, tome iii.

sand, upon the bank of the river ; and it is in this situation, where a burning heat is combined with the coolness of the water by which their stalks are irrigated, that this fruit acquires the refrigerant and high-flavoured pulp, which, under a fiery sky, makes them sought after as an article of nutriment at once agreeable and salubrious.

A dead calm having prevailed during the whole of the 22d, we could not reach *Néguadé*, which lies to the west of the Nile, till the afternoon, although we had left *Ballas* at daybreak, and these two places were only three leagues distant from each other.

It is doing too much honour to *Néguadé* to give it, as has been done, the name of a city : it scarcely deserves to be called a town ; and in fact it is but a village somewhat larger than the rest. It is almost entirely peopled by Copts, among whom there are some Catholics. They have manufactures of blue or striped cloths, of which they make an article of trade, that diffuses some degree of affluence among the inhabitants. It is the residence of a Coptic bishop ; but this prelate does not ameliorate the disposition of a crowd of men, who, although Christians, are often more unworthy than the Mahometans in the midst of whom they live *. The Catholics have also here a vicar, who studied for some time at Rome, and two Recollects, lodged sumptuously, and whose *seraphic* pride looks down with disdain upon those they are appointed to direct or convert. These monks, one of whom was a German, and the other an Italian, gave me a very good reception.

During the night were felt some shocks of an earthquake, to the great terror of the inhabitants of *Néguadé*. The shocks were, as I afterwards learnt, equally perceptible at *Tabta* ; and in the latter place there was at the same time seen a meteor, which, from the

* This bishopric of *Néguadé* is not contained in the list of Coptic bishoprics given by Forskal (Description de l'Arabie, par Niebuhr, p. 79.) : it has, however, been long established.

description I received of it, had some resemblance to a rainbow ; it was not so large, but it was observed to be of the same shape and colours. The atmosphere was obscured by thick vapours, and by the dust scattered by the wind.

I received from the superior of the mission of the *Propaganda*, a hyena's * skin, very large, and well preserved. The animal to which it had belonged had been killed in the very environs of *Néguadé* ; its Arabic name is *dabba*. It is by no means scarce in the mountains and woods of Upper Egypt. It is not, like the jackal, gregarious, yet, like that quadruped, it prowls in the night, and approaches habitations ; but it generally goes alone, and never in packs. The hyena, as ravenous as the dastardly jackal, equally feeds upon the most disgusting prey ; but bolder, because possessing greater strength, it is more apt than the jackal to attack and seize living animals : it is sometimes even not afraid to fly at men, and it frequently devours children.

Considering Egypt as only that space of country in a state of culture along the banks of the Nile, and which is more or less confined between two chains of mountains, it may with truth be said, that it contains no sort of voracious animals. But although these barren rocks, as well as the immense parched plains contiguous to them, are uninhabited and uninhabitable, and seem thence to belong to no country, it has nevertheless been agreed to comprehend under the name of Egypt, that extent of land, or rather of sand, comprised, from east to west, between the Red Sea and Libya, the scene of nakedness and desolation, and the formidable abode of different ferocious animals, which sometimes leave their retreats to infest the plains of Egypt, properly so called, as being the only part of it fit for the residence of man.

And if the domestic animals are in this, as well as the other ad-

* *Canis hyana*, L.

jacent countries, the most gentle and docile in the world, the beasts of prey are there, at the same time, of all others the most fierce. Their ferocity, like the heat of the climate, is extreme. So true it is, that man alone is capable of changing the disposition of the former, which would be naturally as wild as the latter are ferocious; and it is only to a very long and very intimate state of domesticity that they are indebted for the good qualities for which they are distinguished.

The caverns of the lofty and cragged mountains which border the Nile both on the east and west, afford inaccessible retreats, suited only to voracious animals. Hither the ravenous hyena drags the fruits of her nocturnal attacks, and in a field of carnage heaps the bones of her prey. She is almost the only one of the voracious beasts that inhabits these horrible solitudes. The animals which, under an elegantly variegated skin, and a slender and beautiful shape, have been identified with cruelty, and a horrid passion for blood, seldom there make their appearance: and the lion (by the Egyptians called *sabbé*), whose species is every where becoming scarcer, and is very rarely to be met with in the vicinity of Egypt, is afraid to enter that country; or, if he does venture into it, he seldom remains there long.

The lions and quadrupeds with spotted skins are not the only animals, the race of which has been gradually decreasing in number, and has at length disappeared in Egypt. The hippopotamus* was anciently an animal common in that part of the Nile which runs through Egypt. "Those," says Herodotus, "which are found in the *Papremitic* nome, are sacred; but in the rest of Egypt they are not held in equal respect †." The ravages by which they desolated the plains were proportionate to their immense size, and they

* *Hippopotamus amphibius*, L.

† Liv. ii. § 71. Trad. du Citoyen Larcher.

were as much dreaded by the inhabitants as the crocodiles *. From the terror which they inspired, they were generally considered as the symbol of Typhon, that giant who carried death and devastation among the divinities worshipped in that country, and they were consequently the emblem of malignity and cruelty.

Among superstitious nations, terror has also its gods; and to this painful idea alone can be attributed the singular worship with which these unwieldy and dangerous quadrupeds were honoured at *Papri-mus*, merely with the view of appeasing or averting their fury. But the hippopotamus, as has been well observed by the author of the *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois* †, instead of coming at this day as far as Old Cairo, does not venture so low as the cataracts of the Nile. After having become extremely scarce in Egypt, this animal has now finally disappeared.

It is well known, that in these two last centuries there have been found in this country but a very small number of these quadrupeds, and the periods at which they have been there seen have been recorded. About the year 1550, Bellon saw at Constantinople a hippopotamus, which had been brought thither from Egypt ‡, supposing that it was really a hippopotamus which this traveller examined in the capital of the Turkish empire; this, however, Mathiolus disputes, upon the ground of some errors in the description. "I think," says he, "that Bellonius has not seen very clearly, or that he gives an account of more than he saw §." In 1600, Frederico Zerenghi, an Italian surgeon, killed two of them near Damietta ||. Fifty-eight years afterwards, some janizaries shot ano-

* "Dans le Nile, il nait un espèce de cheval aquatique, qui est bien aussi mechant que le crocodile." Pausanias, Trad. de Gedoyn, liv. iv. Voyage en Messenie, p. 400.

† Tome ii. p. 130.

‡ Petr. Bellonii de Aquatil. Parisiis, 1553, p. 14. et Observ. folio 103, verso.

§ Comment. sur Dioscoride, Trad. de Pinet. Lyon, 1604, p. 138, col. 1.

|| Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, par Buffon, article de l'Hippopotame.

ther on shore by the river side, where it had come to feed, near *Girgê*, the capital of the Saïd. It was brought dead to Cairo, and was there described by Thévenot*. Nearly about the same time Pietro della Valle asserted that these animals were kept at Cairo †. Perhaps he found none there except the one mentioned by Thévenot; and in like manner those spoken of by Maillet, as having been taken some years before the time of his consulship in 1692, were probably those killed by Zerenghi ‡; so that the precise date of the last appearance of the hippopotamus in Egypt would be the year 1658.

In fact, since that time, or thereabouts, the hippopotamus has not been met with in this country. The name even appears to be lost with the race; for the inhabitants of the Saïd, where these animals were most common, know as little of the denomination of *river-horse*, as they do of the animal to which it was given: they seem even to have no idea of such a quadruped. Dr. Shaw had already asserted the same thing of the people of Lower Egypt §.

It is surprising that the hippopotamus should have thus retired from Egypt, so as to be there no longer known. This almost sudden emigration could not have been occasioned either by an increase of the number of inhabitants or by their more active industry ||; for it is well known that this country was formerly more populous, and inhabited by an infinitely superior race of people, than it is at the present day.

When I reflect upon the disappearance of the hippopotamus from that part of Egypt watered by the Nile, I discover only the natural effect of the use of fire-arms, which for a considerable number of

* Voyage au Levant, par Thévenot, p. 491.

† “J’ai vu dans le Caire plusieurs animaux vivans, comme des chevaux-marins.” Voyage de Pietro della Valle, Paris, 1670, tome i. p. 319.

‡ Descript. de l’Égypte, par Maillet, part ii. p. 31.

§ Shaw’s Travels, p. 427.

|| Buffon, Hist. Nat. article Lion.

years has been general in this country. Although muskets, or at least cannon, were not there very numerous at the time of my travels, yet in every village of any consequence, the commandant had two or three field-pieces, which his people were firing without any cause several times in the course of the day; and these villages, it is known, are upon the banks of the rivers and canals. Armies or rather troops of Mamalûks were almost constantly in the field; the river was often covered with flotillas of their armed boats, and on every occasion they were accompanied by a small train of artillery, which would have been altogether useless to them, had they not been firing off their cannon every moment, for the sole pleasure of making a noise. Such a disturbance, and such frequent explosions, would be sufficient to terrify animals which travellers agree in representing, generally, as timid; and to drive them into Abyssinia, where these noisy engines of destruction are not known. Happy would have been the Egyptians, had they had no greater ravages to suffer from those who have rid them of noxious animals, than they would have had to fear had these animals been there permitted to multiply!

It has been said that the hippopotamus could not live long out of the water*; that he inhabited the bottom of rivers, where he walked as in the open air†; that he was carried down to the bottom of the sea by the weight of his body, and that he did not swim except at the mouth of rivers‡, &c. &c. It has also been asserted, that he could not remain long in the water. Lastly, Forster was assured, at the Cape of Good Hope, that he could not swim above thirty yards at a time§. From all that has been said of the hippopotamus,

* Aristotle, Pliny, Mathiolus, &c. &c.

† Bellon, works before quoted.

‡ See Une Dissertation Hist. et Physiq. sur la Preuve d'Innocence ou de Crime par l'Immersion, par Pierquin, Curé de Lorraine: imprimée en 1731.

§ Second Voyage of Captain Cook.

it appears that the natural history of this animal is not yet in an advanced state. There is every reason to presume that more extensive observations will ascertain that the river hippopotamus is not the sea hippopotamus, but that they are two distinct species; and it is from not attending to this distinction, which appears certain, that have arisen the differences in the descriptions and accounts of quadrupeds of this genus. It may even be suspected, with some degree of probability, that most of the sea animals described by travellers as the hippopotamus, are only species of large seals.

The hippopotamus was not the only wild animal held in veneration at *Papremis*. The bear had also his burial-place in that city*; but in the rest of Egypt, according to Herodotus, who adds, that this animal is there scarce, he was buried in the place in which he was found dead †. Pliny, however, asserts, that there are no bears in Egypt ‡. But for the testimonies ancient and modern, which appear positive, I should incline to the opinion of that celebrated and elegant historian of nature, and suppose that travellers might, at a distance, have taken hyenas for bears. In fact, how can it be conceived that an animal, whose thick fur sufficiently indicates him to be indigenous in cold climates, who delights in mountains and umbrageous forests, should be equally habituated to live in sandy and open plains, heated and parched up by a burning sun, and in which he could find no means of subsistence? Of the two existing races of bears, the black and the red, the former could not live in solitudes that would afford him neither thick forests, fruits, roots, nor feeds, which are the food of this species. If, on the contrary, is meant the rufous or brown bears, “ found not only in Savoy, “ but on the high mountains, in the vast forests, and in almost

* Pauw, Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens & les Chinois, tome i. p. 152.

† Liv. ii. § 67. Traduct. du Citoyen Larcher.

‡ Hist. Nat. lib. viii, cap. 76.

“ every desert on earth, which devour live animals, and even the most “ putrid carcafes*,” can it be supposed that the mountains and deserts of Egypt would afford them suitable retreats and sustenance?

However strong may be an inference drawn from habits, the comparison of which seldom deceives the observer, in regard to the consequences that thence result; however convincing may be these sorts of proofs in favour of Pliny’s opinion, which, from what I have seen and read, I am inclined to adopt, it must, nevertheless, be admitted, that a great number of authorities scarcely leave a doubt of the existence of bears in Africa.

The knowledge of the true situation of the ancient city of *Papremis*, where the bear was more honoured than elsewhere, would not have dispelled my doubts, if any had remained; for supposing it was not far distant from the district of Nitria, or the desert of St. Macarius, as Mr. Pauw conjectures, the same difficulty still exists. In fact, among the number of animals I met with in that desert, I did not see a single bear. The Bedouins, accustomed to frequent this part of the solitudes of Libya, assured me that they had never seen that animal; and the Coptic monks, more dangerous in these forlorn and depopulated regions than the savage animals among whom they live, confirmed upon this point the testimony of the Bedouins.

I only passed the night at *Néguadé*, and left it on the 23d, at nine o’clock in the morning. Although it was no more than eight or nine leagues to *Luxor*, and the wind was favourable, we could not reach it that day, on account of the frequent sinuosities of the Nile, which prolong the passage, and at the same time render it very troublesome. We were now in parts of the river extremely dangerous on account of the great number of banditti, whose sole occupation is to rob travellers and plunder boats. As it was impossible to

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, article d’Ours.

think of landing upon either shore, I caused the boat to be anchored in the very middle of the stream. A large stone served as an anchor, and a bad rope made of the bark of the palm-tree was fastened to it by way of a cablet. During the night, an expert swimmer approached us, dividing the water without any noise; but as we kept a strict watch he was discovered, and a musket-shot made him quickly retreat with less caution than he had used in swimming towards our *kanja*.

On the 24th at daybreak we weighed the stone by which our boat was riding, and arrived at *Luxor*, a village on the east bank, built on the ruins of Thebes. I was there informed that the Arabic prince *Ismaïn-Abou-Ali*, who was visiting his estates, was then encamped near a little village opposite to *Luxor*. For fear of not being able to overtake him, I lost no time in crossing the river, in order to see a man whose power and interest were in so great repute.

For two days past I had met with a great number of storks *, and several pelicans †. The inhabitants of Upper Egypt call the latter bird the *water camel*, on account of the membranous pouch that is attached to its bill, and bears, when filled, some resemblance to the skins of water with which camels are loaded.

Having arrived at the camp, I waited upon the *sheick Ismaïn*. He was a little old man, very ugly, and quite infirm. I found him in his tent, wrapped up in a shabby woollen great coat, all torn and very dirty, which he pulled open every moment, in order to spit upon his clothes. This disgusting being had yet the foppery to die his beard red with *benné*, undoubtedly in order to conceal the too conspicuous signs of his great age. But this rendered him still more ugly, and the fiery hue of the *benné* upon a wan and wrinkled face, produced a very unpleasant effect. But if his person was infirm and disagreeable, his head was sound, and his understanding very clear

* *Ardea ciconia*, L.

† *Pelicanus onocrotalus*, L.

and lively. He was furrounded by a crowd of Arabs and inhabitants, to whom he listened with attention, while, at the same time, he was dictating to his secretaries, giving his orders, and pronouncing judgments with admirable precision and presence of mind.

I stopped some time before the open tent of the prince; and when he had finished his most urgent business, he asked, in a rather dry tone, who I was. I drew near, and presented to him the letter of Murad Bey. As soon as he had read it, he loudly extolled the attention of his friend, in sending him a physician of *extraordinary skill*, who would at length cure him of his numerous disorders. But the complaint which appeared to affect him most, and of which he immediately informed me, a complaint which would have appeared desperate to the most learned doctor, and of which *Ismaïn*, nevertheless, expected that I could relieve him, was a state of weakness and incapacity for enjoyments that he could not bring himself to relinquish. This task was assigned me as requisite to be immediately performed; the rest, he said, would follow in time. I was to begin my functions by the redolence of this second *Æson*; and from the manner in which he talked to me, I saw that the thing appeared to him as simple and easy, as if I had possessed the magical art of Medea. In order that no time might be lost for effecting a cure of such importance, the old Arab proposed that I should accompany him in his visit to his states, and that he would upon the road take the necessary restoratives.

Ismaïn was also in the habit of chewing and smoking *baschisch*, an intoxicating preparation of Egyptian hemp, which I have before particularly described*. Every day he fell into a pleasing torpor, the *kief* which that plant produced; but being tired of the use of this narcotic, and wishing to try something else, he enjoined me to supply him with another ingredient that might have a similar effect, with

* See page 551.

the exception, however, of wine and strong liquors, for which he had an insuperable aversion.

After the prince had explained to me his intentions, he resumed his business, while I retired into the shade of a thicket of trees, in the midst of which his tent was pitched. I was immediately surrounded by the sort of people who, in Africa as well as in Europe, attach themselves to those that appear to be in favour with the great. There was set before me a sumptuous dinner, during which I was not without both spectators and flatterers, and I had an excellent opportunity of playing the man of consequence; but my thoughts were employed upon a very different subject than the silly beings with whom I was teased; the duty which *Ismaïn* had imposed upon me was uppermost in my mind. I could not work a miracle, and a miracle alone would have enabled me to gratify his wishes. I therefore resolved to evade a delicate and dangerous office which I was not capable to perform. After the prince had dined he fell asleep, and I availed myself of that moment to return to *Luxor*, where a Catholic Copt, whom I had seen at *Néguadé*, had before received me at his house.

On awaking, the prince unfortunately thought of me: he cried out as loud as he could, *fen bakim? fen bakim?* (where is the doctor? where is the doctor?) When he was informed that I was at *Luxor*, he dispatched a messenger to tell me, that as I had been sent by Murad Bey on purpose to attend him, I must not think of quitting him, and that from that moment I was his physician. This message also brought an order for me to be ready to set out next day, to accompany *Ismaïn* in his journey. The messenger was followed by sheep and provisions of every kind, as a present to me from my illustrious and whimsical patient.

I found myself very much embarrassed, and it was necessary to come to a decision; it would have been imprudent in me to refuse to comply with *Ismaïn's* wishes. In order to gain time I sent him for
 answer,

answer, that I was ready to follow him, but that, as he was to go to *Néguadé* in a few days, I requested him to permit me to wait for him there, as I should be more conveniently situated in that town than elsewhere, having occasion to take some repose. The same messenger returned with *Ismain's* consent, and brought me a written order to his intendant at *Néguadé*, to supply me with every thing that I might want or desire. I thought it incumbent upon me immediately to depart, as a mark of respect; and I set out for *Néguadé*, where I was in hopes of finding some means of avoiding the dangerous honour of being a physician to an Arabian court.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

RETURN TO NÉGUADÉ.—RISE OF THE NILE.—GNAT-LIKE TIPULÆ.—KOUS.—REMAINS OF APOLLINIS PARVA.—MOCHA COFFEE.—FERTILITY OF THE SOIL IN UPPER EGYPT.—AGRICULTURE OF THAT COUNTRY.—GRANIVOROUS BIRDS.—SWALLOWS.—WAGTAIL.—RAVENS.—FLIES.—BUGS.—INSECTS STILL MORE DISGUSTING.—ICHNEUMON-FLY.—HUMBLE-BEE.—WASP.—SCORPIONS.—CRAB.—DEGENERATION OF THE PEOPLE OF EGYPT.—WOMEN OF THEBAÏS.—ACCOUNT OF THOSE FEMALES WHO, HAVING EMBRACED THE CATHOLIC FAITH, ARE UNDER THE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OF FOREIGN MONKS.—EFFECTS OF THE JEALOUSY OF THE WOMEN.—PURGATIVES.—SENNA.—SYPHILIS.—MASTIC.

ONE of the Italian monks of *Néguadé* happened to be at *Luxor*; he had just made his circuit of mendicity, and collected the gifts of the Catholics of this district. His collection had been a profitable one; and he loaded my boat with the pious contributions he had levied. We arrived at *Néguadé* on the 26th of June, at nine o'clock in the evening, and my *seraphic* companion conducted me to his habitation, where I continued a few days.

This was the period of the increase of the Nile; its waters had changed their colour some days before, and were beginning to rise. The inhabitants were in hopes that the inundation this year would be considerable; this conclusion they drew from the great quantity of tipulæ* that were assembling above the surface of the ground; experience having taught them, that the more numerous these insects are, the more abundant will be the waters of the river. Swarms, or, more properly speaking, clouds of tipulæ were seen, so thick, that the

* *Tipula culiciformis*, L.—*Ang.* Gnat-like tipulæ.

air, to a certain height, was filled with them, and they might, if I may use the expression, have been cut with-a knife.

The day after my arrival, a Catholic Copt belonging to *Kous* asked me to meet the superior, whom he had invited to dinner. On the 28th we crossed the Nile, and, on our landing, we found horses waiting to carry us to *Kous*, or *Gous*, as it is pronounced by the inhabitants of the Saïd. This town, which is the residence of a *kiaschef*, is situated at some distance from the east bank of the Nile, opposite to *Néguadé*, but half a league more to the northward. According to Danville, it stands upon the site of the ancient city of *Apollinis parva*, which Antoninus, in his Itinerary, simply calls *Vicus Apollinis*, or the village of Apollo. The only monument of antiquity there to be seen, was the front, half buried, of a small temple dedicated to the sun. It is thirty feet in breadth, and built in the form of a rectangular parallelogram; the greater part of it is concealed by sand and rubbish, and the remainder is not more than ten or twelve feet above ground. Figures and hieroglyphics had been cut upon the walls; but they were effaced by the tooth of time, and still more by the superstitious barbarism of the inhabitants. Neither was it longer possible to distinguish any part of the Greek inscriptions traced upon the friezes, one of which was still sufficiently legible to be copied by Paul Lucas*, and the other by Granger†.

I received a great many civilities from the Copt, an old man who lived in great comfort, and was highly respected. His name was *Mallim Poctor*. The dinner that he set before us was reckoned sumptuous in this country; and, according to custom, date-brandy was not forgotten.

Coffeir, a port on the Red Sea, is three long days journey from *Kous*. The road that leads to it runs across the desert. This is the

* Voyage fait en 1714, tome ii. page 2.

† Voyage fait en Egypte en 1730, page 48.

route of the caravans which convey to Arabia the commodities of Egypt, and of those which carry thither the coffee of Yemen. The greater number of these caravans from *Coffeir* arrive at *Kous*. Some also go to *Kenné*, and others to *Banoub*. Persons wishing to lay in a stock of the best coffee, must fetch it from one of these three places. When it had once reached Cairo, whither it was sent down the Nile, it was no longer pure, merchants being there in waiting to mix it with common West Indian coffee. At Alexandria it underwent a second mixture in the hands of the factors who exported it to *Marfeilles*, where it seldom failed to be once more adulterated; so that the pretended Mocha coffee, which was drunk in France, was frequently only the produce of the West India colonies, mixed with a third, and seldom with an equal part of the genuine Yemen coffee. When I was at *Kous*, a hundred weight of this coffee, of the first quality, and free from adulteration, cost there fourteen Egyptian sequins and a half, that is, a hundred and five livres of French money, which made it come to about twenty-one *sous* a pound.

If, besides the prime cost, be considered the expense of conveyance to Cairo, the duties there payable, the charges for shipping and unloading, those for conveying it to Alexandria, the freight to *Marfeilles*, the exorbitant and arbitrary duties to which this commodity was there subject, its importation being prohibited in France; and if to all these be also added the charges for commission, and the cost of land carriage, how was it possible to suppose that real Mocha coffee was to be had at Paris at the rate of six livres a pound? I brought away a bag of this odoriferous Arabian coffee. The trunk in which it was packed retained the perfume for years, and whenever the lid was opened, there issued the most agreeable fragrance. I gave several persons an opportunity of being convinced of the difference between this coffee and that which was sold in France for real Mocha.

In conversation with *Mallim Poctor*, I expressed to him a wish to visit the coasts of the Red Sea, and he offered to have me conducted

to *Coffeir* in safety. I fully hoped to avail myself of his proposal; but it was requisite that I should first see the *sheick Ismäin-Abou-Ali*. I had promised to wait for him at *Néguadé*, whither I returned with the monk, my travelling companion, after having been loaded with civilities by the Copt of *Kous*.

I employed the stay that I was compelled to make at *Néguadé*, in collecting different observations calculated to afford an exact knowledge of the countries in which I then resided. My first inquiries were directed towards the most important point, that which has been, in all ages, a subject of admiration, the fertility of the lands of Upper Egypt.

In this, as in every thing else that deviates from the common track, the love of the marvellous has blended some exaggerated assertions. There is certainly no country in the world where the soil is more productive than in Egypt. However, when, as some ancient and modern authors have affirmed, its produce in wheat is carried to one hundred, two hundred, and even as far as three hundred, for one, it is extended far beyond the common average. On the other hand, those who have asserted that a measure of corn, sown in the ground, produced only tenfold, have stopped far short of the truth. On this subject I collected and compared the most accurate information; the result was, that, one year with another, a crop of corn yields from five and twenty to thirty for one. And it is important to observe, that it is not here meant to count the number of grains contained in an ear, produced from a particular single seed, but that I am speaking of the entire harvest, of the mass of corn that it furnishes in a given district; so that each measure sown, yields a crop of from five and twenty to thirty measures. In extraordinary years, favoured by circumstances, the land laid down in corn gives a produce of fifty for one. At *Néguadé* I was even assured that, six or seven years previous to my arrival, a cultivator had reaped a hundred and fifty times the seed sown; but this observation, supposing it to be correct,

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applying

applying only to a solitary and particular fact, cannot be included in the general estimate. For some years the inhabitants had been complaining of the scantiness of their crops; nevertheless, during these very years, which they considered as times of dearth, the land had produced twenty for one.

Such a fertility, which had no need of exaggeration to appear astonishing, is still susceptible of increase. Ignorant and lazy, the Egyptian cultivators knew not how to derive the greatest advantage from the most fruitful soil; and the process of watering, which vegetation requires in so warm a climate, was neglected, or in a great measure forgotten.

However, if it be considered that vegetation has no where more strength and activity than in the soil of Upper Egypt; if it be remarked that no species of culture long occupies the ground, and that several are seen to succeed each other, and thrive in the same year, the inexhaustible mine of abundance which this ancient land contains in its bosom, cannot fail to be a subject of astonishment.

And this incomparable fertility is still more brilliant in the south than in the north of Egypt. The Thebais, which borders upon the torrid zone*, would seem, from the heat of the sun by which it is warmed, from the masses of rocks by which it is surrounded, and which reflect and concentrate the heat, and from its elevated situation, more difficult to irrigate, to be destitute of verdure and incapable of yielding rich crops: it is, nevertheless, infinitely more fertile than the moist soil of the Delta. Its produce of every kind is more surprising. It is shaded by a greater number of fruit-trees, forming, in some measure, forests not very closely planted, which maintain a constant coolness, and under the shade of which the traveller may either take repose, or proceed on his way.

* The tropic of Cancer passes a little above the cataracts, or at the extremity of Egypt.

Besides the vegetative strength of a privileged soil, the manner in which the Egyptians sow corn is also one of the causes of its great multiplication. It is obvious that the method of sowing thick, perhaps necessary in a cold and compact ground, would be prejudicial in a warm soil exuberant with vegetation. Accordingly the seed is very sparingly scattered in the fields of Egypt. The sower walks behind the plough, and strews in the small furrow it makes, a portion of grain barely necessary, which the plough covers in tracing another furrow. In this manner there is no seed lost; there is none that, as in our country, seems to be thrown purposely to feed the birds. The stalks, arranged in drills, and at a proper distance from each other, as well as the roots that support them, easily receive the impressions of the air and the sun; and the ears, being neither confined nor smothered, are healthy and strong; the grains with which they are filled soon become plump and luxuriant, and none of them ever prove abortive or diseased. Neither are the fields overrun by a great number of plants which, under the generic name of weeds, are, in the greater part of our fields, a real scourge to the harvests. The corn is sown pure as it is reaped; it is not mixed, in the same field, with different species of grain, which, though of the same genus, yet not ripening at the same period, can yield nothing but a mixture, as unproductive to the cultivator, as it is unprofitable to the consumer.

Fields enriched with so plentiful harvests, cannot fail to attract granivorous birds. Flocks of pigeons, and pairs of turtle-doves, alight in them; and sparrows, which may be called corn-birds, from being found wherever this sort of grain is common, assemble there in the vicinity of the habitations. The crested lark, settled in this fertile soil, never forsakes it; however, it appears to be annoyed by the excessive heat. These birds, as well as the sparrows, are to be seen in the middle of the day, with their bill wide open, and the muscles of their breast convulsed, respiring with difficulty, and as if panting for breath. This instinct, which makes them prefer means
of

of subsistence, abundant, and, though attended with some inconveniencies, easily procured, has an affinity to the mind of those men who, by a thirst for riches, are induced to brave innumerable misfortunes and perils.

Swarms of winged insects here serving at the same time for food to swallows, they never quit a climate so favourable to their habits and their support. The Egyptians give them an Arabic name, which answers to that of *birds of Paradise*. Another species of bird, a great destroyer of insects, the wagtail, so well known in the more northern parts of Egypt, is no longer to be met with in these southern provinces; but small flocks of ravens are now and then to be seen.

The insects which are here the most numerous, as well as the most troublesome, are flies*. They cruelly torment both men and animals. No idea can be formed of their obstinate perseverance, when they wish to fasten upon any particular part of the body. It is in vain to drive them away; they settle again at the very same moment, and their pertinacity tires out the most patient. They delight in fastening upon the corners of the eyes, and upon the edge of the eyelids, tender parts, towards which they are attracted by a slight humidity. I observed a species, or rather a variety of flies, striped with gray and dark brown, and resembling the common fly, only they were considerably smaller. They also differ in their habits; for I never remarked that they were much on the wing, nor that they annoyed men or animals. They are almost constantly seen in the inside of houses, adhering to the walls, and particularly to those which are the whitest.

Flies are not the only troublesome insects. The habitations are filled with an enormous quantity of bugs, the bites of which are exceedingly sharp. Nevertheless the Egyptians sleep soundly, although

* *Musca domestica*, L.

covered with these loathsome vermin; their tough and thick skin renders them insensible to the pain, while the European, in the same places, suffers a real torment. The bite of these bugs always occasioned upon my body hard swellings as big as the tip of my finger.

An insect still more disgusting preyed upon us during the whole course of our journey in Upper Egypt. The inhabitants, even the richest, and who appeared the most cleanly, are, notwithstanding their bathing and frequent religious ablutions, covered with lice; even the Beys and *kiaschefs* are not free from them. Whenever they feel themselves bitten by one of these insects, they catch it softly, and place it, without doing it the least injury, upon the sofa on which they are sitting, whence it soon crawls upon some other person. Notwithstanding I took every precaution to avoid being tormented by them, I was obliged to make up my mind, and endure the envenomed bites of these filthy insects, which are, in Egypt, of an extraordinary size and voracity. When my companions were employed in getting rid of them, they jocularly called this occupation *going through the Turkish exercise*.

A beautiful species of ichneumon-fly *, with a long and strong weapon at the extremity of the body, also sometimes enters the houses in Upper Egypt; it shines with the most lively colours; its head is of a beautiful emerald green; the corselet and the belly are of a glistening purple hue.

The great humble-bee, which Citizen Olivier has called the *abeille à corselet jaune* † (the bee with a yellow corselet), is here commonly seen. When it flies it makes a very loud buzzing. It is also found in Lower Egypt; I met with it at Rosetta, but only during the hot weather; it does not make its appearance there in the winter.

* *Ichneumon*, L.

† Encyclop. Méthod. art. Abeille. *Apis æstuans*, L.—*Apis hirsuta, nigra, thorace flavo*. Fabricius Syst. Entomol. p. 382, et Spec. Insect. tom. i. p. 479.

The pretty species of wasps which I described during my stay at Rosetta *, is very common in Upper Egypt. They are there to be seen in the fields, in the gardens, and even in the houses. They delight in the vicinity of water, and build their nests in the ground.

Those hideous insects, scorpions, here grow to a very large size. I was assured that their bite occasioned intense pain, swoonings, convulsions, and sometimes death.

The Nile furnishes, but very rarely, a species of crab †, the flesh of which is good. The shell that covers the upper part of the body is of a lead colour; the antennæ are half black and half yellow speckled with black; the head, in front, is variegated with yellowish and blackish green; the claws and feet are green tinted with yellow above and with a paler yellow below; the extremity of the legs and tarsi are yellow; lastly, the tail is yellow in the middle, and greenish on the sides.

To these details of the immutable history of nature, I shall add a few observations on the ever-fluctuating history of man in a state of society. There is not a more striking example of a complete change in the character of nations than that which has taken place among the Egyptians. Slavery, and its inevitable attendant stupidity, have taken the place of power and greatness. Superstitious ignorance has succeeded to the love of the sciences, and to the exercise of the arts; while perfect civilization has disappeared, and is supplanted by brutality and savageness of manners.

It is hardly possible to trace the habits of a degraded people, over whom barbarism reigns uncontrolled, without the interference of ideas so disgraceful to human nature, ideas of crimes and robberies, which blend in the imagination, and are thence consigned to the canvass of the picture. The vices of the present race of Egyptians have been already more than once portrayed in this work: it will

* See p. 214.

† *Cancer fluviatilis*.

be sufficient for me to add, that the men of Thebais, still more uncivilized than those of Lower Egypt, are, in every respect, more odious ; and I shall content myself with speaking of some customs peculiar to that country.

In going up the Nile, that is, in advancing towards the equator, the skin of the men varies in colour, or rather grows darker. In the more southern districts, the Egyptian women have a tawny complexion and a thick skin. With the exception of rich or foreign women who have lived at Cairo, and who have retained the dress of that city, none of them have any other clothing than that full and long shift, or tunic, of blue linen, with sleeves of an extraordinary width, and large openings at the sides, which I have already described. This method of half-dressing themselves, so that the air circulates immediately over the body, and cools every part of it, is very suitable in a country where thick or tight clothes would render the heat insupportable. But the European monks discovered some indecency in a dress which afforded no suspicion of the kind to any other person. They talked of indiscreet looks of which no one thought, and compelled the Catholic women to lay aside their wide and easy gown, in order to confine their body in a tight and warm *chemise* ; as if such a prohibition was not rather a real indiscretion in a country where the mere name of Christian is a crime, and where every sort of distinction that could bring it to mind became a motive for persecution. But it is by no means astonishing to see such inconsistencies emanate from the narrow and hypocritical brain of Recollects, and especially of Italian Recollects. Those of *Néguadé*, however, less scrupulous or less powerful, were the only monks who had left things as they found them, and had allowed their flocks to dress as they like.

But they all agreed in forbidding the operation, which Nature has rendered necessary, by giving a superabundant excrescence to the Egyptian girls. It was sufficient that the excision of that part, which

which at least was ufeless, bore some affinity to circumcifion, for monaftic ftupidity to perceive in it a Jewifh or Mahometan practice, and to hurl againft it what was termed the thunder of the church, which, fortunately, was dangerous in the eyes of thofe only whom it infpired with fear. Yet it was a powerful weapon in countries where ignorance reigned excluifively; and the Egyptian female Catholics, who were confequently the flaves of the monks, determined to preferve an inconvenient exuberance, rather than not follow the precepts of folly and hypocrify.

Befides, thefe men, fo ready to interfere with fecret details, about which they have, in every country in the world, always been very inquisitive; thefe men, fo cautious to avoid, in certain points, every thing that could have the flighteft affinity to the practices of the Jewifh or Mahometan religion, did not give themfelves the trouble to eradicate among their profelytes thofe habits brought into vogue by the followers of Mahomet. The Catholic women, probably vifible to their fpiritual director alone, conceal themfelves, like the female Turks, from every eye. Their face is covered with a thick veil, and they are, in like manner, kept feparate and reclufe in their houfes. In my character of phyfician, I was fometimes conducted into parties of thefe women by a prieft of their nation, or by an European monk. They always fpoke through a mask, and I never could afcertain whether my patient was old or young. To feel the pulfe, a hand and wrift were held out to me well wrapped up, and the place alone was left bare where I was to apply my fingers to the artery. Were venefection neceffary? This was indeed a real ceremony. They infifted upon fhewing me only the bend of the arm; and I was obliged to put on the appearance of paffion, to obtain the entire expofure of it from the elbow to the wrift. Had one of thefe women fore eyes, or any other local complaint, it was required that I fhould effect a cure without examining the eyes, or the feat of the difeafe; and I always withdrew from thefe haunts of ftupidity ex-

asperated against priests, who, far from endeavouring to nourish and expand the germs of reason, stifled it in its birth, provided their flocks were as religious as they pretended to be, that is, guided by superstition, and, above all, by an entire submission to their will, which these presumptuous and profane wretches had the audaciousness to hold up as the will of the Divinity.

The women of Thebais, who have embraced the Catholic religion, are likewise distinguished from the female Mahometans by the privation of an article of dress generally adopted in these districts. It is an ornament of luxury and coquetry which the monks have also compelled them to lay aside, and for which they are not to be blamed; for it is by no means becoming, at least as far as I could form an opinion of it, from seeing the face of dancing girls and courtesans, who walk about unveiled, disfigured by metal rings suspended from the nose. This fashion consists in wearing one or more gold or silver rings passed through the nostrils, which are bored: some of these rings are very large, and the rich add to them small gold trinkets, which generally stretch the alæ of the nose, and produce a somewhat unpleasing effect. However, I never heard that it was reckoned an act of gallantry in Egypt to kiss the mouth of the women through these rings, as Buffon has asserted on the authority of a traveller*. It would be shewing little acquaintance with the genius of the Egyptians and Arabs, even to suppose them desirous of such amorous kisses. These people are very far indeed from being gallant; and they are perfect strangers to the rapturous preludes of enjoyment. Besides, it is difficult to kiss a woman's mouth through a ring which, passing through one of the alæ of the nose, necessarily hangs over the mouth.

Vansleb, whom Buffon again quotes, says, that the female peasants, and other women of the lower class of the cities of Egypt,

* Hist. Nat. de l'Homme.

have bright eyes, are of a stature below the middle size, dress in a manner by no means agreeable, and are very tiresome in their conversation*. That the holy father should find himself tired in the company of the Egyptian women, into which his profession as a missionary no doubt introduced him, is not in the least astonishing, when it is considered how very deficient they are in our mental attainments, and in every sort of education; that he should be dissatisfied with their dress, although light, cool, and convenient, is nowise remarkable; every one has his fancy; but that the reverend traveller should have found them of a short stature, is an error into which he has fallen. In fact, the Egyptian women are, generally speaking, as tall as the French. It is true that Vansleb was a German, and that the women of that part of Europe are commonly tall and slender; the Egyptian females are neither so tall nor so well made.

It is not usual to meet with jealousy without love. The women of Upper Egypt, who neither love nor are beloved, are nevertheless sometimes seized with a jealous fury, when they discover that their husbands have any partiality for other women, a partiality sufficiently common, and in which physical enjoyment is every thing, and the heart takes no interest. Wounded pride operates strongly on violent tempers, which know nothing of love but its transports. Deceitful as well as cruel, they instil into the blood of a faithless husband a slow and mortal poison. Daily instances are to be seen of a revenge, for which the delirium of an amorous passion can plead no excuse. Their blows are meditated in silence, and they coolly enjoy the horrid pleasure of gradually depriving an unfortunate being of life. I was not actually an eye-witness of the circumstances I am about to relate, but they were in every person's mouth, and in the Saïd were reckoned certain and unquestionable.

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. de l'Homme; and Vansleb, Nouv. Relation de l'Egypte.

Such is the malignant disposition of these women, that they do not wish suddenly to dispatch the object of their resentment; their remorseless jealousy would not thus be gratified; but they occasion a gradual decay, more insupportable than death itself. Their own person furnishes them with the poison that is suitable to their purpose. The periodical discharge which Nature employs to preserve their existence and health, becomes, in their hands, a mean of making others perish. Mixed with some aliment, a certain portion of this discharge is a poison that soon throws him who swallows it into languor and consumption, and in time leads him to the grave. It is said, that the women take care to prepare this horrible repast at certain phases of the moon, during which it must, in their opinion, produce a more certain effect. This poison operates in a terrible manner. The symptoms are nearly the same as in the scurvy; the body desiccates; all the limbs become excessively weak; the gums rot; the teeth loosen; the beard and the hair fall off; in short, after having dragged on a lingering and painful existence for a year, and sometimes more, the unfortunate victim expires in the greatest agonies. No remedy is known for so many disorders; it is even asserted that nothing is capable of affording them any alleviation.

This naturally leads me to mention a few remarks, which the practice of physic gave me an opportunity of making in Egypt. I observed that it was a difficult matter to purge its robust inhabitants. Their stomachs, accustomed to digest bread badly baked, acrid and raw vegetables, and other coarse and unwholesome aliments, are not acted upon by aperient medicines. Doses, which in Europe would occasion the most violent superpurgations, glide ineffectually down their iron stomachs. I have seen eight grains of very strong tartar emetic produce no other effect than a slight nausea. I have sometimes had occasion to administer, with a trembling hand, very powerful medicines, which made no more impression upon my patients than if they had drunk a glass of water. The monks of the

Propaganda,

Propaganda, who supported themselves in this country by the practice of physic, successfully employed a cathartic for men which they might with as little impropriety have given to horses; it was a compound of aloes, colocynth, and gamboge; of these articles they made pills, a drachm of which was a dose.

The leaves of the fenna, a plant indigenous in the southern extremity of Egypt, is there given in very large doses, without inconvenience and almost without effect. Perhaps fresh fenna does not possess the same purgative quality as when it is dried; somewhat like the manna, which is used at *Kurdistan*, *Diarbekir*, *Isfahan*, and in other countries of Asia, as a substitute for sugar in cooking and pastry, and of which the natives eat a great deal without its operating as a cathartic*.

I have already mentioned, that the disorders which attack the very sources of generation were extremely common in Egypt; these have been propagated to its most remote provinces. The monks employed for them a successful cure. They did not use mercury, but sudorifics alone; and far from putting their patients under a regimen, they, on the contrary, advised them to live freely. The Arabs have a peculiar mode of cure. They dig a hole in the sand, in which they bury themselves up to the neck; in this situation they remain without eating, exposed to the most intense heat during the whole day. In the evening only they take a little nourishment. I have been assured that they returned to these scorching stations for twenty or thirty days in succession.

But a very singular fact, for which I will not undertake to vouch, although it has been attested to me by several persons, among others by the Recollects of *Néguadé*, is the astonishing property ascribed to the smoke of mastic*, namely, that of killing any sick person

* See a Description of Arabia by Niebuhr, p. 129.

† A resin which, in the islands of the Archipelago, and particularly at Scio, exudes from the lentisk. *Pistachia lentiscus*, L.

by whom it is inhaled. It is possible, and even probable, that this is only a prejudice; but it is so deeply and so generally spread, that nobody entertains a doubt of the deadly quality of burnt mastic. As I have before observed, the Egyptians perfume with it the porous unbaked earthen vessels, into which the Nile water is set to cool. One day, the monks of *Néguadé*, not knowing that there was any body sick in the neighbourhood, were employed in this operation at the gate of the convent. Immediately a woman, all in tears, was seen darting out of an adjoining house, running as fast as she could, holding in her arms an infant that was afflicted with the small-pox. When she had put the child in a place of safety, she returned to the convent, screaming aloud, and endeavouring to stir up the people against the *Franks*, who, she said, wished to kill her child. Accordingly, when mastic is burnt in the open air, particular inquiry is previously made to ascertain whether there are any persons ill in the environs; for, whatever may be the nature of the disorder, it is asserted that the smoke of this resin kills them as soon as their olfactory nerves are struck with its smell.

CHAPTER XLIX.

EFFECTS OF MISSIONS IN EGYPT.—CHARACTER OF THE EUROPEAN MONKS THERE RESIDENT.—PERFIDIOUSNESS OF THE MONKS OF NÉGUADÉ.—THE AUTHOR TAKES LEAVE OF ISMAÏN-ABOU-ALI.—GARDENS OF KOUS.—LEMON-TREES.—GRAPES.—MUSK-MELONS.—WATER-MELONS.—DATES.—DOUM.—THE TRUE ACACIA.—SESAMUM, ITS OIL, ITS MODE OF PREPARATION.—DISORDERS OF THE EYES.—DISEASES OF THE SKIN AT THE PERIOD OF THE RISING OF THE NILE.

THE name of *Franks*, by which, in the East, are designated all Europeans, whatever may be their country, honoured among the Turks, but despised in the towns of Lower Egypt, is held in abhorrence by the inhabitants of the Saïd. This aversion is the work of the Copts, who are more numerous there than in the northern parts of Egypt. They cannot, with any degree of patience, bear that a few missionaries should come from Italy for the express purpose of preaching against them, treating them openly as heretics and *dogs*, and damning them without mercy.

Such intolerance, such pious abuse, would probably be meritorious with theologians; but it is extremely prejudicial to commerce and to the advancement of science. In fact, by these means communications, already sufficiently difficult, were intercepted; and travelling in this country was, in a great measure, interdicted to Europeans who were not missionaries, and who might claim the merit of being more beneficial than Recollects that convert nobody, but disgrace the name of *Franks* by an arrogant yet mendicant life, which was extremely burdensome to the small number of Egyptian Catholics; for all their knowledge consisted in making dupes; and as the people were not endowed with sufficient discernment to distinguish missionaries,

tionaries from other Europeans, they imagined that we went to Egypt for no other purpose than to affront the Copts, and represent them in the most unfavourable light. Being numerous, as they constitute the true Egyptian race, and powerful, as they enjoy the confidence of the great, whose affairs they superintend, these aborigines, so different from their ancestors, take, in their turn, advantage of their influence, to represent all the *Franks* as at once a dangerous and despicable set of men. Hence chiefly arose the obstacles which the traveller in Egypt had incessantly to surmount; so that these missionary establishments, formed for promoting the interests of Heaven, were useful to no person on earth; but, on the contrary, became injurious to the progress of science, and obstructed the route of those bold men, who, in spite of dangers, devoted themselves to the increase of human knowledge, to which, in other respects, the monks by no means contributed. There is no European traveller, on the contrary, that has not had reason to complain of hypocrites, who, from being acquainted with the country to which he was a stranger, were, on that account, the more to be feared.

No person has had more opportunities than myself of knowing the disposition of this perverse set of men, who subsist by imposture and quackery. They took particular pains to keep at a distance their fellow-citizens, whose scrutinizing looks they dreaded; and they neglected nothing to get them out of the way.

The superior of *Néguadé* had heard of the reception I had met with from *Ismaïn-Abou-Ali*, and his wish to keep me about his person. This plan did not suit his purposes; he could not bear to see another European, and one who was not a monk, in the way of enjoying a degree of credit which he wished to reserve exclusively to himself; and he resolved to have me discarded. While I was torturing my imagination to find some expedient, in order to rid myself of the too great favour of an Arabic prince, whom I had no intention either to serve or to follow, the monk, who sought every opportunity
of

of exercising his malignity and perfidioufness, and who, contrary to his inclination, was very officious and attentive to me, was, in his turn, puzzling himself to prevent my being retained in the service of the prince. We were informed that *Ismaïn* was near at hand ; he had stopped at the little village of *Kamoulé*, which is at no great distance to the south of *Néguadé*. Thither the superior went privately, and made me the entire subject of his conversation with *Ismaïn*, as I learned from an Arab to whom I had rendered some service as a physician. The hypocrite began by complaining, that the prince's confidence, which, by his account, he had merited by his long and perfect attachment, appeared to diminish. " It seems," added he, " that the arrival of a foreigner has injured me in thy opinion ; " but, besides that this foreigner comes from a country where men " are impious, know that thou wilt be greatly deceived, if, in re- " taining him, thou thinkest to have a physician : he never was a " physician ; he is a foldier in disguise ; and the practice of physic " is only a mask he wears, in order to have an opportunity of " visiting and making himself better acquainted with the country " which thou governeest with so much glory and dignity. The " medicines which he will give thee, administered by an ignorant " person, might poison instead of curing thee. Thou knowest, that " during the ten years that I have been thy physician, I have re- " lieved thee by my prescriptions. I have lately, by my skill, dis- " covered new remedies which will restore thee to health and vigour. " I have brought thee some ; make a trial of them, and thou wilt " be enabled to judge if I am not worthy of thy favours, and if I " do not deserve to be preferred to a mere adventurer."

Had this speech been addressed to a Bey, I should have been completely undone ; no punishment would have been too great to expiate a supposed fraud, and my death would have been the inevitable consequence. The infamous monk well knew to what danger he exposed me ; but sentiments of humanity never enter the mind of

hypocritical cenobites. Of what importance was it to him, whether I perished or not, provided he preserved his credit, and could continue without an intrusive witness to exercise, at his ease, the most serious deceit? *Ismaïn* discovered no appearance of displeasure; and the monk had not even the gratification to know if his measures had produced their intended effect. I was delighted with the service he had unintentionally rendered to me, and affected to be grateful for the caresses, which he never so profusely lavished upon me as after his treachery. At length the Arabic prince arrived, and, according to his custom, encamped without the walls of *Néguadé*. I went to pay my respects to him in his tent. He received me with distinction, in presence of the Recollect himself, whom he kept standing, while he made me sit by his side, as a mark of the sovereign contempt he felt for my vile detractor; but he said nothing more of his project of making me remain about his person. I also behaved as if no such thing had been in agitation, and confined myself to a request of his favour and protection, in facilitating the journies I meant to make in the principal parts of Thebaïs which I had not yet visited. He directed letters of recommendation to be instantly written, and carried his kindness so far as to give orders to all his intendants to defray my expenses in every part of his dominions through which I should travel; a mark of generous attention, and a proof of the Arab's greatness of mind, but of which I did not avail myself. We parted exceedingly well satisfied with each other; *Ismaïn*, that he was not to have me for his physician, and I, that I was not under the obligation of working such a miracle as to renovate his age.

I hastened to quit the convent of *Néguadé*, the abode of treacherous hypocrisy; not, however, without letting the superior understand that I was not ignorant of the atrocity of his conduct; and I proceeded to *Kous*, where I arrived in the evening of the 4th of July. *Mallim Poctor*, the same Copt at whose house I had before spent a day,

day, received me very hospitably, and procured me a tolerably commodious lodging: here I proposed to wait the departure of the caravan of *Coffeir*. It had been ready to set out for some days, but its departure was postponed in consequence of intelligence, that the road which it was to take was beset by Arabs.

Kous is surrounded by fruit-trees, which form agreeable orchards. These trees are, indeed, planted without order, and do not exhibit that symmetrical arrangement which, in general, is called a work of taste. Here it is the work of Nature, and those who admire her beautiful simplicity experience sensations more agreeable and more gratifying than the expression of astonishment produced by the efforts of art in its attempts to imitate Nature. In what other country is to be met with a more variegated foliage, a more odoriferous shade? Here all sorts of fruits come to maturity, while the intertwining branches of the trees exhibit the most charming confusion. Their flowers, rendered more fragrant by the heat of the climate, diffuse a perfume no where else to be found, and, under a perpetually fervid atmosphere, the real hot-house of Nature, the most delightful trees, those which in our frozen climate languish, shut up for half the year, are uninterruptedly loaded with blossoms and fruit. The wealthy *Poctor* carried me to one of these gardens belonging to him, and I never in my life was under so delicious a shade. The air was impregnated with the sweetest emanations, among which the exquisite fragrance of the blossoms of a great number of lemon-trees was the most predominant.

This was the season in which grapes were most plentiful. Their long clusters were loaded with large and swelling fruit, containing a luscious and high-flavoured pulp. This is the fruit most esteemed by the opulent; and it is considered the most agreeable aliment for allaying the heat of the blood occasioned by the climate. The streets and markets of *Kous* were filled with musk and water-melons, fruits equally cooling. I here ate three different species of musk-melon;

the *agour*, similar to the European melon, but not uniform in shape, some of them being round, others oval, and several of them extremely elongated; the *aboun*, a species of cantaleupe, the rind of which is yellow, and the pulp of a yellowish white; lastly, the *ab-delavoui* (slave of sweetness), which is elongated, and remarkable for a roundish protuberance that it bears at its extremity. Of all these melons there is none of a quality equal to our choice European melons, most of them being very tasteless. The cantaleupe, elsewhere admired for its flavour, is here very insipid; and the species which, from its name, might be thought to have the sweetest and most agreeable pulp, is called the *slave of sweetness* only because it requires a good deal of sugar to make it palatable. The water-melons, on the contrary, are, as I have before observed, excellent in Upper Egypt. At *Kous* I met with a species or variety of this fruit, which I had not before seen; its form is much elongated; its sides slightly marked, and it grows to a greater size. This species, which is not inferior in quality to the others, is by the Arabs called *nems*, the name they also give to the ichneumon, a quadruped of so unmerited celebrity.

The dates were beginning to ripen, and new ones were to be had; but they were rather scarce at the beginning of this month. The palm, which produces them, overshades, with its lofty top, all the places in Egypt; while the *doum*, another species of palm-tree, peculiar to Thebais, being more agreeable, and, unlike the date-tree, requiring for its support more than a single slender stem, does not thrive so well near habitations, but flourishes better in the fields, to which it affords an umbrageous embellishment.

Upon the dry and almost barren plains of these parts of Upper Egypt commonly grows the true acacia, from the stem and branches of which is procured the gum Arabic*. Its port, or habit, is gene-

* *Mimosa Nilotica*, L.

rally stunted, and its stem crooked and low ; its branches long and few, and left almost naked, from the paucity and narrowness of its leaves ; a very rough bark of a deep brown, and the long white spines with which it is armed, give it a harsh and withered appearance, and might make it be taken for one of those aphyllous trees, the sap of which, benumbed by frost, is reduced, during the winter, to a state approaching that of death. Very small flowers, white, or tinged with yellow, and almost without smell, are insufficient to compensate for its unattractive port and deficiency of foliage. This species of acacia, called by the Egyptians *sunth*, and not *santh*, as I have seen it written by most authors, will never then be reckoned among the ornamental trees, but its utility will always make it be considered as one of the most valuable. Its wood, of a deep red colour, is hard, and susceptible of a beautiful polish. Its seeds, enclosed in a pericarp very similar to that of the lupin, yield a red colour, and are used to dye morocco leather. Goats are very fond of this fruit, which, in Arabic, is called *karat*. When pounded with its pericarp, previous to its maturity, it furnishes our pharmacies with an astringent known by the denomination of *succus acaciæ*. But the gum which exudes from the numerous crevices of the bark of the acacia, or from the incisions made in its trunk or larger branches, is an important article in commerce and manufactures, in which a large quantity of it is consumed. Great heat is necessary for the formation of gum Arabic. In fact, although the acacia thrives in other more northern parts of Egypt, it there produces no gum ; in the burning temperature of Thebaïs, on the contrary, I have seen it entirely covered with congealed and indurated drops of this mucilaginous juice.

In more able hands than those of the Egyptians, the acacia might become a powerful mean of restoring to cultivation the lands of Upper Egypt, which sterility has invaded, and the soil of which, naturally fit for vegetation, is covered by strata of intruding sand.

However dry or argillaceous might be the earth lying under the sand, the gum-tree might be there planted, and would live, provided its roots penetrated into a bed of vegetable mould; and the stratum of sand surrounding the lower part of its trunk would in no respect injure its growth. Forests of acacias would soon recall vegetation and inhabitants to a soil which a variety of circumstances seemed to have perpetually devoted to an arid depopulation; and till it should again be brought to a state of culture the gum Arabic would yield a return sufficiently profitable to leave no cause to regret the expense of such a plantation. Besides, the excellent wood which it might supply would be an indemnification of no small importance, in a country where that article is extremely scarce.

In a dinner at which I was present at *Kous*, I ate, for the first time, some *tabinè*, the name given by the Egyptians to the dregs of the oil of sesamum, to which they add honey and lemon-juice. This sort of *ragout* is much in vogue, but, in my opinion, very undeservedly; for, disagreeable as it is to the sight, from its colour and semi-liquid consistence, it is yet more so to the taste from its flavour. The oil which is expressed from the seed of the sesamum, and which is called in Arabic *sritch*, is also much esteemed in Egypt. It is there preferred to olive oil, to which it is much inferior, and indeed it would never be considered by Europeans as fit for any thing but to be burned or used in frying.

It is not in these latter times only that sesamum and its oil have been in repute in the East. The Babylonians, who were the ancient inhabitants of Bagdad, used, according to Herodotus, no oil but what they expressed from the sesamum*. Pliny speaks of it as being equally good for eating and burning†; and Dioscorides says that the Egyptians applied it to several uses‡. It is probable that

* Lib. i. Traduct. et Note du Cit. Larcher.

† Lib. xviii. cap. 10.

‡ Lib. i. cap. 121.

the present inhabitants of that country being extremely ignorant of the process of preparing oil, as that which they extract from the olive is very bad, and only proper to be made into soap, or used in manufactures, do not know how to communicate to the oil of sesamum the qualities it ought to have, and which in all probability it formerly possessed.

This plant, indigenous in the warmest countries of the old continent, and there called *semsem*, is known in Europe under the name of *sesamum*, and in France also by that of *jugoline* or *jugeoline*, which has no affinity to its usual appellation. It has a great resemblance to the digitales*. It is much cultivated in Egypt, and in several districts in the Levant; and it is even begun to be propagated in Italy, where I have seen its seeds; but they are not so large or luxuriant as those in Africa. This plant thrives very well in French Guiana, a neglected and depreciated colony, but from which France might however derive great advantage and wealth. The sesamum was there cultivated in the gardens of the negroes, who expressed from it an oil, which was a luxury to that miserable class, alike worn out by privations and hard labour.

Besides its economical qualities, sesamum and the preparations made from it, are also in use as medicines and cosmetics among the Egyptians. The women consider nothing so well calculated to procure them that *embonpoint* for which they are anxious; to cleanse the skin, and give it a bloom and lustre; to preserve the beauty of their hair; and lastly, to increase the quantity of their milk, when they become mothers. Medicine also finds in it real or supposed remedies in the cure of several diseases. If, however, it be not more efficacious in other maladies than in ophthalmia and inflammatory disorders of the eyes, for which it is recommended by the Egyptian physicians, no great confidence can be placed in its curative virtues;

* *Digitalis Orientalis, sesamum dicta.* Tournef. Inst. Rei Herb.—*Sesamum Indicum*, L.

for there is no part of the world in which the organs of sight are so frequently affected by numerous complaints, inasmuch that perfectly sound eyes are extremely uncommon, except among the women, whose veil defends them against the acrid and corroding impressions of the air.

I have in a former part of this work* indicated some of the causes of the variety of disorders of the eyes, which are truly endemical in Egypt, and which render that country, otherwise excellent, a disagreeable and dangerous abode. I have observed, that one of the principal of these causes was, in my opinion, the great quantity of water thrown about in the streets and houses of the cities, several times in the day, in order to moderate the heat and cool the air that is inhaled. The ground, extremely heated, emits, after being copiously moistened, a great quantity of nitrous and inflammatory vapours, which cannot fail to be fatiguing and injurious to the sight; but the custom of the inhabitants of sleeping in the open air, must not, as has been imagined and observed by a variety of writers, be included in the number of the circumstances which render the ophthalmia and cecity so common in Egypt. In fact, although the men in Upper Egypt, where the heat of the sun by day makes them long for the coolness of the night, have no other bed than the roof of their huts, they have nothing to dread from this custom; for they so completely cover their body, and particularly their head, that a person must be an Egyptian not to be stifled under the pieces of cloth with which they conceal and bind up their faces, so as in a great measure to check respiration. On the other hand, it is well known that the people of ancient Egypt did not sleep thus generally in the open air, and yet they were equally subject to blindness and ophthalmia.

It was now, as I have already observed, the period of the rise of

* See page 260, and following.

the Nile. The *goutte*, that miraculous dew, which, according to the idea of the Egyptians, purifies the atmosphere, and entirely preserves from corruption corn and vegetables exposed to be wetted by it, had fallen; and its wonderful effects were still the subject of conversation at *Kous*. This circumstance gave me an opportunity of examining the cutaneous disorder attributed to this dew, the production of one night, which is the natural consequence of the excessive heat of the season. I saw several persons, whose face and body were covered, in many parts, with large pimples called *habe Nili* (seeds of the Nile), similar to those of ordinary blotches, only that the blisters were larger. This indisposition, which is by no means dangerous, and which goes away naturally, is perhaps the same as the *pelagra* of the Milanese, and the *mal de la rosa* of the Asturias. I have been informed that it more readily attacks foreigners than the people of the country; but of the four Europeans, of which our party consisted, not one felt its effects.

CHAPTER L.

TREACHERY OF A COPT.—CHARACTER OF THE MEN OF THAT NATION.—DANGEROUS CLANDESTINE PROCEEDINGS WHICH COMPEL THE AUTHOR TO RELINQUISH HIS INTENDED JOURNEY TO THE RED SEA.—WASP.—RUINS OF THEBES.—WAR NEWLY BROKEN OUT IN UPPER EGYPT.—WEST QUARTER OF THE ANCIENT CITY OF THEBES.—GOURNEL.—MALIGNANT RACE OF PEOPLE BY WHOM THAT VILLAGE IS INHABITED.—FRAGMENTS OF ANTIQUITY.—UNCOMFORTABLE NIGHT PASSED AT GOURNEL.—A SICK MAN.—A PHYSICIAN OF THE COUNTRY.—ROUTE FROM GOURNEL TO NÉGUADÉ.

AN inconceivable fatality seemed to counteract every attempt I made to leave Egypt. My intended journey into Abyssinia had miscarried at the moment I was going to set off, and similar motives now compelled me likewise to relinquish my journey to the Red Sea. I was surrounded by knaves who conspired to make me their dupe, and even their victim. *Mallim Poctor*, the Catholic Copt of *Kous*, who had so frequently promised to have me escorted to *Coffeir*, and who had at first behaved to me with the appearance of cordiality, was, like all the men of his nation, no better than a traitor, and so much the more dangerous from his being, by long habit, completely versed in the arts of treachery and dissimulation. The Mamalûk who commanded at *Kous* often cautioned me to be upon my guard. He knew *Poctor*, and considered him as a rogue of whom I could not be too mistrustful. I must say, upon this occasion, that in general I had much greater reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the Mamalûks, than with that of the natives of the country. With a more rough and savage disposition, these foreigners possessed a degree of pride, and an ingenuous bluntness, which rendered them indeed formidable to those subject to their despotism; but which, by inspiring them

them with a sort of greatness of mind, ensured the performance of their promises and the enjoyment of their protection; while the Copt, brutish and gloomy, insinuating and deceitful, was distinguished for the cringing and insidious deportment of the most abject slave.

The attention paid to me by the *kiaschef*, was a restraint upon the plunderers into whose hands I had fallen. But an order from Cairo, in depriving him of his command, bereft me of his support; and the very men, who, but a moment before, trembled in his presence, treated him with the greatest disrespect as soon as they knew that he had lost all his authority. *Poctor*, in order to rob me, had leagued with a Turkish merchant, and it must be admitted that they were a couple of the most complete liars and swindlers. The preparations for my journey to *Cosseir* became an inexhaustible source of pretences for asking me for presents and money. I had given the Copt a telescope, a brace of pistols, and several bottles of cordials; and there was not one of my little moveables that he did not wish to possess. He loudly extolled to me the pains which his friend, the Turkish merchant, was taking to expedite my journey, and prevailed upon me to make a return for services so important. I accordingly sent to the latter another valuable telescope, which he refused, giving me to understand, that not being the captain of a ship, a telescope would be useless to him, but that he would very willingly accept of money. He had already taken but too much from me. Sometimes he asked it to secure the hire of the camels that were to carry me; sometimes to make an advance to the conductor of the caravan; at another time, his exertions demanded a recompence; in short, he had obtained from me five-and-twenty sequins at different times, without the preparations for my journey appearing to be at all forwarded. I was told that a caravan was preparing to set off; but that tidings being received of some Arabs hovering in the desert it was to cross, had retarded its departure: a few days

after there was no caravan; and some fleet camels were to convey me very swiftly to the shore of the Red Sea. But in this new arrangement I was to leave my baggage in the care of the Turkish merchant, who would send it to me by the next caravan. The plot was rather barefaced; and being but too well convinced of the impropriety of confiding in such people, I told them that, not wishing to submit longer to their knavery, I relinquished all idea of my journey to *Coffeir*. This determination not according with the views of *Poctor* and the Turk, they endeavoured to dissuade me from it by every means in their power. But when I reclaimed the money which I had advanced for a journey now abandoned, they made bitter complaints. By their account, I was still in their debt for the trouble they had taken; but upon my threatening to lay my case before the Arabic prince *Ismaïn-Abou-Ali*, they brought me back five sequins. I gave up the other twenty rather than remain longer exposed to the plots of these two rascals, and resolved to continue my route towards the ruins of the ancient city of Thebes.

As I was packing up my baggage in the sort of room which I occupied, I perceived that a species of large wasp, with violet-coloured wings, had built its nest in the inside of the wooden box of a mariner's compass. The honey-comb was of earth, nearly of an oval form, and pierced with a round hole in the middle. Each cell contained a maggot, resembling a little worm of a grass-green colour. Round this honey-comb there were others which had been begun, but were left in an unfinished state.

The intense heat of the sun rendered the country through which I was travelling a region truly torrid. During my stay at *Kous*, Reaumur's thermometer, placed in the shade, rose to thirty-five degrees.

On the 17th of July we set off from *Kous* on horseback, accompanied by four Arabs, and keeping on the east bank of the Nile, followed its course. In the middle of the day, we stopped at a village, the name of which, *Nouzariè*, indicates that it is peopled by

Copts

Copts or Egyptian Christians. We soon arrived at *Karnak*, a miserable village, where the cottages would serve as a foil to the magnificence of the splendid ruins by which they are surrounded, were there in the world any thing to be compared to the remains of Thebes, a famous city of antiquity, that has been sung by the first of Grecian poets*. A league beyond *Karnak* stands *Luxor*, another village built at the southern extremity of the site which that celebrated city occupied on this side of the river. It would have required more time than I had to spare, and more safety than was to be expected on this spot, covered with ruins and infested with robbers, to examine minutely the vestiges which immortality has rescued from the shock of ages and the fury of barbarism. It would be impossible to describe the sensations I experienced at the sight of objects so grand and so majestic. It was not simply admiration, but an ecstasy, which suspended the use of all my faculties. I remained a long time motionless with rapture, and more than once felt impelled to prostrate myself as a mark of respect before monuments, the erection of which appeared to surpass the genius and powers of man.

Obelisks ; colossal and other gigantic statues ; avenues formed by rows of sphinxes, and which may still be traced, although the

* In order to save the reader the trouble of reference, the translator subjoins the original passage from Homer, and Pope's version.

— ἐδ' ὅσα Θήβας

· Αἰγυπτίας, ὅθι πλεῖστα δόμοις ἐν κλήμασι κείτοι,
 Ἀ' θ' ἐκατόμυλοι εἰσι· δικόσιοι δ' ἂν ἐκάστην.
 Ἄνῆρες ὄξοιχεῦσι σὺν ἵπποισιν καὶ ὄχεσφιν. I. 383.

Not all proud Thebes' unrivall'd walls contain,
 The world's great empress on th' Egyptian plain
 (That spreads her conquests o'er a thousand states,
 And pours her heroes through a hundred gates,
 Two hundred horsemen, and two hundred cars,
 From each wide portal issuing to the wars). ILLIAD, b. ix. 500.

greater part of the statues are either mutilated or concealed under the sand; porticoes of a prodigious elevation, among which there is one of a hundred and seventy feet high, by two hundred broad; immense colonnades, the pillars of which are twenty feet, and some even as much as thirty-one feet in circumference; colours still of astonishing brilliancy; granite and marble lavished in the structures; stones of enormous dimensions, supported by capitals, and forming the roof of these magnificent buildings; in short, thousands of prostrate columns occupy a space of vast extent.

Ye boasted edifices of Greece and Rome, bow down before the temples and palaces of the Thebes of Egypt! Its proud ruins are still more striking than your most pompous ornaments; and its gigantic remains more sublime than your monuments in perfect preservation. The glory of the most celebrated fabrics is eclipsed by the prodigies of Egyptian architecture; and to do justice to their grandeur and beauty, would require the genius of those by whom they were planned and executed, or the eloquent pen of Bossuet*.

The

* Having retired in the evening into one of the cottages of *Luxor*, my imagination filled with the wonders I had seen, I again read, with enthusiasm, the passage from Bossuet, in which he traces, from the narrative of Thévenot, a rapid sketch of the ruins of Thebes. It is impossible to speak in a more elevated style of works which command admiration and respect. I think I shall gratify the reader by transcribing this passage, which will contribute to give him an idea of places worthy of the pencil of the French orator:

“ Les ouvrages des Egyptiens étoient
 “ faits pour tenir contre le tems: leurs
 “ statues étoient des colosses: leurs co-
 “ lonnes étoient immenses. L’Egypte
 “ visoit au grand, et vouloit frapper
 “ les yeux de loin, mais toujours en les
 “ contentant par la justesse des propor-
 “ tions. On a découvert dans le Saïd
 “ (vous

“ The works of the Egyptians were
 “ calculated to withstand the corroding
 “ tooth of time: their statues were co-
 “ lossal, their columns immense. Egypt
 “ aimed at grandeur, and sought to strike
 “ the eye at a distance, but never failed
 “ to gratify it by correctness of propor-
 “ tion. In the Saïd, which you well
 “ know

The Arab who commanded at *Luxor* for *Ismaïn-Abou-Ali*, and to whom I delivered a letter from that prince, gave me a very handsome reception. On the 18th we mounted our horses, and, under his escort, made the tour of the ruins of the ancient residence of the kings

“ (vous savez bien que c’est le nom de
 “ la Thébàide) des temples et des palais,
 “ presque encore entiers, où ces colonnes
 “ et ces statues sont innombrables. On
 “ y admire sur-tout un palais dont les
 “ restes semblent n’avoir subsisté que
 “ pour effacer la gloire de tous les plus
 “ grands ouvrages. Quatre allées à perte
 “ de vue, et bornées, de part et d’autre,
 “ par des sphinx d’une matière aussi rare
 “ que leur grandeur est remarquable,
 “ servent d’avenues à quatre portiques
 “ dont la hauteur étonne les yeux. Quelle
 “ magnificence, et quelle étendue! En-
 “ core, ceux qui nous ont décrit ce pro-
 “ digieux édifice, n’ont ils pas eu le tems
 “ d’en faire le tour, et ne font pas même
 “ assurés d’en avoir vu la moitié: mais
 “ tout ce qu’ils y ont vu étoit surprenant.

“ Une salle, qui apparemment faisoit
 “ le milieu de ce superbe palais, étoit
 “ soutenue de six vingts colonnes de six
 “ brassées de grosseurs, grandes à propor-
 “ tion, et entremêlées d’obélisques que
 “ tant de siècles n’ont pu abattre. Les
 “ couleurs même, c’est-à-dire, ce qui
 “ éprouve le plutôt le pouvoir du tems,
 “ se soutiennent encore parmi les ruines
 “ de cet admirable édifice, et y confer-
 “ vent leur vivacité; tant l’Egypte favoit
 “ imprimer

“ know is the name of Thebaïs, have
 “ been discovered temples and palaces, at
 “ this day almost entire, where these co-
 “ lumns and statues are innumerable.
 “ The admiration of the traveller is parti-
 “ cularly excited by a palace, the remains
 “ of which seem to have subsisted only to
 “ eclipse the glory of all the noblest works
 “ of art. Four alleys, extending farther
 “ than the eye can reach, and bounded,
 “ on each side, by sphinxes of a substance
 “ as rare as their size is remarkable, serve
 “ as avenues to four porticoes of most
 “ astonishing height. How magnificent!
 “ how stupendous! Indeed, those who
 “ have described to us this prodigious
 “ edifice, have not had time to examine
 “ its whole extent, nor are they even cer-
 “ tain of having seen the half of its beau-
 “ ties; but all that they did see was truly
 “ wonderful.

“ A saloon, which apparently formed
 “ the middle of this superb palace, was
 “ supported by a hundred and twenty
 “ columns, the circumference of which
 “ could not be spanned by six men with
 “ extended arms. These columns were
 “ lofty in proportion, and interspersed
 “ with obelisks which so many revolving
 “ ages have not been able to overthrow.
 “ Even the colours, which, from their
 “ nature, soonest experience the power of
 “ time,

kings of Egypt. The magnificence it displayed, and the extent of its circumference, surpasses all conception. But new events occurred to hurry me away from ruins, the most remarkable parts of which I intended to have examined, and to have had drawings of them taken. The only one that I had time to get delineated is given in *Plate XXII.* which represents a singular colonnade of that portion of the ruins surrounding the village of *Luxor*. Upper Egypt was again about to become the theatre of a war between the Mamalûks. Some Beys belonging to the vanquished party of *Ismaïn* had found means to get possession of Thebais, as far as the Red Sea, and there to make a sufficient number of partisans to give the victorious Murad some inquietude. To exterminate this remaining portion of enemies, the latter was sending a small army, commanded by a Bey of his household. I was between two parties of combatants, equally undisciplined and ungovernable, and alike inclined to commit the greatest excesses. The disorderly behaviour of these troops, consisting of men who possessed none of the qualifications of a soldier but courage, infected the districts through which their parties passed. Themselves pillaging and laying every thing waste, they left to others a free opening to pillage and devastation. Robbers stripped the travellers by land, while pirates stopped the boats upon the Nile. Tribes of Arabs revived old quarrels, and had frequent skirmishes with each other; village was fighting against village; in short, upon these occasions, disorder, tumult, and licentiousness, were carried to the highest pitch; and all authority being at an end, the unprotected foreigner could not fail of becoming a victim in the general confusion.

“imprimer le caractère d’immortalité à
 “tous ses ouvrages.” *Disc. sur l’Hist.*
Univ. part. iii. § 3.

“time, are still unfaded among the ruins
 “of this admirable edifice, and display all
 “their original brilliancy; so well did
 “Egypt know, how to impress the
 “stamp of immortality on all her pro-
 “ductions.”

It

It was impossible for me to remain longer on the spot where the proud city of Thebes formerly stood. This district, extremely dangerous at the most tranquil periods, was upon the point of becoming impassable for every one but robbers. Neither could I think any more of proceeding up towards the cataracts. Independently of the dangers to which I should have been exposed from a more barbarous set of inhabitants in this southern country, the enemies of Murad, into whose hands I should have fallen, would have put me to death as one of his emissaries; I therefore, very unwillingly, adopted the only plan I had left, that of returning down the Nile, the inhabitants between this place and the northern part of Egypt being gradually less ferocious in disposition, as well as less swarthy in complexion; besides, I had not so much to fear in the event of meeting with the partisans of Murad Bey.

The Arab *sheick* of *Luxor* urged me not to delay my departure; but I still wished to cross over to *Gournei*, which was on the west bank, in order to see the part of the ancient city of Thebes that was on that side of the Nile. This was reckoned the most difficult spot to land at in Thebais, on account of the multitude of robbers by whom alone it was inhabited. I had heard the *kiaschef* of *Kous* say, that he would not venture to travel there, even with his little party of Mamalûk soldiers. The *sheick* of *Luxor*, one of those whose kind and hospitable behaviour remained undiminished in a country where it is customary to promise much and to perform nothing, endeavoured to dissuade me from this step; and when he saw me determined not to relinquish it, he very kindly pointed out to me such precautions as he thought might best contribute to my safety. This worthy man would accompany me to the boat, in which I arrived off *Gournei* on the morning of the 29th.

I was a hundred and thirty-five, or a hundred and forty leagues from Cairo, when I discontinued my route to the southward.

The place where I landed was planted with gum acacias *. Although the village was at no great distance from the river, as it was the resort of the most formidable banditti, I followed the advice of the *sbeick* of *Luxor*, and requested the *sbeick* of *Gournei*, for whom also I had a letter from *Ismaïn*, to come himself to the water-side. He immediately complied with my request, and conducted me to the meanest, the most frightful, and most miserable place in appearance I ever beheld. The badly built mud huts, of which it consists, are no higher than a man, and have no other covering than a few leaves of the palm-tree. And, as for the inhabitants, never did I see such ill-looking wretches. They were half black, and almost entirely naked, part only of their body being covered with miserable rags, while their dark and haggard countenance was fully expressive of their ferocious disposition. Following no trade, having no taste for agriculture, and, like the savage animals of the barren mountains near which they live, appearing to employ themselves solely in rapine, their aspect was not a little terrific. The Arab who here represented *Ismaïn* had no great authority; and what he told us of the banditti of *Gournei* was but ill calculated to dispel our fears.

My companions, whose imagination had been struck by all the accounts they had heard of this truly detestable place, appeared very uneasy; the Syrian interpreter, as cowardly as he was wicked, cried from fear; they all blamed me loudly, and considered our destruction inevitable, when they saw me seated upon the sand in the middle of a dozen of these rascally *fellabs*, pulling out my purse every moment, and paying their own price to all those who brought me idols or antique medals. I thus made a pretty ample collection of fragments of antiquity; and I must say, in justice to the inhabitants of *Gournei*, that they displayed as much integrity and fairness in

* *Mimosa Nilotica*, L.

these little bargains, which employed us a great part of the day, as if they had been the most honest people in the world.

Most of the medals I purchased were of little value. The greater number of them were *Ptolemies*, and of copper; there were three or four gold coins, but these were Arabic. Very beautiful cornelians, ready cut, and fit to be engraved, are commonly found among the ruins. Of the articles of antiquity that were offered to me for sale, a man shewed me one for which he asked a most extravagant price, although it was an object of very little consequence, an amulet of terra cotta, representing a figure with two faces. But the possessor had had the art to attach to it an imaginary value, and thereby to create himself a small income, founded, like all those of the same kind, upon folly and credulity. The women considered this talisman, carried about their person, as an infallible mean of procuring good labours, and they paid as much as thirty medines for the hire of it for a day.

The west quarter of the ancient city of Thebes is not inferior, in point of magnificence, to that which was separated from it by the Nile; but the monuments it contains are not in so good preservation, and the ruins are piled up in the greatest disorder. A few specimens are still standing as the unshaken testimonies of the astonishing solidity of the edifices that were here erected. There are yet to be seen the front of the walls of an ancient temple, entirely covered with hieroglyphics, a superb portico, and some colossal statues: among these are to be distinguished a few fragments of the statue of Memnon, which uttered sounds at the rising of the sun, and which, in former times, was considered as a wonder*. I could only hastily admire

* This was effected by the rays of the sun when they fell upon it, and the noise resembled the snapping of the string of a harp. At the setting of the sun, and in the night, the statue uttered lugubrious sounds. These facts are supported by the testimony of the geographer Strabo, who confesses himself ignorant whether the sounds

admire these important remains of antiquity, the greater part of which I had no opportunity of seeing but at a distance; I shall, therefore, dwell no longer on them here, than I had it in my power to dwell on the monuments themselves.

I could have wished much to visit some spacious excavations, hewn out in the rock, at a league to the westward of *Gournei*, which were the tombs of the ancient monarchs of Thebes; but I could find nobody that would undertake to conduct me thither; the *sheick* himself assured me that the inhabitants of *Gournei* being at war with those of the neighbouring villages, some of whom they had recently killed, it would be highly imprudent to expose myself with guides taken from among them, and who, far from affording me any sort of protection, would infallibly draw upon me the revenge of their implacable opponents.

If the whole day which we passed in a place of so bad repute was not perfectly free from alarm, the night was also spent in a state of extreme agitation. The lodging assigned to us was one of the largest, but, at the same time, one of the most unsubstantial of the cottages, in which, however, we were very much at a loss for room. We had taken every possible precaution to guard against being surprised or attacked by the inhabitants; but not one of us had thought of our being beset by another sort of mischievous beings. Scarcely had we laid ourselves down upon our carpets, before a legion of rats, of an extraordinary size, issued forth into our apartment. We felt them incessantly running over us, and biting us every moment. Nor was this all: a very boisterous wind had sprung up; our unstable cottage could not resist its violence; every now and then it blew down huge pieces, most of which fell upon us. I, in particular, was struck by a large iron pike, which the shaking of our hut tore from the roof;

proceeded from the base of the statue, or from the people that were around it. This celebrated statue was dismantled by Cambyfes king of Persia, when he conquered Egypt. T.

had the point been towards me, it must have entered my body. At length, in the midst of the deafening noise of the wind, we were alarmed by the tumbling down of one of the walls of the cottage, which very fortunately did not fall inwards. Under the apprehension of being crushed by the remaining walls, we ran out of this place of wretchedness and misery, and spent half of the night walking in the open air, with our guns on our shoulders.

The *sheick el belled* of *Gournei*, who, in Egypt, is the chief man of the place, and nearly the same as were the mayors of villages in France, sent for me to his house. He had a disorder which could not be cured without a difficult operation. I took good care not to acknowledge to him that his cure was beyond my skill, and gave him some medicines which could do him neither good nor harm; but from which, however, it was necessary for our safety to promise him the best effects.

I found with the *sheick* a physician of the country, who constantly carried his knowledge of physic under his arm. It consisted of a thick volume, in the Arabic tongue, containing recipes for every disease. Whenever he was consulted, he turned over his repertorium, and gave no answer till he had met with a passage which he thought might apply to the case of his patient. One of my people who was troubled with ague-fits, pretended to address him in a confidential tone. After having inquired into the symptoms which attended the fever, this unskilful physician for a long time fumbled over his book, which, in similar cases, prescribed acid fruits, such as limes, pomegranates, &c. and the smoke of a burnt fish-bone, which my aguish companion was to inhale. But shutting the book, he added, from his own personal science, "there is no remedy more efficacious against fevers than *written characters*," that is, small bits of paper on which certain words are written, and which may be either swallowed or carried about as a charm.

This quack, who had been sent for from a great distance, to prescribe

scribe for the chief magistrate of *Gournei*, was ignorant of his complaint, although he had been with him several days. When I went away, he followed me to ask my opinion of his patient's case. "Consult your book," said I to him, "and, under the article "*fistula*, you will discover the nature of that disease, and, probably, "some remedy; but lose no time, for gangrene is beginning to make "its appearance; and, in a little while, your patient will certainly "die, if you are not expeditious in stopping its progress." At these words my learned friend, aware of all the danger which, in his country, is incurred by failing in a cure, did not long demur about the course that appeared to him most likely to ensure his safety; he did not even return to his patient, but disappeared without speaking to any person, still carrying his repertorium of knowledge under his arm.

If it was not prudent to travel to *Gournei*, to leave it was a matter of no less difficulty. The boats of the Nile avoided its shore, which was universally dreaded; and the malignity of its inhabitants had involved it in a war with its neighbours, and particularly with the people of *Kamoulé*, a village half way to *Néguadé*, in which they had recently murdered a man. According to the savage custom of the country, it was necessary that blood should flow at *Gournei*, in order to avenge that spilt at *Kamoulé*, without the smallest inquiry being made, whether this blood, which a blind vengeance sought to shed, was that of the murderer or of any other person. No one dared to run the risk of becoming the victim of a resentment which time does not efface, and which can be extinguished only by blood. Accordingly all the inhabitants refused to serve us as guides; and the Arab *sheick* himself was afraid to undertake to conduct us to *Néguadé*. At last a man offered himself, and engaged to direct our route. The *sheick* furnished us with horses, and accompanied us about a quarter of a league; but, in spite of my entreaties, he refused to proceed a step farther. We thus remained under the protection of a
man

man half naked, walking on foot, with no other weapon than a stick, and whose inauspicious appearance made us apprehensive of meeting some of his comrades. He advised us to quit the plain, in order to avoid the vicinity of *Kamoulé*. Therefore ascending the steep mountains which form a chain of rocks along the cultivated districts of Upper Egypt, we passed through narrow gorges and irregular windings, the most complete desert, as no trace was to be seen either of men or of animals; and a skreen of rocks, heaped one upon another, entirely concealed the inhabited part of the country. A road like this, difficult, and often dangerous for our horses, was not at all calculated to remove our apprehensions. Our guide, in league with our hosts at *Gournei*, might have bewildered us, and led us into some ambuscade: however, after a six hours journey along these disagreeable roads, we descended into the plain near *Néguadé*, and from thence crossed over to *Kous*. Thither our conductor followed us; and, very well pleased at having escaped his enemies, he would not again expose himself in their neighbourhood, but, with his horses, kept along the Nile on the east shore, till he arrived opposite to his place of abode.

CHAPTER LI.

COPT OF KOUS. — SHEEP OF YEMEN. — SHEEP OF EGYPT. — GOATS. — HOGS. — REASONS WHY HOGS WERE FORBIDDEN AS FOOD IN EGYPT. — CROCODILE. — LIZARD. — FRAGMENTS OF ANTIQUE STONES AND VITREOUS SCORIA. — POISON STONES.

SCARCELY had I arrived at *Kous*, at the lodging which I before occupied, when *Mallim Poctor* came to visit me with all the external marks of friendship, and congratulated me that I had the prudence to relinquish my journey to *Coffeir*; for that the Turkish merchant, in whom he thought he could have confided, had laid a plan to have me robbed upon the road; but I paid no great attention to the conversation of a man, with whose treachery I was so well acquainted. The Turkish merchant was not now at *Kous*, and I was very certain, that, had he been there, and *Poctor* absent, he would have told me the same story about him, with a view of obtaining some new present. But the Copt accompanied his tale with this extremely probable circumstance, that my Christian interpreter was implicated in the plot formed against me by the Turk; and *Poctor* might have added, by himself. I thought it best, however, to dissemble: the Copt was a man of interest in his country, and if I could not trust to the candour of his protestations of friendship and attachment, I had reason to fear that he might become a very dangerous enemy.

When I returned his visit, I saw in his court-yard several Yemen sheep, a species of a very slender and elongated make, and which has a small head in proportion to the body, an arched forehead, pendulous ears, and a fleece rather of short and silky down than of real wool. This sheep, although not exactly the same with the *adimain*, or *great sheep of Senegal and the Indies*, mentioned by Buffon,

Buffon *, has so much affinity to it, that the slight differences between these two animals appear rather to proceed from accidental local circumstances, than to constitute a regular variety. Besides, this Arabian sheep does not make part of the flocks in Egypt; those which I saw at *Kous* had been sent to *Poctor* as curiosities.

A country, whose longitudinal breadth bears no proportion to its latitudinal extent, and whose climate, soil, and even inhabitants, exhibit sensible shades of difference, must necessarily contain productions modified by difference of situation. This impression of a temperature more or less hot, and more or less dry, is in like manner to be observed in the animals domesticated by man. Few, however, of those of the same genus kept in Egypt are to be found alike in the northern and southern parts of that country. It has been seen, that the race of sheep in Lower Egypt is that which is remarkable for its broad tail, and is known under the name of the *Barbary sheep* †. From the mixture of that breed with the common sheep, a mixture very frequent among animals of this genus, living in a state of domesticity in hot climates, is produced an intermediate race, which is diffused through Turkey, Greece, Provence, &c. &c.

Neither the same sort of rams nor ewes are to be seen above Cairo as in Lower Egypt, and the race is stronger and of greater size. In Upper Egypt these animals have a head proportionably larger, more flattened in the upper part, and naked underneath for the half of its length. A large wattle, or dewlap, hangs under their neck; their horns are short and recurved; their legs are not so long as those of the other breeds, and the testicles of the male sometimes trail on the ground; they have a very thick fleece, and when they are sheared the wool is left on the head, which is soon covered by it to the very tip of the muzzle. This sort of bushy frizzled

* Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes. *Ovis Guineensis*, L.—Ang. Wattled sheep.

† See page 288.

head of hair, through which they can scarcely see, gives them a very singular cast of countenance: their colour is generally brown, inclining to reddish, which last tint becomes lighter as they advance in age. Some of them are black, and others of a yellowish white.

Although these animals grow to an astonishing size, their voice is extremely weak, and they seldom bleat; but they are, nevertheless, exceedingly petulant. The rams are incessantly butting each other, even when there are no females among them. Their skin is used for a bed by most of the Egyptians. Besides the thickness of their fleece, which makes this sort of mattresses less hard, they assert, that a person lying on it is secure from the sting of scorpions, which, they say, never come upon wool, where, probably, the feet of the insect might get entangled. One of these skins of a great size, that is to say, large enough to serve as a mattress for a man, is sold as high as four and twenty livres; while, at the same time, the whole animal, when alive, but without the fleece, may be purchased for seven or eight.

This second race of Egyptian rams, equally common all through Nubia and Abyssinia, is very probably that described by Buffon, under the denomination of the *Tunis ram* *, which, it must be admitted, wants precision, as he does not sufficiently distinguish this race from that of the *Barbary sheep*, from which it differs in several respects, although Linnæus, or his editor Gmelin, has confounded them, in designating both by the broadness of their tail †.

Neither are the goats alike in Upper and Lower Egypt. In the north, the inhabitants keep only the *Mambrina goat* ‡, with a smooth skin and long pendulous ears. The goats of the Saïd are much smaller; their horns are slender and handsomely turned. They are very lively and active, and also very noisy, being incessantly re-

* *Supplément à l'Histoire Naturelle des Quadrupèdes.*

† *Ovis laticaudata*, L.

‡ See page 288.

peating their bleatings, the sound of which may be aptly compared to the cries of a child. Their hair is long, thick, and almost as soft as silk. This last character, and some other resemblances in point of form, assimilate them greatly to the silky-haired goat of Angora. This race of goats appears to be the same as that of the *Juda goat*, which is mentioned by Buffon in the natural history of the chamois, or wild goat; and which, according to Bosman, is common in Guinea, Angola, and other parts of the coast of Africa*.

In Egypt, in the midst of flocks of sheep and goats, is never seen an animal of another genus, which forms in our country a branch of agricultural wealth, and one of the most common as well as favourite articles of food. The legislators of the East, from the priests of ancient Egypt downwards, have been unanimous in proscribing the flesh of the hog. Among the Egyptians in particular, this animal was held *unclean*. Any person who touched it, even in passing, was obliged to plunge with all his clothes on into the Nile. Those who kept herds of swine formed an isolated class, and were excluded from the society of other men; and, although natives of Egypt, they were forbidden to enter the Egyptian temples. No person would give his daughters in marriage to a swineherd, nor espouse his †. However, while the Jews, who had in Egypt taken the same aversion to the hog, neither immolated nor ate it, the Egyptians sacrificed it once a year to the moon; and on that day only, the day of the feast of the full moon, it was permitted to be eaten ‡.

It is not reasonable to suppose, that this so general aversion among a celebrated people, should, as some persons have imagined, have no other foundation than a natural repugnance on account of the vora-

* Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, et Supplement, art. du *Bouc de Juda*.—*Capra reversa*, L.

† Herodotus, lib. ii. § 47. traduction du Cit. Larcher.

‡ Herodotus. Notes du Cit. Larcher.

cious appetite which leads these animals to wallow and feed among heaps of the most offensive ordure. They must, for the same reason, have rejected the flesh of fowls, which, it is well known, devour the most filthy and disgusting food.

The custom of abstaining from the use of pork undoubtedly originated in dietetic rules indispensable under a burning sky. Of this we shall be convinced, when we observe that the race of swine natural to those climates has more affinity to the *Chinese hog*, or the *Siam* or *India hog**, than to that of Europe; that the *Chinese hog*, even when reared in our cold countries, affords certainly more delicate meat, but, at the same time, much fatter than that of the common hog; that this meat, so white and flavoured, but so fat in Egypt and Syria, and in the southern parts of Greece, is heavy even to the strongest stomach; in a word, that from this one circumstance the Egyptians were justified in considering it as insalubrious, on account of the indigestion and disagreeable nausea it produced in stomachs already weakened by the extreme heat of the climate.

On the other hand, the quantity of fat with which this animal is loaded, obstructing perspiration in countries where it is so copiously excited by the heat, renders it more subject than elsewhere to the measles, a disorder which is peculiar to it, and which, under a burning sky, might easily degenerate into leprosy. Such a disposition was more than sufficient to induce the Egyptians, whose attention to avert every thing that could tend to engender the leprosy was carried to a scrupulous excess, to conceive a disgust against a genus of animals which appeared to be subject to it themselves. This was, in fact, the true motive for an aversion, which the gross superstition of the Jews has retained in cold climates, where the hog is among the number of animals most useful for the sustenance of man. The Egyptians considered, that as it carried with it the prin-

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Sus porcus*.

ciple of the leprosy, ring-worms and other cutaneous eruptions, which in that country possess a more acrid and determinate character, it was incumbent upon them to refrain from eating pork.

The custom of abstaining from the flesh of the hog has been transmitted to the present race of Egyptians. It is not eaten by the Copts more than by the Mahometans; so that nothing is scarcer than these animals in the Saïd, where there are not, as in the towns of Lower Egypt, Greeks who venture to keep them privately, nor any other Europeans but seven or eight isolated missionaries. When I arrived at the convent of *Néguadé*, in which treachery assumes the mask of hospitality, the Catholic Copts hastened to announce to me that I could there see a rare and singular quadruped. I was eager, on my part, to be shewn this wonder: they conducted me to a recess in the court, and I was not a little surprised to find there nothing more than a hog, which the monks kept, and which the stupid Egyptians considered a very curious animal.

These Coptic Catholics, who combine the superstition of several religions, have a degree of faith which cannot fail often to be attended with the most fatal effects. They are persuaded that the crocodiles*, being possessed of sufficient discernment to distinguish a Christian from a Mussulman, attack only the latter, while they respect the worshipper of Jesus. So imbued are they with that opinion, that they bathe without fear in the waters of the Nile, where are to be found those immense and hideous lizards; while the Mahometans, whose credulity induces them to admit this miraculous predilection, dare not run the same risk. I remember to have read something similar in the first volume of a Description of Western Ethiopia; where the author asserts, that Christians have nothing to

* *Crocodile, ou le crocodile proprement dit.* Lecepède, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes ovipares.—*Lacert i crocodilus*, L.—In Egypt *timfab*, a name somewhat similar to that of *chamfes*, which the crocodile bore there in ancient times.

apprehend from crocodiles, while these animals devour a number of negroes. Superstition holds every where the same language, and in this instance of credulity, rational persons will recognise that of the missionaries.

In remote times, the crocodile experienced a very different treatment in Egypt, according to the part of the Nile in which he was found. In one place he was pursued with fury, and killed without mercy; in another he was made the object of worship. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood of Thebes, and of the lake Mæris, considered him as a sacred animal. They chose out one that they tamed and attended with the greatest care; his food was prescribed and regulated by the sacred books; he was adorned with ear-rings made of gold, or of a composition to imitate precious stones, as well as a sort of bracelet upon his fore feet *, ornaments rather too elegant for so ugly an animal.

At present, crocodiles are neither molested nor worshipped. They are suffered in peace to impregnate the waters of the Nile with their musky odour, and to prey upon the fishes by which they are inhabited. Being confined to the most southern parts of Egypt, they are there very numerous. They are to be seen motionless, basking in the sun with their head above the water, and have, at a little distance, the appearance of large logs of floating timber: being thus carried gently down the stream, they enjoy the heat, in which they take great delight. I have shot at several of them in that situation very close to me; for being in general not disturbed, they are easy to be approached. With a testaceous armour that repels a ball, they are very difficult to kill. I hoped to be able to fracture their skull by shooting at them with a gun loaded with a large oblong slug; but whether they were also invulnerable in that part, or whether, being only wounded, they sunk, and died some time after at the

* Herodotus, at the place before quoted, § 69.

bottom of the water, all those at which I fired dived, and instantly disappeared.

In the vicinity of Thebes, the little boat in which I went up the river was often surrounded by crocodiles lying on the surface of the water; they saw us pass with perfect indifference, testifying, at our approach, neither fear nor any intention of cruelty. The report of our pieces alone could disturb their tranquil apathy. Crocodiles never make any attempt to get upon the gunnel of boats, though ever so little above the water, and persons on board have nothing to dread from their attacks. But they should avoid dipping their hands or feet in the river, otherwise they would run the risk of having them snapped off by the sharp and cutting teeth of these amphibious animals.

Although very active in the water, which they rapidly divide, they proceed but slowly on land; and unless disguised by their muddy colour, and the coat of dirt with which they get incrustated by walking along the slimy banks of the Nile, so as not to be distinguishable, and persons are thereby subject to be surprised by them, they are by no means dangerous out of the element in which they have greater strength and more room for exertion.

It is on the miry banks of the Nile that they deposit their eggs, and there they likewise copulate. The female, who, during the congress, is turned upon her back, cannot rise without considerable difficulty; and it is even said that she cannot change her posture, or recover her legs, without the assistance of the male. Will it be believed, that there are in Upper Egypt men, who, hurried on by an excess of unexampled depravation and brutality, take advantage of the helpless situation of the female, drive off the male, and supplant him in this frightful intercourse? Horrible embraces, hideous enjoyment, the knowledge of which was yet wanting to complete the disgusting pages of the history of human perversity!

The fecundity of the crocodile would make that animal a terrible

scourge to the countries it inhabits, did not numerous enemies, among which the tortoise of the Nile holds the first rank, prevent its propagation, by devouring the eggs and the young immediately after they are hatched. At *Kous* seven young crocodiles were brought to me; they were eleven inches in length, and though hatched only two days, had already very sharp teeth. The Egyptian who caught them told me that there were about fifty together; but that it was impossible for him to take more of them, on account of the mother, who came unexpectedly and attempted to fly at him. These reptiles, so formidable from their hideous shape and voracious habits, are still more so from their immense size. I saw at the convent of *Néguadé* the skin of a crocodile thirty feet long by four broad, and I was assured that there were some in the Nile not less than fifty feet in length.

I also saw at *Néguadé* the skin, but in bad preservation, of another species of lizard, which is called in that country *ouaral* *. It was two feet long, but there are some larger. This animal is altogether terrestrial, and never to be found in the water. Respecting it are told a number of fabulous stories, among which, perhaps, may be placed the expedient it employs, according to Sicard, to procure the milk of the ewes and she-goats, of which it is very fond: it seizes strongly with its long tail one of the legs of the sheep or goat, and thus preventing her from getting away, sucks her at its ease †.

I received from *Poëlor* the Copt a small bag filled with fragments of all sorts of sparkling stones, as well as vitreous scoria, which had been found among the rubbish of ancient monuments. When *Poëlor* gave me this present, which was of very trifling value, he made me remark a little round pebble, of a dirty yellow colour,

* *Le marbre*, Lacepède, Hist. Nat. des Quadrup. ovipares.—*Lacerta Nilotica*, Hasselquitz, Itin. p. 311. Forskal, Fauna Ægyptiaco-arab. p. 13. Lin. System. Nat.

† Mém. des Missions du Levant, tom. v. p. 194.

covered with small spots perfectly round, and of white tinged with yellow, in the centre of which was a speck of the same colour as the ground of the pebble. From its property, real or supposed, of curing the sting of scorpions, this stone is held in great estimation by the Egyptians. But a much more valuable one, of which the Copt was in possession, and which he did not give me, was a very beautiful ruby that he wore upon his finger. This gem had been found in the ruins of *Dendera*.

The pebble I have just mentioned is not the only one to which are attributed virtues that have no reality but in the imagination of the Egyptians. I was shewn a little stone, called, on account of its qualities, *badsjar sem* (poison-stone), a small dose of which taken in powder is supposed to counteract the poison of serpents and other venomous animals. The quacks of every country employ this stone to impose upon the multitude, and, in order to obtain it more credit, they assert that they have extracted it from the head of a dragon or serpent. The truth is, that it is nothing more than a sparry concretion, which owes all its efficacy to credulity and superstition.

This is likewise the case with respect to the *badsjar Benazir* (stone of Benazir), that takes its name from a village near which it is generally found. The inhabitants of Egypt look upon it also as a valuable antidote. When rubbed upon a vessel containing some drops of water, it whitens the water, and makes it like milk.

Before my departure from *Kous* my medical skill was put to a severe trial. The new *kiaschef* having fallen from his horse and dislocated his shoulder, honoured me with a confidence which was extremely unpleasant. It would have been in vain for me to explain the established distinction between physic and surgery; it would not have been understood, and the avowal of my incapacity must have been attended with danger. I was therefore obliged to turn surgeon, and my companions acted as my assistants. It was a pretty

singular exhibition to see us tormenting the Mamalûk with useleſs efforts; while he, not being sensible of our unskilfulness, patiently endured the pain of an operation very clumsily performed. I had reason to fear that my patient would detain me about him; and, lest he should take such a fancy, I set out the same evening for *Kenné*, where I arrived in the night of the 23d of July.

CHAP-

CHAPTER LII.

KENNÉ.—KOPT.—DENDERA.—KELHÉ.—DISTURBANCES.—ROUGHNESS OF THE NILE.—PIRATES.—SAHET.—BÉLIANÉ.—BIRDS.—GIRGÉ.—ITALIAN MONKS.—MENSHIÉ.—BEE-EATERS.—TAHTA.—GENERAL INSURRECTION IN THIS DISTRICT.—SYPHILIS.—FEVERS.—WORMS.—HÆMORRHOIDS.—FLIES.—ICHNEUMON-FLIES.—SCORPION.—LIZARDS.—BOAT.—KAU-EL-KEBIR.—WEEVILS.—SKIRMISH BETWEEN THE ARABS.—REPAIRS OF THE BOAT.—ABOUTIGE.—COURTESANS.—EARTH-EATERS.—MANFELOUT.

KENNÉ is an inconsiderable town, and, like *Kous*, situated to the eastward of the Nile, but at a greater distance. It is one of the places of rendezvous of the caravans which go to *Coffeir*, as well as of those which return from that port laden with the rich productions of India and Arabia. It still retains the same name; the ancients called it *Cænæ* or *Cænopolis*; but it is no longer what it was in former times. A canal, by which the waters of the Nile communicated with those of the Arabian Gulf, had rendered it a very commercial town. No vestige of this canal now exists; the monuments with which the ancient city was embellished have disappeared; its commerce is nearly annihilated; its riches have vanished; and not a trace remains of the industry of its ancient inhabitants except a wretched manufactory of earthen-ware.

Between *Kous* and *Kenné* stands *Koft*, a village built at a distance from the water-side, near the site of the ancient city of *Cophios*, which the commerce of the Red Sea had also rendered a very flourishing place. Several authors make this the termination of the canal of the Red Sea now filled up, while others suppose it to be near *Kenné*.

The last-mentioned place is opposite to *Dendera*, whither I went for the second time. I did not fail to cast another glance of admiration on the temple which the *Tentyrites* consecrated to Isis, a monument in a better state of preservation than any other in Egypt. I met with the same kind reception from the *emir* as on my first visit; he gave me a very beautiful antique head of white marble, which I lost with a number of other curiosities.

Continuing to descend the Nile, the waters of which were daily swelling and growing thicker, we stopped on the 25th at *Reisbie*, a village on the west bank of the river, where we purchased some provisions. From thence we proceeded to *Kelbé*, another village on the same side, at half a league from *Sabet*, where I had had so much altercation with the Mamalûk in command, and with the master of my boat. To me this was always to be a fatal spot. I found it in a state of the greatest fermentation. Whole villages, taking advantage of the troubles occasioned by the approach of the war of which Upper Egypt was on the point of becoming the theatre, had risen, and refused to pay their tribute, which they were apprehensive of being a second time called upon to discharge, owing to the uncertainty of what party would be victorious. Several of these little districts had taken up arms to resist the *kiaschef* of *Basjour*, who was marching against them, in order to reduce them to submission: the inhabitants of *Kelbé* were of the number. Scarcely had we entered their territory, when, deceived by our dress, thirty or forty *fellahs*, armed with lances and sabres, rapidly came down upon us. We had advanced without distrust, and were unprovided with sufficient means of defence to resist so numerous a body. I was therefore compelled to have recourse to the only alternative that remained, and reason with people little susceptible of understanding the language of reason. However, after having asked them why they treated as enemies peaceable foreigners, I perceived that they had taken us for the followers of the *kiaschef* against whom they had risen;

rifen; I had no great trouble to undeceive them, and they consented, though not without some difficulty, to leave us without farther molestation.

We immediately re-embarked, but soon incurred another sort of danger. The wind was blowing strong from the northward; the river, the course of which is here confined by a craggy mountain projecting into its bed, was ruffled by a heavy swell, particularly in those parts where the rapidity of the stream had to contend more strongly against the resistance opposed to it by the wind. Having endeavoured to get into the strength of the current, we there found waves so high and breaking so short, that our little *kanja*, which had no ballast, had nearly been swamped. With much trouble and danger, we reached the foot of the mountain, where we remained in expectation that towards the evening the wind would moderate, as is generally the case.

We had been apprized at *Kelké* that the place where we were was become the most dangerous reach in the navigation of the Nile. No boat durst venture here alone; by day as well as by night, pirates were committing continual depredations. We were off one of their most formidable retreats. Several excavations in the rock served them for a habitation and a look-out, from whence they discovered at a great distance, boats, the attack and plunder of which they had time to plan. No doubt they did not think themselves sufficiently strong to master us; however, we kept upon our guard, and they made no attempt to approach. But as they were so near, we were prevented from straying far from the water-side, and I was unable to visit the grottoes which are hewn out of the rock, and which are most probably works of antiquity.

Though it was growing dark, the wind did not abate, and it was impossible for us to pass the night in the place where we were. We made a temporary sail with some pieces of blue linen cloth, part of the dress of our boatmen, and steering towards the opposite shore, through

through a swell much too heavy for our little *kanja*, we reached *Sabet*, the port of *Basjoura* and of *Farschout*.

The *reis* went ashore to the village, and returned in a moment to inform me, that, in the state of confusion which reigned in the district, he had just been assured that we could not remain off *Sabet*, without being exposed to be murdered. I sent him back to tell the *sbeick el belled* that I was a *kiaschef*, and that I ordered him to take measures to ensure my safety, for which he should be responsible. The chief of the village, without waiting for a second message, came himself with some men, and spent the whole night in guarding my boat. At daybreak he did not forget to inquire if I had slept well, and if I was in good health: he then sent me some coffee and a slight breakfast. But I pushed off as quick as possible, for fear broad daylight should have discovered that the pretended *kiaschef* had no beard.

We passed the night of the 27th at *Béliané*, a considerable village to the westward of the Nile, and near which, towards the mountains, are still to be seen, according to the account given me by the inhabitants, some ruins that occupy a great extent of ground.

Storks and pelicans were standing motionless for whole hours upon some sandy islots; black and white king-fishers, spur-winged and ring plovers, and egrets, were occasionally seen; and off *Béliané* some pigeons even alighted upon the stream, although rapid and rough, and remained a few moments upon the surface of the water.

From *Béliané* we proceeded on the 28th to *Girgé*, where there was another house of monks of the *Propaganda*, for whom I had also a letter from Cairo. I had a curiosity to see whether they were better disposed than those of *Echmimm* and *Néguadé*, and the reception they gave me did not long leave the matter in doubt. I waited upon the superior, a tolerably good looking old man with a long white beard. He contented himself with glancing at the date of the letter I delivered to him, and perceiving that it was not very recent, he

threw the paper in my face, exclaiming that the letter was worth nothing. I confess it required no small effort of moderation to abstain from punishing such an excess of insolence, to which several persons were witnesses. The monk, perceiving my agitation, took up the letter, read it, and made a thousand apologies, which I received by turning my back upon him, and walking out of the house, fully resolved never again to enter any of these abodes of folly and impertinence.

Next to Cairo, *Girgé* is the largest city in Egypt. It is the capital of the Saïd, the residence of a Bey, and also of a Coptic bishop. It is situated a hundred leagues from Cairo, and is built along the Nile, the shore of which is there lofty and steep. The houses are modern, but of irregular construction; and a traveller meets with nothing in this town to induce him to make any stay.

We left *Girgé* on the morning of the 29th. The northerly wind, which, for several days, had blown with unabated violence, raised waves of an astonishing height, and such as I should by no means have expected to have seen on a river. It totally impeded the progress of the boats which were dropping down with the stream. It was not without considerable difficulty that we reached *Menshié*, a town where the markets are always well supplied, because the boats that are bound to the north of Egypt, are accustomed to put in for a stock of provisions. The pigeon-houses here are still handsomer than in the other places. *Ptolemaïs Hermi*, a large and populous city, formerly stood upon this spot. A few scattered ruins, and a stone dike to confine the waters of the river, are the only remains that *Menshié* preserves of its ancient splendour.

The *kiaschef* of this place wished me to attend him as a physician, and asked me if I was provided with letters from Murad Bey; and upon my replying in the affirmative, he assured me that I then had a very bad recommendation, as Murad was soon to be deprived of his usurped authority. This *kiaschef* was preparing to set

out to join one *Haffan* Bey, who was an enemy to Murad, and whose party was daily increasing in the Saïd. But what gave me more concern, was, that he insisted upon taking me with him, in order, as he said, to cure the wounds which *Haffan* had received in his last battle with Murad. I did not lose a single moment in withdrawing myself from the execution of a project, the consequences of which must inevitably have been fatal to me, and I proceeded for *Soubaje*, where I arrived on the morning of the 30th. In the course of this day we saw several of the same birds that I have just mentioned.

The next morning I set off from *Soubaje* on horseback, with two Arabs, after having ordered my boat to proceed to *Tabta*. I passed through *Kénné*, a village at the foot of the mountain to the westward, and under the dominion of the Arabic *sheick Ismäin-Abou-Ali*. I observed in the environs, upon some *true acacias* *, a few bee-eaters †, birds elegant in form, and rapid in flight, which are continually in pursuit of winged insects. They were by no means wild, and, as they hopped along, they uttered a cry, not loud, but somewhat shrill, and in a single note.

At *Tabta*, where I arrived on the evening of the 31st, I again took the lodging which I had already occupied at the house of the Catholic Copts. *Mallim Marcous*, the Copt upon whom I had performed an important cure, was at Cairo; but my reputation remained undiminished at *Tabta*; and no sooner was my return known, than I was beset by a crowd of persons who really were, or fancied themselves, ill.

This district was far from being in a state of tranquillity. The *fellabs* of the surrounding country were rising, and refused to pay

* *Mimosa Nilotica*, L.—*Ang.* Nilotic true Egyptian acacia.

† *Le guépier*, Buffon, *Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum.* No. 938.—*Merops apiaf-ter*, L.

the taxes. Some Arabs, from whom tribute-money was likewise demanded, had joined the malcontents. Several *kiaschefs* who had united their forces to march against the rebels, had recently experienced a complete defeat. A victory over authority, or, to express myself more correctly, over the most dreadful despotism, had rendered this country the seat of disorder and confusion. The fields were deserted or ravaged; the cultivators forsook them to fly to arms; the flocks were carried off or destroyed; and provisions of every sort became the prey of the enemy or of banditti. The roads being infested by bands of robbers, all kind of communication or intercourse was intercepted. In short, desolation reigned over a soil, the fertility of which could not be subdued by this barbarous warfare. All these circumstances occasioned devastations which could be repaired only by time, and which considerably exceeded the value of the tributes that were here attempted to be levied. But the indignation excited by an odious tyranny agitates the mind to such a degree, that its consequences are not impartially considered. Nations, however debased they may be, at length grow weary of being at the disposal of an unprincipled tyrant; and that power which, a stranger to the dictates of justice and reason, is unmindful of the rights of humanity, and which has no other means of attaining its object except by the rigorous severities of arbitrary violence, cannot long exist, but must infallibly be crushed under the weight of its own oppression.

The few days I passed at *Tabta*, without scarcely leaving the house, to which I was, much against my inclination, confined by the agitated state of the country, gave me an opportunity of making farther observations upon the prevailing diseases, as well as upon the method of cure employed by the Egyptians. They distinguish several species of venereal complaints, according to the difference of the symptoms, and call them whimsical names, an explanation of which it is not easy to give. The generic denomination is *embarek* (the blessed). Sometimes it is the *goat disease*, and sometimes the

camel disease. This last species is considered as the most dangerous and the most difficult to cure. Nothing is less complicated than their treatment of these disorders. In general, it consists in eating a great deal of meat, drinking a considerable quantity of brandy, and rubbing the body with oil and sulphur. Others employ a method equally simple, but more disgusting: it is to drink the water in which the women wash themselves after lying-in. A man assured me that, by this mean, he had been cured of several external symptoms, which had entirely disappeared; but, on the supposition that his account was entitled to credit, it still remained certain that the cure had been merely palliative; for this very man complained of violent pains in his limbs, and particularly in the joints. At Cairo, and in the other towns of Lower Egypt, the treatment is more methodical; for the space of forty days, a decoction of sarsaparilla is prescribed; and the regimen consists in eating nothing during that interval, but unleavened bread and honey. After that, the patient must drink a great deal of brandy.

I observed that intermitting fevers were very uncommon in Egypt. When they appear, they, in general, continue only five or six days, at the expiration of which they either cease or become malignant. The Arabic name of fever is *shone*. The unwholesome aliments on which the greater part of the inhabitants subsist, generate in the intestines a vast quantity of worms: these the Egyptians of the Saïd call *feïfoufé*. There are few men in that country who are not subject to the hæmorrhoids; when they swell, and are painful, a razor is employed to open them; and it is the province of the barbers to perform this operation.

Besides the tiresome quantity of common flies which torment both men and animals in this scorching climate, I observed another species, greatly resembling the common fly, only smaller; its body is entirely covered with hair, and is of a deep shining blackish brown. These flies were brought to my boat in a basket of fruit.

Another

Another species of fly, the head and body of which are of a very bright green, with a little black at the extremity of the body, and a few small transversal stripes, of the same colour, under the belly, was frequently to be seen at *Tabta*: I afterwards met with these flies again at Rossetta, where they disappear during the winter. They generally remain on the ground, where they feed upon every thing they can find, fruit, broken victuals, excrement, &c. &c.

In the Saïd, a beautiful species of ichneumon-fly, which appears in Lower Egypt only during the summer, is also frequently seen. Some of them are of a blue and violet colour, with glittering golden reflections; and others, of a shining golden green. A long sharp sting projects beyond the extremity of its belly. These beautiful insects, which I again saw at Rossetta, though only in the summer, enter the houses, and take up their abode in the little holes of the walls, or of the wainscot. When they are caught, they emit a very small quantity of a liquid which has the smell of sulphur.

One evening I heard a woful screaming, which lasted for upwards of an hour, and which proceeded from the flat roof of a house in the neighbourhood of my lodging. I was informed that it arose from the pain a woman had suffered, in consequence of just being stung by a scorpion. A female was in question, and that circumstance was sufficient to preclude me from obtaining any other particulars relative to the consequences of this sting.

In this season, small lizards, of superior beauty, take a delight in frequenting the shores of the Nile, and of pools of water. Their whole body glitters with golden and azure longitudinal stripes, and their tail is of a beautiful sky blue. These pretty lizards sometimes, though seldom, approach the habitations of man. I saw one of them upon a wall of the house where I lodged at *Tabta*. Excessive heat is necessary to their propagation; in fact, I never met with them in the north of Egypt. The Egyptians appear to have a regard for these little animals; for, on my endeavouring to catch some of them

upon the shore with a stick, I was frequently prevented by my boatmen.

I had discharged the *kanja* which had brought me to *Tabta*. To continue my route, I waited till some boat should touch in the neighbourhood. I was informed that there was one at *Sheick Zeineiddin*, a small village upon the bank of the Nile, a short distance below *Tabta*. I went thither; and I own I was not a little alarmed when I beheld the stowage of the vessel in which I was about to take my passage; it was one of those large lighters called *masch*. Its cargo consisted of corn for the supply of Cairo; but it was so deeply laden, that its gunnel was almost even with the surface of the river; so that, in order to prevent the water from coming in, and to answer the purpose of a washboard, a sort of dike, of fascines and mud, had been constructed on the gunnel. Had it been possible for me to proceed by land, I should not have ventured to embark in a vessel, the situation of which could suit only those who had nothing to lose, and who, by habit, had acquired a great facility in swimming. But the whole country was in an uproar, and no person durst travel. On the 6th of August I therefore set off with the *masch*. Its lading, already so heavy, was farther augmented by a great number of men and sheep, the latter of which were stowed upon the top of the corn.

About two leagues from *Sheick Zeineiddin*, and on the opposite shore, that is, to the eastward of the Nile, stands the village of *Kau el Kebir*, or *Kau* the great, to distinguish it from another smaller village on the west bank. It is built on the brow of a lofty promontory, and offers to the regretful eye of the traveller the remains of an antique colonnade, in a good state of preservation. A dike, built of hewn stone, but half in ruins, defended from the inundations of the river the territory of the ancient city, which some suppose to be *Antæopolis* (the city of Antæus), and others *Diospolis minor* (the lesser Diospolis). At the very pitch of the promontory, and beyond the quay, are to be seen the vast remains of

a mole, which is scarcely covered by the water, and which, extending into the river, rendered this reach extremely dangerous. When the water is low, this piece of architecture, which is likewise built of hewn stone, appears above the surface of the stream, and affords the probable presumption, that at this place there was formerly a bridge over the Nile.

The master of the boat belonged to *Tomieb*; he did not choose to pass that town without paying a visit to his family and his mansion, and, above all, without laying in a stock of corn for his own use. He accordingly had a pretty large sample conveyed to his house; and, in order that the bulk of his cargo should appear to have suffered no diminution, he mixed as much dry earth with the remainder as he had taken of corn.

Walking along the Nile, I found, upon the rocks, some weevils, ten lines in circumference, and four in breadth: their colour is a dark yellow, with blackish undulations.

We were spectators of a conflict that took place between two parties of Arabs, at some distance from the Nile. Although the fire of small arms lasted a considerable time, it was by no means fatal. We saw nobody fall; they fired from afar, and almost always when on a gallop. It was a slight skirmish between bad marksmen, mutually endeavouring to avoid each other. After spending an hour in an exercise which appeared to be a tournament for diversion, rather than a real battle, we saw one of the parties retreat, without our being able to ascertain the reason, and ride off as quietly as if returning from an entertainment.

The *reis* was very well satisfied with being at home, and gave himself little concern about the boat intrusted to his care; the tedium I experienced in waiting for him was extreme; the disturbances which prevailed on shore did not allow me to leave the vessel; and the numerous passengers, by whom I was surrounded, rendered my situation on board neither more safe nor agreeable. At length, on the
8th,

8th, we were enabled to set sail with a stiff breeze, which raised a tremendous swell. The waves broke with violence against the feeble barrier which had been erected on the vessel's gunnel, and there was every reason to fear, that, by softening the mud by which it was supported, it would very soon be destroyed. At the moment of our departure, we saw a village on fire; it was called *Koum el Arab*. This conflagration was the effect of a war between the Arabs, in which they displayed neither courage nor generosity, and which was carried on with every mark of treacherous and cruel revenge.

Our vessel standing in need of some repairs, we stopped at *Aboutigé*. This was precisely what I had foreseen. The structure of mud raised upon the gunnel had yielded to the impetuosity of the waves; the mud, entirely moistened, left, in several places, a free passage to the water; layers of the fascines had fallen overboard; and had we continued failing on much longer, the waves would have come right into the *masch*, and sent it to the bottom. The sailors began to reconstruct this unstable barrier; but as such an operation required time, I availed myself of an opportunity that occurred, and proceeded to *Siout* by land.

A Turk, who was an officer in the household of a Bey, having been sent to collect his imposts in the country, and being obliged to return without having accomplished the object of his mission, at this period of general insurrection, offered to escort me to *Siout*. He was to set off the day after our arrival at *Aboutigé*; and not to keep him waiting, I passed the night in a caravansary. I had scarcely lain down when I heard the report of several muskets, fired hastily within the very walls of the building. Every body ran out; for my part, I remained perfectly quiet, and I was informed that the alarm had been occasioned by some banditti who were attempting to break into the house.

I had spent part of the day in a coffee-house at *Aboutigé* with this Turk, and two *Serrachs* of Cairo, who, unlike people of this sort, were

were well-behaved, and of an affable disposition. According to custom, we were entertained by poets and dancing-girls, who were at the same time devoted to the worship of Venus. They form a kind of corporation, under the superintendance of an officer of the police, to whom each of them is obliged every Friday to pay ten medines. This man, whose title, in Arabic, answers to that of *Commander of the Prostitutes*, exercises an absolute authority over these women, and protects or punishes them according to circumstances. Although those I saw at *Aboutigé* were by no means ugly, they inspired disgust, owing to the diseases which had ravaged their charms, and the traces of which were visible even in some of their faces.

Between *Aboutigé* and *Siout* is a canal, which the Nile was already filling with its waters. We were on horseback, and our guides had imagined that we might cross it nearer the chain of mountains, where they supposed that the water would not be so deep. But it proving impossible to ford the canal, we were obliged to return the way we went, and keep along its banks till we came to the side of the river. There we found a small boat, built of old pieces of wood joined together with mud, in which we had considerable difficulty to make our horses embark. At length we arrived at *Siout* in the middle of the day.

During the journey, the Turk, my travelling companion, stopped from time to time, and made a servant pick up some pieces of earth, which he immediately ate. I asked him what was his fancy for so singular a repast. He replied, that an insatiable appetite had rendered it necessary to him, and that nothing could prevent him from gratifying his inclination. This man was near sixty years old. Though he was very lusty, his complexion was extremely fallow; he was feeble and languid, and complained of violent pains in his stomach. Born at Constantinople, and having spent part of his life in Turkey, he had not felt this propensity for eating earth till after a pretty long residence in Egypt. I have since been informed that several persons,

in

in that country, were attacked by this malady, which appears to be peculiar to Africa. It is well known that the negroes brought into the West India colonies, sometimes perished from the consequences of this inordinate appetite, after having dragged on a lingering existence, tormented by useless chastisement, and barbarous precautions which they found means to elude.

From *Siout*, where I left the earth-eater, I proceeded, on the evening of the 11th, to *Manfelout*. The next day, the *masch* I had left at *Aboutigé* arrived; my companions and my property were still on board; but we were not sorry to quit a vessel in which it was both dangerous and disagreeable to continue our voyage.

CHAPTER LIII.

TURKISH AGA.—EGYPTIAN PHYSICIANS.—ARMY OF CAIRO.—MUSSULMAN PRIESTS.—LENTIL BREAD.—LIZARDS.—BOAT.—DRAGON-FLIES.—GNATS AND TIPULÆ.—WINDS.—EGYPTIAN SAILORS.—MOUNTAINS.—TROUBLESOME ADVENTURE, AND THE MANNER IN WHICH THE AUTHOR SUCCEEDED IN EXTRICATING HIMSELF.—CHAIN OF MOUNTAINS, AND OBSERVATIONS RESPECTING THEM.—LIME QUARRY.—PELICAN.—PYRAMIDS.—BIRDS.—DEÏR ETTIN.

WHILE I was waiting at *Manfelout* until a less incommodious boat than that we had quitted should put in there, I took a small house, the rent of which was not higher than the one I occupied at *Siout*. I was not long settled in it before I was involved in a disagreeable and troublesome business, which I could not possibly avoid. A Turkish Aga, the representative of the empty authority of the Pasha of Cairo, resided at *Manfelout*. Being afflicted with a lingering disorder, he wished to employ me as his physician. He was, however, in no need of one, for I frequently found several at his house, whom he sent for from all quarters, and whose medicines he had the perseverance to take one after another, and not unfrequently at the same time.

One of these physicians made him wear in his turban the skin of a snake, a very famous preservative and specific in Egypt against all diseases of the head. Another prescribed to his patient to go out on foot, and walk into the country until he should meet with a bit of any sort of rag, which he was to trail along with his naked foot till he got back to his house, where he was to burn it along with three sticks and a little alum, in order that he might inhale the smoke. A third had promised the Aga to cure him in three days of a sto-

machic complaint, from which he suffered very much. His remedy consisted in rubbing and strongly compressing the stomach, and afterwards binding it up very tight with bandages. I was witness to the resignation of the patient in undergoing this fatiguing operation; but the physician very prudently decamped before the expiration of the three days which he had required to effect the cure.

In other respects this too credulous Aga was very serviceable to me. During my stay at *Manfelout*, the army of Murad, commanded by a Bey of his household, entered that place, bringing in its train the most unbridled licentiousness. In the midst of hordes of superstitious and undisciplined barbarians, a *Frank* ran the greatest risk. By one of those abuses of power which is practised by civilized nations, one of those tyrannical acts too frequent among men in a state of warfare, that is, in a state of revolt against nature and the principles of society, I was obliged to make room for a troop of Mamalûks, who took possession of my habitation. *Omar Aga*, that was the name of my patient, as soon as he was informed of my disagreeable situation, caused my property to be conveyed to his house, where he very earnestly pressed me to take up my residence. This Turk was really a good sort of man, but superstitious to an excess. He was not contented with consulting all the quacks in Egypt, but he had all day long by his side priests reading chapters of the Koran, and repeating prayers. I was often tempted to laugh when I saw the astonishment these stupid preachers of the Koran expressed on observing my motions. An European, a *Frank*, was, in their eyes, a curious being, and one that from his infidelity and gracelessness must be something extraordinary. I was invariably the object of their attention and remarks. All my proceedings, all my movements, appeared to them extremely singular; and they could not conceive how I possibly could act in the same manner as a true believer. "See," said they to each other, "how he walks, how he moves his hands, how he eats, &c. &c. what a comical fellow!"

In the course of a few days, the oppressive army of Cairo left *Manfelout*. I saw it embark on the Nile in a state of disorder not easy to be described. The Bey in command was also ordered, in his progress, to reduce to submission the Arabs and *fellabs*, who had revolted and refused to pay the imposts. The fury of this intestine war, in depopulating the plains, had diminished the sources of abundance; so that provisions were not now to be had at their usual moderate price. The lower class of people were obliged to eat bread made of lentils mixed with a little barley: it is called *bettau*. Its colour is of a golden yellow, and it is not bad, but rather heavy. Towards the cataracts of the Nile there is scarce any other bread in use, corn being in that southernmost part of Egypt very scarce, while lower down it is the only food of the poor.

A multiplicity of small gray lizards * delighted in sharing the habitations of men. They were now to be seen in greater numbers than at any other time of the year upon the walls, and even in the houses. This species is common all over Egypt, where it is called *bourse*. Its cry, which it repeats frequently, is pretty similar to the noise made by suddenly detaching the tongue from the palate. This animal is held sacred among the Turks and Egyptians, a sort of respect which undoubtedly originates from the exercise of hospitality generally adopted in the East. They are unwilling to disturb gentle and harmless animals which approach man with confidence, and seem to reside with him only to free his dwelling from a multitude of insects with which he is tormented, in a country where the excessive heat renders them more numerous and troublesome than elsewhere.

Through the attention of *Omar Aga* I was soon enabled to continue my voyage. I have already mentioned, that in ascending the Nile I saw at *Manfelout* a sort of corvette, which could be navigated only

* *Lézard gris*, Lacepède, Hist. Nat. des Quadrup. ovipares.—*Lacerta agilis*, L.

during the rise of the river. The waters had now attained a sufficient height; her lading had just been completed, and she was on the point of sailing for Cairo. This large vessel, called *galioun* (ship), on account of her size, and the ports with which she was pierced, for the purpose of carrying guns, was able to contain a considerable cargo for navigating on a river; she had on board two thousand five hundred sacks of corn, or the weight of near two hundred and fifty tons, besides a quantity of bales shipped by different people, a hundred men at least, and a number of cattle. Aft, were built three handsome cabins, one of which was larger than the great cabin of the *Atalante* frigate. The aftermost, which was the most agreeable, was appropriated to me by order of the Aga.

I embarked on board this vessel in the evening of the 24th of August. Swarms of dragon-flies *, of a purple colour, were flying about the banks of the river, while clouds of gnats and tipulæ tormented us in the evening from their numbers and the sharpness of their sting.

During the whole night there was a fresh and cold breeze from the northward. I have somewhere read, that no wind was ever felt upon the Nile: this is an egregious error; for upon this river there frequently prevail very violent winds, which often increase to storms and hurricanes extremely dangerous to navigation.

On the 25th, at daybreak, we got under way, but soon brought up again; for we stopped four hundred yards below *Manfelout*, in order to take on board a number of buffaloes. I soon perceived the awkwardness of the crew in working the vessel. We ran aground not far from the river-side, and we were obliged to work hard the rest of the day, and all the night, in getting the vessel afloat; after this we dropped down the river a little below the place where we had run aground, in order to take in the buffaloes. Here we remained

* *Libellula*, L.

another day and night ; but during the night, our ignorant and improvident sailors having neglected the necessary precautions in securing the vessel, the wind, which was very high, broke all the moorings, and she drifted at the mercy of the current. The danger was imminent ; we were near the mountain of *Aboufeda*, a chain of rocks close to the water-side, against which the current sets with great rapidity. The unskilfulness of our sailors could not but make us uneasy ; and, in fact, it was not without considerable difficulty and exertion that we were able to regain the shore from which we had been blown off.

At length, after having lost several days, we set sail in the morning of the 27th. As the vessel drew a great deal of water, we passed very near the chain of rocks of *Aboufeda*, in order to keep in the depth of the stream ; but the river being there narrower runs with great rapidity, and boats or vessels should take care not to get into the eddy of the current ; for should they unfortunately strike against the rocks, which are more than perpendicular, being excavated at their base, it would be impossible to avoid destruction. On the prominences of these rocks were perched some wild geese. Besides the catacombs of which I have spoken, I remarked, at the extremity of the mountain of *Aboufeda*, the ruins of buildings cut in the rock, and which I had not observed when I formerly passed.

Among the persons that the *reis* had taken on board were four blackguards, who had deserted from the army. Delighted at having escaped the fatigues of war, their insolence knew no bounds. Having learned that we were Europeans, they more particularly directed against us their insults and outrage. I was determined to have them punished at the first town off which we should stop ; but having reached *Mellavoui* in the night, I was obliged to submit with patience. The four vagabonds continued to rail at us all the next day ; they carried their audacity so far as to strike two of my companions, who, on their part, were not slow in returning the blows. A battle
enfued,

ensued, and the noise reaching me, I ran up with my sabre in my hand, and with the flat of it applied several strokes to the shoulders of the aggressors. They immediately desisted, but it was an universal cry in the boat, "An *infidel* strike a *Mussulman*!" This was an unpardonable crime, which was to draw immediate death upon my guilty head; and the crew talked of throwing me into the river. The *reis*, instead of appeasing the tumult, was as fanatical as the rest, and the loudest in his vociferations. I retired with my companions to the cabin which we occupied, where we barricaded ourselves in the best manner we could, in expectation of being attacked. But the fire-arms, with which we were well provided, appeared to our adversaries sufficiently formidable to keep them at bay, and they satisfied themselves with murmuring and concerting revenge.

Through the lattice-windows of the cabin I perceived, at *Sbeick Abadé*, the ruins of *Antinoopolis*, and upon the same east bank *Benibaffan*, a village at the foot of a perpendicular rocky mountain, in which the ancients had dug sepulchral chambers. Lower down, a forest of palm-trees formed an agreeable contrast to the rugged aspect of the rocks bordering that side of the Nile. The village of *Savouadi*, where are to be seen some ruins of ancient edifices, came next in view. The rock has been here cut and excavated in several places: the apertures of a great number of catacombs successively appear on the side of the mountain, and near them I could distinguish hieroglyphics and symbolical figures.

The vessel having put into *Miniet*, the *reis* immediately landed with a score of passengers, and ran to the *kiaschef* to complain that I had had the assurance to strike a *Mussulman*. These malicious people took care to relate and misrepresent the circumstance to every person they met. The populace of *Miniet* collected; groups of barbarous fanatics called for the head of the *dog* who had insulted a favourite of Mahomet. I had dispatched my two Egyptian domestics after the *reis*, that they might observe what passed. They returned

returned to inform me of the ferment that the accusation of the *reis* produced among the people. They had entered the court of the *kiaschef's* house, where a clamorous mob were calling for vengeance; and had heard that it was intended I should be punished with the bastinado on the soles of the feet. According to their account, I had not a moment to lose: they said I must immediately conceal myself, or make my escape. Not being disposed to adopt either of these plans, I took a step altogether contrary. I resolved to face the danger; and, in order to avert it, to present myself openly. I immediately quitted the bark with one of my people, and my dress prevented me from being recognised. We passed through several streets; every where we heard conversations respecting a *Frank* who had beaten a Muffulman. Having reached the house of the *kiaschef*, I pushed through the crowd, who little suspected that the person about whom they were talking was in the midst of them. At length I got close to the *kiaschef*, who was surrounded by a great number of people. The *reis* and my other accusers were the nearest to him, and they soon pointed me out to the commandant. "It is thou, then," said the *kiaschef* to me in the most angry voice, "who hast dared to strike a faithful Muffulman!"—"Pay no attention," answered I, in a firm tone, "to the silly clamours of these ignorant *fellabs*, to which, for the honour of a valiant Mamalûk, thou hast already listened too long. Thou art the slave of Murad Bey; thou knowest that I am his friend; I have matters of the utmost importance to communicate to thee from him, and to which I beg thou wilt attend." I immediately approached him, and pretending to whisper, I slipped into his hand a few sequins, which I held in mine for that purpose.

The *kiaschef*, who had raised himself a little from his cushion to listen to me, again resumed his seat, and darted at the *reis* the most menacing looks. "Knowest thou," said he, in a feigned, or at least a purchased rage, "the consequence of a *Frank*?" He then proceeded with a long absurd dissertation on the virtues and power of the

the *Franks*, respecting whom he was perfectly ignorant. The *reis* attempted to reply, but the *kiaschef* rose up and gave him a box on the ear, and afterwards ordered him to be caned. In an instant the ignorant mob, stupidly fitted for despotism, after having looked upon me as an atrocious criminal, dispersed, praising the justice of the *kiaschef*, and extolling the good qualities of the *Franks*.

Corruption among men in power, an irrefragable testimony of depravity of manners, and a certain preface of the fall of empires, and the dissolution of the ties of society, was among the despots of Egypt considered as a received usage and custom. It was there a maxim, that money could surmount every difficulty*. No great sacrifices were there necessary to attain the desired object. It is only in those countries in which virtue and honour are in every mouth; and where, in fact, these qualities are very rare, that corruption is an article of traffic, the price of which few can afford; but it may be had upon moderate terms among a people where honour not being a word in common use, it is not necessary to distribute gold for the purchase of silence. I had just obtained a signal act of justice, but which, according to the manners of the Egyptians, and particularly under the circumstances in which it was dispensed, might be considered as injustice. In a moment the violent rage of the people had been appeased, and its effects had recoiled upon those who had provoked it; and yet all this cost me only seven or eight sequins.

Notwithstanding the protection the *kiaschef* had publicly afforded me, I thought it would be imprudent to put myself again in the power of the rabble on board the vessel. The four deserters, who had excited the disturbance, were, it is true, no longer there, the *kiaschef* having had them apprehended; but there still remained the *reis*, and several other persons devoted to him, who might assist him in revenging the well-merited correction he had just received. I

* *Pretio tutum iter et patens.*

therefore resolved to quit so infamous a crew, and to wait for another opportunity. The *kiaschef*, to whom I communicated my intention, opposed my carrying it into execution, and insisted that I should not put myself to any inconvenience, swearing by the *Prophet* that I should experience nothing unpleasant. Two officers of his household were ordered to reconduct me to the vessel. As I walked along in order to reach the aftermost cabin, the *reis* and Egyptian passengers kept a profound silence; but it was easy to see that it was a silence occasioned by fear and rage. The two Mamalûks passed the night with me, and, according to the orders they had received, signified to the *reis*, that he was to pay me the respect due to a person protected by Murad Bey, and that his life should be answerable for my uninterrupted safety, as well to the Bey as to the *kiaschef*. At the same time, they, in the name of the latter, gave orders to some Mamalûk officers embarked in another vessel, which was going to sail in company with ours, to take care that I received no insult. It was agreed, that, in case of any improper conduct of the *reis*, or any other person, I should display my shawl at one of the stern-windows, as a signal for them to come to my assistance. Having taken these precautions, we quitted the shore of *Miniet*, and I had no occasion, during the remainder of the voyage, to have recourse to these Mamalûks. Except a few murmurs, which gave me little concern, my tranquillity was in no respect disturbed, and I could peaceably enjoy the satisfaction of having so successfully extricated myself from an adventure which might have been attended with the most serious consequences, and of having escaped a punishment which it appeared almost impossible for me to avoid.

At some distance below *Miniet*, the chain of mountains to the eastward of the Nile projects into the river in towering and perpendicular masses of rock, and confining the waters, renders the current very narrow and rapid. This is the *Mountain of Birds*, of which

I have already spoken *. On the brow of one of the rocky piles of which it is formed, the Copts have erected a monastery, little calculated to soften its rugged and wild aspect.

A wide fissure separates this chain of rocks from another, called *Dsjobel Keranat* (mountain of piles), because the stony masses there appear piled one upon another.

On the evening of the 30th, we stopped near a spot covered with date-trees. This natural grove would have been considered agreeable in any part of the world; but in the vicinity of arid mountains, fatiguing to the sight, and frightful to the imagination, it appeared truly delightful. As soon as we had dropped anchor, the Mamelûks on board the vessels in company came to inquire if I had any cause of complaint, and insisted that the *reis* should make me an apology for the insolent language in which he had again indulged. I received his excuses with disdain; but I was not sorry to see, that after this man had endeavoured to do me so serious an injury, he was humbled in my presence.

Next morning we proceeded on our voyage; but towards noon, the north wind became so boisterous, and raised such a swell in the river, that the two vessels were obliged to seek shelter under an island, called *Hadsjar Salamé*. I had not before seen waves so high in the Nile: breaking very short, they were dangerous even for small decked vessels. Boats had no other resource, when they happened to run into these rough parts of the river, than to put before the wind, and endeavour to keep in that situation, which, however, did not always prevent them from being swamped.

Continuing our voyage down the Nile, on the 31st we again sailed along a chain of high rocks, which were washed by the waters for a considerable distance, and which seemed to have experienced

* See page 514.

some convulsion of nature. On their brow stands a chapel, which indicates that on this spot is buried a Mussulman saint, much revered, under the name of *sheick Embarek*. All the mountains to the eastward of the Nile are much loftier than those to the westward; they also approach nearer the river, and often form its bank, while, on the west, the mountains are at a greater distance, and are frequently so remote that they can scarcely be perceived from the water. The former, that is, those washed by the Nile, are generally prominent at the top, while their middle and base are indented and furrowed longitudinally on all that side which faces the river, even towards their summit, as if the waters had run to that height against their declivity, and had there left the successive marks of the decrease of the depth of the stream. Another general observation which my voyages on the Nile enabled me to make, is, that while these mountains, or rather masses of rocks, on the east, contract the course of the Nile, the low lands, or rather sands of the opposite shore, advance proportionally in an angular direction, and leave only a very narrow channel much dreaded by navigators.

The Nile was now beginning to inundate the plains with its fertilizing waters. The canals were gradually filling. This part of Egypt is, in this season, the most beautiful country in the universe, and where the eye embraces the most picturesque situations, and the most striking contrasts. To the west, the plains afford an abundance which ages of successive culture have not been able to exhaust. Villages standing upon eminences surrounded with water, seem, with the trees encircling them, so many verdant isles floating upon the surface of a tranquil lake. To the east, arid mountains, masses of rocks piled upon each other, and devoted to eternal sterility, would have presented a disgusting uniformity, had not some of their fissures afforded a view of hamlets scattered here and there, and spots of ground covered with several sorts of plants, particularly sugar-

canes, the green and agreeable colour of which was highly gratifying to the eye*.

We passed by *Feshné*, a town on the west bank, which gives its name (*Dsjebel Feshné*, mountain of *Feshné*) to a mountain, not so high, but longer than those of which I have been speaking. It also renders the navigation of the river more dangerous in this part, because, having experienced a shock of an earthquake, several masses of rock have been detached from it, and have fallen into the river.

On the 1st of September we were detained the whole day off *Bebé* by a dead calm, and we left it on the 2d. The chain of the *Feshné* mountains, which had diminished to hillocks of sand, again make their appearance a little below *Bebé*, and form a very high and round promontory, which contracts the course of the river. This place is called the mountain of *Abounour*, from the name of a saint, whose tomb is seen on the flat part of its summit. We made no stop at *Benisouef*. Here the Nile extends to a great distance, and forms a large sheet of water, upon the surface of which habitations and spots of cultivated ground appear to be floating.

Opposite to *Bousch*, the chain of mountains to the east rounds

* The following lines, from a highly poetical fragment, by our countryman Gray, are so beautifully descriptive of the face of the country in Egypt during the inundation of the Nile, that the translator thinks the reader cannot but be gratified by their insertion :

What wonder in the sultry climes, that spread
Where Nile, redundant o'er his summer bed,
From his broad bosom life and verdure flings,
And broods o'er Egypt with his wat'ry wings,
If, with advent'rous oar and ready sail,
The dusky people drive before the gale,
Or on frail floats to neighbouring cities ride,
That rise and glitter o'er the ambient tide ?

* * * * *

off into a projecting point, and becomes more elevated than the adjacent parts of the same chain. This point is in a manner bleached, particularly in the places exposed to the current of the water, where its surface is of a shining white. It is called *Dsjebel Guypfê* (mountain of lime). In fact, there is here extracted a quantity of lime, which is conveyed to Cairo in long barges of a good construction, and carrying only one square sail.

Towards night we anchored off a village called *Meimoum*, which is built at some distance from the bank of the river. I there saw pelicans skimming the surface of the water; and I remarked that the flight of that bird is unsteady, that is, it flaps its wings eight or ten times in succession, then poises itself in the air, and again flaps its wings, continuing this alternate movement during the course of its flight.

Opposite to *Meimoum*, on the east bank, is an old Coptic convent, and, lower down, a rocky point, known by the name of *Dsjebel Nauti* (sailors' mountain), because there is there buried an Egyptian sailor who was canonized by his fellow-mariners.

Riba was the last place at which we stopped before our arrival at Cairo. To the westward, the inundation extended as far as the foot of the immense pyramid which is to be seen some leagues from *Riba*. As well as I could form an opinion at so great a distance, it is built upon a hill which is also of a pyramidical form. The summit of this pyramid appears as if partly fallen down. Beside it stands a small village.

Aquatic birds seemed less common than during the season when the Nile is confined within its bed; but if they do not appear so frequently upon the river, it is, doubtless, because the plains being inundated, they spread over a greater space. Birds of prey are to be seen hovering in great numbers above the lofty mountains, which afford them peaceful retreats, where they build their nests in the holes of the rocks.

On the 4th, the day had scarcely begun to dawn, when the eagerness of the crew to reach Cairo induced them to set the two immense sails of our vessel. We had cast anchor during the night, half a league from Old Cairo, opposite to a Coptic convent, called *Dejr Ettin* (monastery of figs). At this place the boats which come down from the Saïd, land their passengers and cattle, that they may appear in the harbours of Cairo with nothing but the cargo stowed in their hold.

CHAPTER LIV.

CURSORY REFLECTIONS UPON THE EXPEDITION OF THE FRENCH TO EGYPT.—VOYAGE FROM CAIRO TO ROSSETTA.—WATERING-MACHINES.—LOSS OF SEVERAL ANIMALS.—ATTACK MADE ON THE CONSUL OF ROSSETTA BY A PARTY OF BEDOUINS.—BIRDS OF PASSAGE.—HEDGE-HOG.—FROGS.—REEDS.—MASTIC.—RAMADAN.—DEPARTURE FROM ALEXANDRIA.

HAVING spent upwards of five months in travelling over Upper Egypt, that is to say, over an extent in latitude of about a hundred and eighty leagues, watered by the Nile above Cairo, and terminating at the cataracts or at the tropic, and having frequently resided in the principal parts of that country, I have been enabled to obtain sufficient knowledge of it to express my opinion on the expedition of the French. There are so many people who speak on this subject, without being acquainted either with the nature of the soil or climate of Egypt, or with the manners of its inhabitants; there are so many encomiasts, as insipid as they are ignorant; so many perfidious detractors; that, perhaps, some degree of interest will be excited by the candid and free language of an observer, jealous of the glory and power of his country, to whom the adulation of the slave, and the gloomy ill-humour of the cynic, are equally unknown, and who cannot be denied the privilege, if not of being attended to or consulted, at least of speaking with some advantage upon a subject of which he has taken no small pains to acquire the best information.

It has been seen in the course of this work, that I considered the project of replacing our distant, and, perhaps, insecure colonies by another colony, the proximity of which to the mother-country, the almost miraculous fecundity of its soil, the facility of its culture, its singular situation, which makes it the emporium of the commerce of
the

the richest nations, its vicinity to countries the most fruitful in valuable productions; lastly, the ease and dispatch with which communications might be maintained between France and Egypt, render that colony of far higher importance; all these considerations induced me to regard this project as a happy conception, a sublime idea, and its execution as one of those rare acts which render nations illustrious, and which bear the internal and striking stamp of immortality.

In fact, the possession of Egypt would ensure to an industrious and enlightened nation the commerce of the Levant and of Barbary, as well as that of the opulent country of Yemen. The Indian seas carrying their waters through a long gulf into its sands, afford the greatest facility to navigation and commerce, the sources of inappreciable wealth, especially when the canal of communication between the Nile and the Arabian Gulf, one of the most considerable and most useful works of the ancient kings of Egypt, shall have been discovered and again perfected. The river itself, then better known in its course, will be disencumbered from the obstacles which now obstruct its navigation, and will, in security, and at a moderate expense, convey the gold and other productions which nature has placed under the scorching climate of the interior of Africa; while the sun-burnt Moor, the indefatigable broker of these fiery regions, will forsake the route of the coasts of Africa, and conduct his caravans into Egypt, as soon as he is certain of there finding safety and protection, as well as an abundance of the articles which constitute his returns. Connexions founded upon trade and interest, but unfettered by all ambition of religious conquest, the pious mania of injudicious missionaries, and which has excluded the Europeans from an interesting and immense country, will be established with the Abyssinians, whose territories are watered by the same river. With new nations, new riches will be brought to light; and in gradually and successively extending these communications, a knowledge will be acquired of a part of the globe, into the bosom of which neither the heroes of antiquity,

tiquity, nor the boldest adventurers of modern times, have hitherto been able to penetrate.

In speaking of discoveries, I have indicated the only kind of conquest which philosophy sanctions, and which occasions neither the spilling of blood nor the shedding of tears; that which alone affords a pure and real enjoyment, and which an enlightened people places in the highest rank. Egypt will likewise become the seat of the arts and sciences; and the riches resulting from this source will have a wider and more generous destination, since their diffusion will extend to every nation in the world.

Agriculture will assume a new aspect; and, being better understood, will add the treasures of plenty to an accumulation of wealth already so considerable. I have enumerated the principal productions of Egypt; I have mentioned those, the culture of which might be attempted with success, and which, when concentrated, will eclipse the most valuable commodities our most wealthy colony affords. The limits of fertility will be enlarged, at least, as far as the chains of mountains which seem to mark its boundaries on both sides of the Nile; and perhaps industry, guided by science, will even discover the means of establishing vegetation upon the sandy and desert plains, which, behind these mountains, stretch to the east and to the west.

But what would not fail to happen in favourable circumstances, is retarded by those which have attended the French expedition to Egypt. War, it is universally admitted, is the most unpropitious period for the establishment of colonies. Like a consuming conflagration, it burns, it destroys every thing that it approaches; commerce, agriculture, all the sources of public prosperity, are dried up or annihilated; the bright flame of the torch with which the genius of the arts and sciences strives to enlighten mankind, grows dim at the aspect of public calamities, and is at length extinguished by the tears which misfortune every where causes to flow. The destructive breath of ambitious passions stifles the voice of philosophy; every kind of good vanishes, while every kind of evil accumulates. In-

stead of fostering waters, the earth is inundated with blood, producing a fertility at which nature revolts. Ravage succeeds to culture, and scarcity takes the place of abundance. All sorts of misery occupy the ensanguined stage of the theatre which infuriate war erects; and the man of sensibility, his soul overwhelmed with grief, and his heart worn out with agony, indignantly beholds the atrocious beings who, in the course of an ambitious career, cruelly sport with the happiness and the lives of mankind. The ferociousness of such men has no counterpart in nature; tigers even do not gorge themselves with the blood of tigers*.

Without peace, no real happiness can exist; without peace, no society can prosper. If these incontestable truths be applied to the expedition to Egypt, it will be easy to perceive that the new colony, desolated by the double scourge of intestine commotions and external war, cannot acquire a flourishing condition. The various tribes by whom it is inhabited, and whom it would, perhaps, have been better policy to dispose for a revolution, than to attack in the field, animated by an inordinate fanaticism, founded upon the grossest ignorance, and excited, besides, by the enemies of France and of general tranquillity, will abandon the cultivation of the soil, or destroy the crops it may have produced. The fields are overrun by warriors, and covered with all the implements used in battle; lands, which a succession of ages had seen decorated with the richest harvests, are astonished at being shaded by encampments. The labours which the art of war requires cannot be executed but to the detriment of that of agriculture. Several spots on the surface of the earth thus change both their aspect and nature; and it will easily be conceived how prejudicial these partial injuries are in a country where fertility was, in a manner, merely factitious, and where it cannot subsist without the succours which the people of ancient Egypt multiplied with so much ingenuity and skill.

* ————*parcit*

Cognatis maculis similis ferra. JUVENAL.

The devastation which the wants of a large army produce, and military operations, in general, are so many wounds inflicted on agriculture. The trees, which are so valuable in Egypt, where every sort of wood is very scarce, will fall beneath the axe of necessity or of malevolence; plantations, of many years standing, which afforded a necessary shelter against the heat of the climate, will be destroyed; and ever-verdant groves, loaded with agreeable and cooling fruits, will share a similar fate. So that at the moment when peace shall be restored, the ravages of war and of barbarism should be repaired, before any amelioration is attempted; an immense task, but not beyond the courage and activity of the French.

An excessive heat, particularly in the southern part of Egypt; the hurricanes from the south, rolling along clouds of fiery dust, will, perhaps, appear inconveniencies sufficiently serious to deter individuals from indulging an inclination to inhabit the new colony. But the coolness of the night relieves the burning temperature of the day; and the southerly gales of wind, which are certainly not unattended with danger, very rarely occur. There is no ancient colony that does not present a more discouraging aspect; but there is none that combines such numerous advantages. The climate is far from being unhealthy. With a little precaution, a person might there hope to attain a great age, and be exempt from every complaint, did not the disorders of the eyes, in a great measure, appear unavoidable in that country.

In Lower Egypt, the temperature of the air is considerably milder. Rains, waters distributed in more abundance, there maintain greater coolness over immense humid plains, which are neither confined nor parched up by the burning heat reflected from arid mountains. The manners of the inhabitants, like the climate, are also more mild, and the traveller was there exposed to much less danger.

What satisfaction did I not feel at finding myself again in this country, in which commerce had induced a few Europeans to settle,

and which, in comparison with the Saïd, appeared in my eyes a tranquil abode ! Nevertheless, I did not revisit my countrymen at Cairo ; I had too strong a recollection of the tedium I had experienced in the narrow limits which, in that city, they were afraid to exceed. Besides, the country about Cairo was in the greatest confusion ; the Beys were encamping in the environs, and preparing to lead their forces against those who, from Upper Egypt, threatened them with an attack. I therefore hastened to cross the territory occupied by a horde of undisciplined combatants, and, by means of my disguise, passed through the middle of them without attracting their attention. Leaving Cairo on the right, I repaired to *Boulac*, where I was in hopes of finding a boat to carry me to Rossetta ; but all the boats were retained for the service of the army. However, I met with a *reis*, the same who had brought me from Rossetta : he had left his *kanja* at *Beiffous*, a village below *Boulac*, under the apprehension that it might be put in requisition. We went by land as far as *Schoubra*, another village between *Boulac* and *Beiffous*, and from thence proceeded in a skiff to join the other boat.

We left *Beiffous* on the 6th of September, at eight o'clock in the evening. The moon shone with unclouded brightness. It was a novelty to us to enjoy tranquillity, of which we had been deprived for several months. We were no longer tormented by those serious alarms which incessantly beset us during our travels in the Saïd. Not but that there were some pirates in these parts of the Nile ; yet, besides the smallness of their number, they were very timorous, and seldom ventured to attack boats in which they suspected there were any Europeans, whose fire-arms they dreaded. The masters of the boats, accustomed to the conveyance of merchandise destined for the commerce of Europe, were, in general, persons to be depended on ; and the waters of the river, which are not here confined by steep banks or rocky mountains, are never ruffled by the contention of a rapid current and a boisterous wind, but uninterruptedly glide slowly
along

along between two low and muddy shores, against which boats run no risk of being dashed to pieces.

The cultivators of this part of Egypt do not employ for the watering of their lands the same swinging levers as are seen above Cairo, where industry has made a greater progress. They make use of a sort of wheel, with a chain-pump, which being turned by one ox, raises the waters of the Nile, and distributes them over the neighbouring fields or gardens. But whether the construction of these hydraulic machines, though exceedingly simple, appeared too expensive to be undertaken by all the farmers, or whether they did not choose to adopt them, I observed, when a temporary irrigation only was necessary, another somewhat singular method was practised for the conveyance of the water to the cultivated grounds. Two men seated by the river-side, at a certain distance from one another, each hold the end of a rope, in the middle of which is fixed a *couffe*, or basket made of rushes; by a continual veering and hauling motion which they give to the rope the basket is filled; and at the extremity of the arch which they make it describe, it empties the water into the trench made for its reception and conveyance.

We had a quick passage from *Beissous* to *Rosetta*, and arrived there on the 7th, at six o'clock in the morning. I again found those persons who had shewn me so much friendship during my former residence in that town; but I did not find several living animals that I had left there at my departure. I was informed that they had all died a few days before my arrival, except one antelope, which seemed to have escaped only to afford a pretext for exacting from me the amount of the hire of the place where these animals had been confined; as it was necessary that they should have died but recently, in order that I should be charged for their subsistence.

Some time after my departure from *Rosetta*, the consul, whose civility to me was invariably the same, had been attacked, on his return from *Alexandria*, by a party of *Bedouins*, who, not contented

with plundering him, also personally ill-treated him, and, more than once, were going to put him to death. They kept him and his servant till the evening, lying upon the sand, and exposed to the greatest heat of the day. It was suspected that these Bedouins belonged to the tribe of *Huffein*, the man who had been my faithful conductor to the desert of Nitria, and who had defended me with so much bravery against the attacks of another tribe. The precaution which they took of blindfolding the consul's servant, who had accompanied me in that journey to the desert, was a presumption of some weight, and which coincides with what I have before said respecting the customs of this erratic and extraordinary people, whose virtues are blended with a disposition for robbery, and who, according to circumstances, alternately become plunderers or protectors.

This was the season of the arrival of those birds, which, on the approach of the frosty weather, forsake our icy countries, during a part of the year when nature is in a state of torpor bordering upon death, in order to seek a milder climate, and a more abundant subsistence. From the month of August, a great number of fig-peckers * are caught near the coasts of Egypt, and particularly in the environs of Alexandria. Those little birds continue to arrive for about three months, during which the Egyptians catch them in great numbers by rubbing bird-lime upon the trees and bushes whereon they alight. They are sold either alive or ready plucked. To strip them of their plumage, they are for a moment buried in the sand, the heat of which, by melting their fat, renders it easy to pluck their feathers, and prepares them for becoming a very delicate dish.

* *Becfigue*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 668, fig. 1.—*Motacilla ficedula*. Not that all those birds which were caught in such numbers on their arrival in Egypt, were all real fig-peckers; among them there were other little birds of different species, such as *fauvettes*, which are frequently confounded with fig-peckers.

I remarked,

I remarked, more particularly at Rossetta and at Alexandria, some other species of birds of passage, during the month of September, the period when the absence of these new visitors of a milder country transforms our naked forests into gloomy solitudes. The bird that fills our groves with its noisy whistling, as it embellishes them with its brilliant plumage, the loriot *, prefers perching on the mulberry-trees of the gardens in the environs of inhabited places; but his tuneful voice is not heard; he is silent in Egypt, and comes not there to warble his loves. Loriots are there eaten; they continue to arrive little more than a fortnight; and bee-eaters † are also here an article of food. These birds are called in Provence *sirènes*, and the Greeks give them the name of *melisò orgbi* (enemies to bees). But they are not considered as very good eating, any more than fly-catchers ‡, which are taken with a net or caught with bird-lime. Another bird still less delicate than those which I have just mentioned, and which is no less the victim of the voracity of man on its arrival on the coast of Egypt, is the woodchat, or rufous speckled shrike §, called by the Arabs *dagnouffe*, and by the Provençals *dar nagua*. These are caught in nets in pretty considerable numbers. They are sold alive, like all those birds which the law of Mahomet prohibits to be strangled, and which must not be used for food till after they have been bled. But, as these last-mentioned birds are very vicious, and nip the fingers violently, the bird-catchers take care to confine both parts of their bill with one of their feathers.

* Loriot, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 26.—*Oriolus galbula*, L.

† Guépier, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 938.—*Merope apiaster*, L.

‡ Gobe-mouche, première espèce, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 565, fig. 1.—*Muscicapa griseola*, L.—Ang. The spotted fly-catcher.

§ Pie grèche-rouffe, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. Nos. 9 et 31.—*Larus collurio*, L.

Rollers*, of the species called in Provence *blurets*; wood-peckers †, &c. &c. are likewise here to be found.

But there are no birds of passage which arrive in greater, and at the same time more unaccountable, numbers, than quails. They assemble together on the sandy shore of Egypt in very large flocks. It is difficult to imagine how a bird which being so heavy in its flight, cannot fly to any distance, and which in our fields we see alight almost as soon as it has taken wing, should venture to traverse a pretty great extent of sea. The islands scattered over the Mediterranean, and the vessels sailing along its surface, serve them, indeed, for places of rest and shelter, when the winds become boisterous, or contrary to the direction of their route. But these asylums, which the quails have not always sufficient strength to reach, and the distance of which is frequently fatal to them, likewise prove to them places of destruction. Too much exhausted to fly, they suffer themselves to be caught without difficulty upon inhospitable shores; they are also easily taken by hand upon the rigging of ships; and when excess of fatigue prevents them from rising to that height, they strike with violence against the vessel's hull, fall back, stunned by the shock, and disappear in the waves. Whatever may be the dangers of the long voyage to which these birds do not seem destined, whatever losses these bodies of feeble travellers may sustain in the course of the passage, there still arrives so great a multitude in the environs of Alexandria, that the number to be seen there is truly incredible. The Egyptian fowlers catch them in nets. During the first days of their arrival, such quantities are for sale in the

* *Rollier d'Europe*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois.—*Coriacias garrula*, L.—*Ang.* The garrulous roller.

† *Pic-vert*, Buffon, Hist. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. Nos. 371 et 879.—*Picus viridis*, L.—*Ang.* The green wood-pecker.

markets of Alexandria, that three and sometimes four were to be purchased for a medine, or about fifteen or sixteen deniers. The crews of merchant-ships lived upon them; and at the consul's office at Alexandria there were complaints exhibited by sailors against captains of vessels for giving them nothing to eat but quails.

In walking about the gardens of Rossetta, I was shewn a hedgehog, which in Arabic is called *confhefs* *. This quadruped is common in Lower Egypt, but it is not to be found in the Saïd. The pools of water in the environs were filled with thousands of frogs, which make a terrible noise. The reeds under which these animals conceal themselves at the bottom of the water, serve for making ropes for general use.

I found that the same idea prevailed at Rossetta as in the Saïd, respecting the property attributed to the smoke of mastic; but in Upper Egypt it was considered as absolutely mortal to the sick who inhaled it; whereas at Rossetta, it was reckoned only pernicious. Accordingly the sick, in order to avoid the danger of breathing it in a country where mastic is frequently burnt, take the precaution of holding continually under their nose an onion, the odour of which, if it be more wholesome than that of mastic, is undoubtedly far less agreeable. All the mastic that is consumed in Egypt comes from the island of *Scio*, in the Archipelago. The women are constantly chewing small pieces of it melted with wax; it is used in ragouts; and the vessels employed for cooling water are perfumed with it, as well as almost every household utensil.

The Ramadan, or fast of the Mussulmans, commenced this year on the 22d of September. The preceding evening I saw the ceremony of its opening at Rossetta. All the tradespeople assemble in companies, and march in procession through the town by the light of kindled chips of resinous wood contained in iron pots, carried upon

* *Erinaceus Europæus.*

the end of long sticks. The head of each of these corporations of tradesmen is mounted upon a fine horse, and clothed in an extraordinary dress. Several also wear masks. The populace greatly applauded this masquerade; but were particularly loud in their expressions of joy and approbation, when the chief nightman appeared disguised as an European. This fact may give a just idea of the degree of consideration we enjoy in their country:

During the month that the Ramadan lasts, eating and drinking are not only prohibited from sun-rise to sun-set, but chewing, or even smoking tobacco is as strictly forbidden. The working man, overcome by fatigue and heat, and suffering from thirst, is ready to faint from inanition. But the rigour of a long fast does not incommode the man of opulence; in every country he can evade the laws; while the poor man is oppressed by the execution of them in their fullest extent. If the Ramadan is a period of fasting very difficult to be endured by him who lives by the sweat of his brow, it is an interval of pleasure for the rich, who make of it both a lent and a carnival. No sooner is the sun set, than feasting, dancing, music, shows, and entertainments in the streets, succeed to the rigid abstinence of the day. Thus the idle and useless man passes the night in diversions, and sleep kindly intervenes to prevent him from perceiving the length of the day.

After having rested for some days at Rossetta, I repaired to Alexandria, where I resumed my native dress, to which I could not accustom myself for a considerable time. One of those vessels destined for the *caravane* *, or coasting trade of the seas of the Levant, was preparing to sail for Smyrna; and I availed myself of this opportunity of proceeding to Greece and Turkey. Except the person that was specially attached to me, I took leave of all my

* *Caravane* was the name given in the Mediterranean to the voyages which the knights of Malta were obliged to make, in order to attain the dignity of commander; but Sonnini here gives it a different definition. T.

companions, whose mission was to terminate with my travels in Egypt. The vessel on board which I took my passage, set sail from the new port of Alexandria, on the 17th of October 1778, and I soon lost sight of the flat and barren shores of a country where the prodigies of art seemed to vie with the wonders of nature.

A P P E N D I X.

HILARIA HUNTERIANA *.

“ Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well.” CHESTERFIELD.

“ Let them think seriously of the matter before they publish; who is hurrying them?”

HUNTER'S SONNINI.

“ A second Thomas, or at once,

“ To name them all, another Duns.” HUDIBRAS.

ANCIEN Officier et Ingénieur de la **E**NGINEER in the French Navy, and
Marine Française, et Membre de plusieurs Member of several scientific and literary
Sociétés Savantes et Littéraires. *Title-page.* Societies. *Title-page.*

A vulgar translator would have said, “ formerly an officer and engineer
“ in the French navy,” &c. The learned Doctor has here opened his career
of *improving* upon the original, by suppressing the circumstance of his au-
thor having been a naval officer under the old government of France; and
of his own authority conferring upon Sonnini the office of engineer in the
navy of the French republic!

* This selection, it will be readily perceived, contains but a very few of the numerous
beauties of the Rev. Dr. Henry Hunter's translation of Sonnini's Travels. To form a compre-
hensive idea of them, it will be necessary to compare the translation which flows from his poetical
pen with the original, or with my humble attempt to give the mere meaning of the French
author to the English reader.

It may be proper to caution the compilers of jest-books, and paragraph-makers of newspapers,
against inserting any of the following *bon mots* of the reverend wit in their respective publica-
tions, the property of every sentence of them being secured by law.

It may be proper to observe, that the office of engineer, which M. Sonnini actually held under the French monarchical government, was for the construction of buildings, docks, &c. belonging to arsenals.

Carte géographique. *Ib.*

A geographical chart. *Ib.*

This may be very elegant; but a mere English writer would be apt to call the delineation of a country mostly inland, and where the coasts form no part of the survey, simply a *map*.

Tout retard, toute négligence deviennent également repréhensibles. *Vol. i. p. 3.*

Neglect or delay become equally reprehensible. *Vol. i. p. 3**.

A person fettered with the trammels of grammar would have said *becomes*.

Il me fallut entrer dans ce qu'on l'appeloit alors le sanctuaire de la justice, et qui n'étoit, à vrai dire, que le labyrinthe de la chicane, dont les parois, hérissées de crocs aigus, se chargeoient de la dépouille de ceux qui avoient la témérité d'y pénétrer. *P. 5.*

I was obliged to find my way into what was then denominated the sanctuary of justice, but *which* proved to be, in reality, the labyrinth of chicane, the walls of *which*, bristled on all sides with sharp hooks, loaded themselves with the spoils of those who had the temerity to venture *in*. *P. 4 †.*

The beauties of this passage, and of others, which I shall hereafter leave without remark, will speak for themselves.

Des hommes, êtres malfaisans et dangereux. *P. 6.*

Men, beings *maleficent* and dangerous. *P. 6 ‡.*

I believe Dr. Hunter has the merit of adding the word "maleficent" to the English vocabulary.

La poste me transporta rapidement à Marseille. *P. 17.*

The post conveyed me *with its usual rapidity* to Marseilles. *P. 16 §.*

This might have been very well, had M. Sonnini been a letter, and the amplification of its *usual* rapidity been, in that case, pardonable; but a

* Page 2 of this translation.

† Page 3 of this translation.

‡ *Ib.*

§ Page 11 of this translation.

Translator, who did not absolutely depend upon a dictionary, would have said more simply, "post-horses conveyed me rapidly to Marseilles."

La chasse ne nous procura que quelques cailles. P. 27. The *chase* procured us only a few quails. P. 25*.

Our language is indebted to Dr. H. for this new sense of the word "chase."

The same improvement in language afterwards occurs in another place.

Un chasseur de Rosséte nous apporta un jour un panier, plein de ces oiseaux, qu'il avoit tués au fusil. P. 378. A *hunter* of Rosséta brought us one day a basketful of these birds, which he had killed with a gun. P. 338 †.

Nous vîmes plusieurs marfouins ou souffleurs. P. 28. We saw a great many porpoises or blowers. P. 17 ‡.

The designation *blower* is in ichthyology one of the new terms of the *Hunterian nomenclature*!

Elle donne du fer équivalent au meilleur fer de Suède par son nerf et sa douceur. P. 34. It produces iron equivalent to the best Swedish, as to toughness and ductility. P. 32 §.

The arts, no less than the sciences, are indebted to Dr. H. for improvements in terms; a blacksmith would have called this "malleability;" but the Doctor's universality of talent proves the justice of the observation contained in the eleventh page of the first volume of his invaluable translation: "A traveller (*or the translator of a traveller*) exposes himself to ridicule, "when he follows too closely the letter of the proverb *ne futor ultra crepidam*."

Comme si la gloire des armes pouvoit consister en des choses d'aussi peu de conséquence, propres seulement à remplir des têtes étroites. P. 40. As if the glory of arms could consist in such frivolous *emulation*, the only *furniture* of narrow minds. P. 36 ||.

* Page 17 of this translation.

‡ Page 18 of this translation.

|| Page 25 of this translation.

† Page 219 of this translation.

§ Page 22 of this translation.

Bridone n'est pas le seul voyageur de sa nation qui se soit plu à mal-parler de la nôtre; et aux yeux de l'homme impartial, cet esprit de jalousie et d'orgueil ne paroît pas moins ridicule que les petits traits de présomption de Madame Montagne (c'est le nom de l'aubergiste). Je voulus lui demander à dîner, afin d'avoir occasion de lui parler de Bridone, qui étoit venu à Palerme peu d'années avant nous. Elle favoit qu'il avoit écrit des longues plaisanteries sur son compte. *P. 44.*

Brydone is not the only traveller of his nation who has indulged himself in speaking slightly of ours; and in the eyes of every impartial person, that spirit of jealousy and pride must appear *not a whit* less ridiculous than the little traits of presumption of *Madame Montagne*, that is the *landlord's* name. *I ordered a dinner at his house*, in order to have an opportunity of talking with *him* about Brydone, who had visited Palermo a few years before. *My hostess* knew that he had published many pleasantries, of which she was *the butt*. *P. 40*.*

It is in passages like this that we see the transcendent imagery of the pen of the reverend Doctor, who can, without difficulty, transform woman into man, and shew a versatility of expression, which a Tyro like myself dare not attempt to imitate.

Dans le nombre des choses remarquables des environs de Palerme, on ne manque pas d'indiquer à la curiosité des étrangers, un couvent de capuchins. L'on montre, sous cette maison, un caveau, &c. *P. 51.*

Among the remarkable objects in the vicinity of Palermo pointed out to strangers, *they* fail not to *singularize* a convent of Capuchins. *You* are shewn under the *fabric* a vault, &c. *P. 43 †.*

I have, in the Preface, acknowledged my obligations to the classical Doctor, for putting an end to all the difficulties hitherto made by translators, of rendering properly in English the French *on*. The preceding passage is selected; to give one specimen of the reverend gentleman's superiority in this respect: in almost the same sentence he has been able to give this pronoun both in the second and the third person. But for beauties of this kind, which occur in every page, I must refer the reader to the translation itself.

* Page 27 of this translation.

† Page 31 of this translation.

Des goëlands fendent l'air de leur vol rapide. *P.* 55. *The goëlands cleave the air with a rapid flight. P.* 51*.

This adoption, which occurs in twenty places, of *goëlands* for *gulls*, must be highly gratifying to ornithologists. I would humbly recommend to the learned divine, in his next work; to make use of *chat, chien, cheval, &c.* instead of the vulgar nomenclature of *cat, dog, and horse*. Surely the Doctor could not suppress the word *gulls* for fear of bringing that word to the recollection of the purchasers of his translation.

Il feroit à désirer que l'on y fût également à l'abri des dangers auxquels exposent les sacrifices à Vénus, par la foule de ses prêtresses qui se rendent de toutes parts. Il y en a des toutes les nations; et leur affluence, qui forme épigramme avec l'un de vœux des chevaliers, étoit singulièrement pernicieuse, &c. *P.* 66.

It were to be wished, that an equal security were there provided against the dangers incurred in offering sacrifices to Venus, from the multitude of her priestesses who flock thither from all parts. They are *the refuse* of all nations, and their *concourse*, which formed an epigram with one of the vows of the knights, was singularly pernicious, &c. *P.* 59†.

Bravo, Doctor!!!

Ces catacombes paroissent avoir aussi servi de retraite, dans des tems moins reculés, aux habitans de Malte, lorsque leur île étoit en proie à des guerres qui l'on souvent tourmentée. L'on y remarque deux anciens moulins. *P.* 72.

These *catacombs* appear likewise to have served as a place of retreat, in times not very remote, to the inhabitants of Malta, when their island became a prey to the wars which have frequently *scurged it*. Two *ancient mills* are also pointed out to you. *P.* 63‡.

It is not easy to say whether the preceding passage is to be more admired for correctness of grammar or elegance of style. The rhetorical translator shews how much he is a master of those charms of rhythmical cadence, that give exquisite delight to readers of sensibility, and are the criterion of true taste in composition.

* Page 34 of this translation.

† Page 40 of this translation.

‡ Page 44 of this translation.

Coup-d'œil sur l'Ordre de Malte —
Idiome de l'Isle de Malte—Oiseaux Navi-
gateurs. P. 83, titre de Chap. VI.

*Glance at the Order of Malta—Idiom of
the Island of Malta—Sailing Birds.* P. 75,
title of Chapter VI. *

Les frères hospitaliers de Saint Jean de
Jérusalem. P. 85.

The *hospitable brotherhood* of St. John of
Jerusalem. P. 76 †.

This is certainly more elegant than the *hospitallers*; and the name *chevaliers*, used by the Doctor (p. 78), is much more dignified than the vulgar one of *knights* of Malta.

L'oïfiveté et ses cohortes corruptrices,
&c. P. 86.

Idleness and *the corruptive cohorts that
march in her train.* P. 77 ‡.

This is the true English idiom.

Les étincelles du courage de quelques
particuliers. P. 86.

The *sparks* of courage *occasionally struck*
from a few individuals. P. 78 §.

Striking indeed!

Des parages où le commerce a beaucoup
d'activité. P. 89.

Seas where commerce has much activity.
P. 80 ||.

Here we have another example of the true English idiom.

Et lorsque l'on considère que la plupart
de ces mêmes hommes, de retour dans leur
foyers, étoient destinés à exercer des em-
plois importants. P. 90.

And when it is considered that the
greatest part of these *same* men, on re-
turning to their *several focuses*, were destined
to the exercise of important employments.
P. 81 ¶.

I really have not been able to discover the meaning of these *same focuses* of the sublime translator. Had not the version issued from the pen of a reverend doctor of divinity, I should, in consequence of a passage in Trifram Shandy, have been inclined to suspect that something of an indecent allusion was meant.

* Page 50 of this translation.

‡ Ibid.

|| Page 53 of this translation.

† Page 51 of this translation.

§ Page 52 of this translation.

¶ Page 54 of this translation.

Cette île fait actuellement partie de la
république Française. P. 96.

That island *actually* constitutes a part of
the French republic. P. 87*.

In page 80 we also read of the Order of Malta's "*actual* hostilities." Of this translation of the French *actuel* and *actuellement* (vulgo, *present* and *at present*) the Doctor has not, as in many other cases, the merit of originality; he has been anticipated by a number of the classical and accurate newspaper translators.

Soit qu'ils pressentissent les orages qui nous ont affaillis le jour suivant, soit que, ne découvrant aucune terre, ils craignissent de se hasarder en haute mer, après quelques instans d'un vol incertain, ils rentrèrent par la même fenêtre d'où je les avoit lâchés. Des ce moment ils ne quittèrent plus la grande chambre, et si effrayés de quelque bruit, ils sortoient par une des fenêtres de la poupe, ou par un sabord, ils y revenoient bientôt par un autre côté. Quoique d'espèces différentes, ils vivoient entr'eux dans la meilleure intelligence. P. 97.

Whether they (*some small birds that had come on board the Atalante*) had a *presentiment* of the tempest which *attacked us* the day after; whether *that, discovering no land, they were afraid to venture themselves on a boundless sea*, after a few moments of uncertain flight, they *re-entered* by the same window from which I had let them go. From that *moment* they quitted not the great cabin; and if terrified by any *extraordinary* noise, they flew out *by one of the poop-windows, or by a port-hole*, they returned presently *some other way*. Though of different species they lived on the *best terms with each other*. P. 88 †.

Elles sont moins basses et coupées par plus d'inégalités: l'on y remarque quelques traces de culture, des palmiers et des habitations. Enfin, l'on s'assure que l'on est dans la direction d'Alexandrie, à la vue de la colonne de Pompée, et auparavant à celle de deux monticules qui sont derrière la ville actuelle, et dans l'enceinte de l'ancienne. Mais de quelque côté que l'on aborde ces côtes dangereuses l'on ne peut trop user de prévoyance, parceque toutes ces reconnoissances ne s'aperçoivent pas de fort loin, &c. P. 103.

It is not so low, and is intersected by more inequalities; some traces of cultivation are discernible, some date-trees and human habitations. *In a word, it is a sure sign that you are in the direction of Alexandria, when you get sight of Pompey's pillar, and, previous to that, of two rising grounds, which are behind the present city, and within the precincts of the old.* But from whatever quarter you approach these dangerous shores, it is impossible to employ too much circumspection, because *all these indications are not visible at any great distance, &c.* P. 94 †.

* Page 57 of this translation.

‡ Page 62 of this translation.

† Page 58 of this translation.

The two preceding passages, and a variety of others of the Hunterian translation of Sonnini, have, I understand, been introduced into some of the principal academies as exercises for the young masters and misses to turn into English.

Vers l'extrémité oriental du croissant formé par le port neuf, sont deux obélisques. *P.* 128.

Towards the eastern extremity of the crescent formed by the *new bridge* are two obelisks. *P.* 117*.

It is *new*, indeed, to translate *port*, bridge.

Le poids de la colonne est donc d'un million cent dix mille livres, poids de marc. *P.* 132.

The weight of the whole column, therefore, is one million one hundred and ten thousand pounds, eight ounces to the pound. *P.* 120 †.

If it was beneath the dignity of your style, Rev. Sir, to translate *poids de marc* by its usual term, *avoirdupoids*, surely you might have allowed it to be sixteen ounces to the pound! or did you mean to give the French republicans an idea that Pompey's pillar, or *column*, as you are pleased to term it, was only half its actual weight, the more readily to induce them to transport it to the *Place de la Révolution* at Paris?

Le nom de colonne de Pompée, sous lequel elle est généralement connue. *P.* 135.

The name of Pompey's *column*, by which it is generally designed. *P.* 128 ‡.

It is not generally *designed* by the name of Pompey's *column*; but, until Dr. Hunter's publication, was *universally known* under the name of Pompey's *pillar*. Here, however, as in many other common *designations*, the Doctor has made great improvements: as, *mummies-well* (vulgo, *mummy-pit*), vol. ii. p. 340; *ancient Cairo* (vulgo, *Old Cairo*), vol. iii. p. 17; *antique Egypt* (vulgo, *ancient Egypt*), vol. iii. p. 164; *wonders of the universe* (vulgo, *wonders of the world*), vol. i. p. 99, &c.

Des arbres et des arbrustes croissent le long des eaux. De légères dérivations de l'eau portent la fécondité dans les champs, où l'on sème de l'orge et où l'on cultive différentes espèces de légumes, particulièrement beaucoup d'artichauts. *P.* 146.

Trees and *shrubby* grow by the water's side. *Small ramifications of water* carry fecundity into the plains, in which *they sow* barley, and cultivate a variety of *leguminous plants*, particularly *artichokes* in abundance. *P.* 138 §.

* Page 78 of this translation.

† Page 80 of this translation.

‡ Page 82 of this translation.

§ Page 88 of this translation.

Besides the correct and elegant diction of this passage, the Doctor is to be congratulated on his improvement upon botany, by having added *artichokes* to the number of *leguminous plants*!

Les catacombes fervent souvent aussi de retraite aux chackals, tres nombreux dans cette partie de l'Egypte: ils ne marchent qu'en grandes troupes, et ils rôdent autour des habitations. Leurs cris font inquiétants. P. 154.

The catacombs likewise frequently serve as a retreat for the jackals, which *swarm* in this part of Egypt: they always *march in numerous squadrons*, and roam about the habitation of *man*. Their cries *occasion much disturbance*. P. 140*.

What improvement upon the original! and what genius displayed in introducing, in a short sentence, at once *swarms* and *squadrons* of *jackals*! We find also, in page 206 of vol. i. *swarms* of *göïlands*.

C'est un bâtiment carré dont les côtes enferment une grande cour autour de laquelle, et sous des arcades, font des magasins. P. 201.

It forms a square, *the sides of which enclose a large court*, and around it, under arcades, a *series of warehouses*. P. 182 †.

A series of warehouses!—*The whole series of ships!* (vol. i. p. 96)—*A series of overwhelming ruins!* (vol. i. p. 208)—*A succession of rubbish!* (vol. iii. p. 40)—*A file of camels!* (vol. ii. p. 105)—*A file of rocks!* (vol. iii. p. 298).—How much superior to the language of common writers!

La grenade pend à côté du corfosol. P. 232.

The pomegranate hangs down by the side of the *corfosol*. P. 209 †.

In the original there is an error of the press, *corfosol* being printed for *coroffol*, the French of the anona or custard apple. The Doctor, never at a loss, without hesitation adds *corfosol* to his new nomenclature.

“ For he could coin or counterfeit
 “ New words with little or no wit;
 “ Words so debas'd and hard, no stone
 “ Was hard enough to touch them on:
 “ And when with hasty noise he spoke 'em,
 “ The ignorant for current took 'em.” HUDIBRAS.

* Page 92 of this translation.

† Page 119 of this translation.

‡ Page 137 of this translation.

Roffette, et non pas Rofette, ainſi qu'à *Roffetta*, and not *Rofetta*, as it is now preſent on l'écrit communement. P. 243. commonly written. P. 219*.

Although M. Sonnini has written a long note upon this ſubject, giving his reaſon for writing *Roffetta* with a double *ff*, yet through the whole *ſecond volume* the accurate Doctor ſpells it *Rofetta*. If ſo minute a circumſtance was unworthy of the attention of the tranſlator, it might at leaſt have been attended to by the printer.

Suivant lui, cette fort de culture eſt ſuffiſante pour engendrer les maladies dans un pays où il ne tonne jamais, ou très rarement, et où l'atmoſphère, imprégnée de ſubſtances ſalines que le feu du ciel ne conſume point, eſt fort ſujette à s'altérer; il inſinue même que c'eſt une des cauſes de la peſte, qu'il ſuppoſe mal-à-propos être une maladie endémique à l'Egypte. P. 255.

According to him this *ſpecies* of culture is ſufficient to generate *endemical* diſeaſes in a country where it never thunders, at leaſt *very rarely*, and where the atmoſphere, impregnated with ſaline ſubſtances, which *the fire of heaven* does not conſume, is *very much* ſubject to *corruption*; nay, he inſinuates that this is one of the cauſes of the *peſtilence*, which he erroneouſly ſuppoſes to be an *epidemical* diſeaſe in Egypt. P. 230 †.

Any perſon reading this paſſage, muſt ſuppoſe M. Sonnini to be mad in aſſerting that the plague, or, as it is more elegantly rendered by Dr. Hunter, *the peſtilence*, is not *epidemical* in Egypt. He could never imagine that a tranſlator ſhould render *endémique*, *epidemical*. For myſelf, I ſhould have taken this for a typographical error, and, as ſuch, paſſed it over in ſilence, had I not found the ſame thing again repeated (vol. ii. p. 16, and vol. iii. p. 107).

But this being the caſe, I can only impute it to the groſs ignorance of a man who has the preſumption to prefix his name as the tranſlator of a work of ſcience. Such a tranſlation is a diſgrace not only to the tranſlator but to the nation. Not ſatiſfied with this, he has had the aſſurance to introduce in the very ſame paragraph the word *endemical*, which his author did not warrant.

L'on ne fait que peu d'élèves. P. 264.

But few *pupils* are reared. P. 238 ‡.

* Page 143 of this tranſlation.

† Page 150 of this tranſlation.

‡ Page 155 of this tranſlation.

Gentle reader, who do you think are these pupils?—*Calves*, not metaphorically, but really; not such as may become doctors of divinity, but young oxen.

Les gens de loi. P. 266.

Doctors of the law. P. 241*.

I cannot say that there are not among the modern Egyptians *Doctors of Law*, though I have never heard of them; but I think *Doctor Hunter* bestows his degrees rather gratuitously; cheaper even than degrees are purchased in the universities of his country, when with one dash of a pen he creates all the lawyers in Egypt *Doctors of the Law*.

Le haut de la pipe est garni d'une pièce d'albâtre factice et blanche comme le lait: des pierres précieuses l'enrichissent. Chez les personnes moins opulentes, elles sont remplacées par des fausses. P. 269.

The top of the pipe is *garnished* with a species of mock alabaster, and white as milk: it is frequently enriched with precious stones. Among persons less opulent the place is supplied by *faucets*. P. 243 †.

What the reverend word-maker means by *faucets* I am at a loss to comprehend. In the same page he translates *noix de pipes*, *nuts of pipes!* (it is certainly so literally,) and *or moulu*, *gold-leaf*, which is not quite so literal.

La plus grande quantité de ce qui s'en consume en Egypte, est apportée de Barbarie. P. 308.

The greatest part of it (the hermodactylus) *consumed* in Egypt, comes from *Arabia*. P. 278 ‡.

Does the learned translator mean that *Barbary* and *Arabia* are the same country? or does he mean to correct an error in his author? If the latter, he ought to have made it one of his *learned notes*.

Le peu que je vais ajouter est le fruit d'observations postérieures à celles qui sont consignées dans l'histoire naturelle, générale et particulière. P. 340.

The little which I am going to add is *the fruit of posterior observations to those* which are already *consigned to the* natural history, general and particular. P. 305 §.

“ And teach all people to translate,

“ Though out of languages in which

“ They understand no part of speech.” HUDIBRAS.

* Page 157 of this translation.

† Page 158 of this translation.

‡ Page 180 of this translation.

§ Page 198 of this translation.

La race des tourtellères à collier de l'Égypte, moins grosse, et plus mignone que celle de l'Europe, paroît être la même que celle de la tourterelle du Sénégal. *P.* 346.

The race of turtle-doves *with a ring round the neck of Egypt, less fat and more delicate* than those of Europe, appear to be the same with that of the *turtle-dove with a ring, of Senegal.* *P.* 311*.

The amplification of terms is here particularly beautiful, and the idea of these doves being less fat and more delicate than those of Europe, the Doctor must have supposed to be better adapted to the taste of John Bull, than if, keeping to the sense of his author, he had said they were “not so large and more delicately formed!”

Les Égyptiens font des galettes avec les grains du dourra. *P.* 354.

The Egyptians make *muffins* of the seed of the dourra. *P.* 318 †.

Yes, reader, *muffins!* rare Egyptian muffins!

L'on apportoit sur les marchés de Rossette une grande quantité de ces oiseaux; ils s'y vendoient à très bon compte. Les Mahométans ne mangeant d'aucun animal qui n'auroit pas été saigné, on coupoit le col aux canards, où on les laissoit vivans, après leur avoir rompu les ailes que l'on lioit sur le dos, en sorte qu'il étoit très difficile de se procurer un de ces oiseaux qui ne fût pas mutilé, ou dont le plumage ne fût pas endommagé. *P.* 355.

Great quantities of these birds were brought to the markets of Rossetta, and were *sold to very good account.* As the Mahometans ate no animal which had not been bled, the throats of the *wild-ducks* were cut, *in which state they were left living, after having their wings broken, which* were fastened over their back, so that it was very difficult to get one of these birds *which* was not mangled, or *whose* plumage had not been damaged. *P.* 318 ‡.

Fie! fie! Doctor: any school-boy would have told you that *vendre à bon compte* means *to sell cheap.* The remaining part of the preceding passage, however, exhibits you as a most elegant translator. In the treble repetition of the word *which*, you fully display your sublime and unfettered genius; and the idea of the wild-ducks being *left living* after their throats were cut, could proceed from your *animated* pen alone.

* Page 201 of this translation.

† Page 206 of this translation.

‡ Page 206 of this translation.

Il me semble donc inutile d'en donner la description particulière que j'en ai faite. L'on fait, &c. P. 349.

It seems useless therefore to present the particular description I have taken of *it*. *It* is well known, &c. P. 314*.

The terminating *it* in the first sentence of the above passage, and the incipient *it* in the second, form a beautiful example of the figure called by grammarians *αναδιπλωσις*. The same figure occurs in several other parts of the Doctor's translation, particularly in the following passages.

Quant à ce dernier usage, je ne presume pas que l'on soit tenté de l'imiter. Il n'en est pas moins général en Egypte. P. 361.

With regard to this last mode of using it, I conjecture that we shall not be tempted to imitate *it*. *It* is not the less general in Egypt. P. 323 †.

Elle est particulière aux femmes d'origine Egyptienne. Toutes les autres, quoiqu'appartenant à des peuples qui y sont domiciliés et comme naturalisés, en sont exemptes. L'on n'attend pas communément l'époque de la puberté. Vol. ii. p. 38.

It is peculiar to women of Egyptian descent. All others, even those that are settled and naturalized, as it were, in the country, are exempt from *it*. *It* is not usual to defer this operation till the period of puberty. Vol. ii. p. 35 ‡.

Quand nous fûmes du château, nous passâmes devant la boutique du gouverneur, ce n'étoit plus que le barbier. Vol. i. p. 397.

When we left the castle we passed the shop of the governor, *which was no longer that of a barber*. Vol. i. p. 356 §.

Fielding has written a chapter in Tom Jones, to prove that an author ought to know something of the subject on which he writes. It might be equally proper for a translator to know something of the language from which he translates:—had this been Dr. Hunter's case, he would have said, *which was now merely that of a barber*.

Nous vîmes sur le rivage beaucoup de lavandières. P. 398.

We saw on the shore several *laundresses*. P. 358 ||.

* Page 203 of this translation.

‡ Page 266 of this translation.

|| Page 232 of this translation.

† Page 210 of this translation.

§ Page 231 of this translation.

Washerwomen, the reader may suppose; but the learned divine actually means *wagtails*, at least Sonnini did. This nomenclature is to be found in many places of the Doctor's scientific version. *Lavandière* certainly means a *laundress* as well as a *wagtail*, but the translation would have been more correct, had our ornithologist condescended to use the provincial denomination of *dish-washers*. As it is, he has certainly *got into the suds*. This reminds me of the gentleman, who, translating the comedy of *Love's last Shift*, rendered the title, *La dernière Chemise de l'Amour*; also of the Parisian physician, who, having read in an English medical work of the efficacy of the *Dog and Duck water*, in certain complaints, prescribed to his patient the decoction of a dog and a duck; lastly, of a certain *Doctor of Divinity*, who, being employed to translate De Rulhière's *Histoire de la Révolution de Russie*, rendered thus the following passage:

“ Sous le règne présent, un jeune favori gouvernait l'empire, tandis qu'un simple Cosaque, dont la première fortune avait été de *jouer du serpent* dans la chapelle du palais, était parvenu jusqu'à épouser secrètement l'Impératrice.”

“ Under the present reign, a young favourite governed the empire, while a mere Cossack, whose first fortune had been to *play with a snake* in the palace chapel, had attained to the honour of secretly marrying the Empress.”

And Nathan said unto David, Thou art the man*.

L'eau douce et tranquille d'une fleuve.
Vol. ii. p. 55.

The *sweet* and tranquil water of a river.
Vol. ii. p. 49 †.

Sweetness is rather a new quality which the Doctor has discovered in river water. He introduces his reader in another place (vol. i. p. 45) to “*living* and limpid waters!” and in a third (vol. ii. p. 10) to the “*new water* of the Nile.”

On l'a aussi appelée chèvre Mambrine, de Mambré, ou de Mamré, parcequ'elle est commune sur le montagne de ce nom.
P. 77.

It has likewise been called the *Mambrine* goat, or goat of *Mambre* or *Mamre*, because it is common on the mountain of this name. P. 68 †.

* It may be proper to mention, that the above passage does not appear in this manner in Dr. Hunter's translation of the above work as published, a gentleman who is *a little better* acquainted with the French language than that reverend gentleman, having corrected this trifling error before it was printed.

† Page 276 of this translation.

‡ Page 288 of this translation.

What name, Doctor? I have never, in the course of my English reading, found a mountain called either *Mambrine*, *Mambre*, or *Mamie*.

Mahomet, Arab lui-même, avoit prévu le cas assez fréquent où ses sectateurs se trouveroient dans le désert. P. 176.

Mahomet, an Arab himself, was aware of the circumstances in which his followers would frequently *find themselves* in the desert. P. 150*.

This is one of the hundreds of passages in which the learned translator has happily introduced the reflexive verb of the French; and an authority so transcendent will no doubt secure its naturalization in our language. I do not, however, feel myself of sufficient consequence in the republic of letters to venture yet to adopt this idiom.

A chaque encensement particulier il baise sa main gauche. Après avoir beaucoup encensé, il vient, et toujours en courant, appliquer sa main sur le front des assistans, et vite il reprend l'encensoir. P. 192.

After each particular act of *incensing*, he kisses his left hand, and when he *has been exercising* his *censor* some time, he comes always running, and applies his hand on the face of every one present; which done he instantly resumes his *censor*. P. 166 †.

The Doctor, if not a man of letters, ought, as a theologian, to have been able to spell the word *censer*.

L'on voit dans ses environs beaucoup de ruines, que les Coptes montrent comme celles de l'ancien monastère de Saint Macaire même. Les Arabes donnent à ces ruines un nom qui signifie *Château des Femmes*; denomination étrange, pour désigner des réduits pratiqués en haine des femmes, et peuplés par des hideux anachorètes. P. 215.

In the environs are several ruins, which the Copts shew as those of the ancient monastery of St. Macarius *himself*. To these ruins the Arabs give a name which signifies *Women's Castle*; a strange denomination for a retreat erected out of antipathy to womankind, and inhabited by hideous anchorites. P. 187 †.

Sonnini meant to say, the ancient monastery of St. Macarius *itself*.

To this passage the reverend translator has added a note, signifying, that probably these are the ruins of a monastery which would make the

* Page 315 of this translation.

† Page 355 of this translation.

‡ Page 369 of this translation.

Arabic name sufficiently appropriate. Upon what this learned conjecture is founded, I am at a loss to discover; but I presume that it was in order to give weight to his hypothesis, that the annotator in another place (vol. iii. p. 183) introduces St. *Macaria* instead of *Macarius*.

Au moment où nos possessions des Indes Occidentales étoient en proie aux agitations, &c. ; au moment où l'agriculture abandonnée n'y donnoit, au lieu de produits, que des inquiétudes à la métropole; e'étoit une belle et vaste conception que de les rapprocher, pour ainsi dire, de transporter près de nous toutes leurs richesses. P. 265.

At the moment when our possessions in the West Indies were a prey to discord, &c. ; at the moment when neglected agriculture afforded nothing but uneasiness, instead of produce, to the *metropolis*; it was a beautiful and vast conception to bring them near to us; if I may be allowed the expression, to convey their wealth into our neighbourhood. P. 230*.

That the Doctor would find in his dictionary *métropole* rendered only *metropolis*, I have no doubt; but a translator must not be a mere slave to a dictionary. Every person versed in the French language knows, that this word has other more extensive significations. In the present instance it means *the mother-country*—any other translation is absolute nonsense.

Le jour même de mon départ pour le Caire, je tuai sur le Nil, près de Rossette, un oiseau qui a beaucoup de rapport avec le grèbe de rivière ou castagneux. P. 272.

The very day of my departure for Cairo, I shot on the *hill* near Rossetta a bird having much affinity to the little grebe, or didapper. P. 237 †.

Hence it appears, that the Doctor considers the *Nile* to be a hill, not a river, as is vulgarly believed; and he is careful that the reader shall not suppose this a typographical error, for he repeats the same translation two pages farther on: “ En remontant le Nil ”—“ *As I was ascending the hill.* ”

La première nageoire dorsale avoit dix neuf lignes de *large* à sa base. P. 281.

The first dorsal fin was nineteen lines *long* at the base. P. 244 ‡.

This correction of Sonnini, who, I presume, must have been in an error,

* Page 398 of this translation.

† Page 493 of this translation.

‡ Page 408 of this translation.

in stating the fish's fin to be nineteen lines *broad* at the base, ought to have made one of the valuable notes to the Doctor's version.

Il avoit déclaré une guerre d'extermination aux brigands de toute espèce. P. 321. He had declared *war to the death* against robbers of every kind. P. 279*.

In the course of the present contest, Dr. H. must have frequently heard of a *war of extermination*; but a *war to the death* probably appeared to him more elegant, as having more of a scripture sound; and here, as in other expressions in his seraphic translation; such as, *of a truth †*—the *accursed kanga ‡*—we *journeyed* from Mellavoui to Manselout, where I intended to *sojourn §*—*furthermore*, this *same* man was *threescore years old ||*—*a wounded spirit ¶*, &c. we see the theologian; or, to adopt the reverend translator's own expression in vol. i. page 129, "the cloven foot is completely uncovered."

Les selles ont la même forme que celles de Turquie, les arçons sont encore plus élevés. P. 334. The saddles *have* the same shape as those of Turkey; but the *bows* are still more elevated. P. 290**.

There is no science, art, or trade, on which the Doctor has not made improvements. Saddlers of England! remember that what you have heretofore called the *head of the saddle* is in future to be denominated *the bows*.

Je passois une partie de mes journées aux croisées de la maison consulaire. P. 372. I spent *one day* at the window of the consul's house. P. 322 ††.

Quelque jours apres les bains. P. 377. A few *hours* after bathing. P. 326 ††.

These are specimens of the Doctor's "faithful transcript of the original."

Je priaï un négociant François de me conduire chez des Coptes. Vol. iii. p. 6. I requested a French merchant to conduct me *into the territories of the Copts*. Vol. iii. p. 5 §§.

By the *territories* of the Copts is meant nothing more than their houses in Cairo; but the Doctor constantly rises above his original—thus also:

* Page 432 of this translation. † Vol. i. p. 68. ‡ Ib. p. 217.
 § Vol. iii. p. 46 and 51. || Ib. p. 106. ¶ Ib. p. 310.
 ** Page 439 of this translation. †† Page 461 of this translation.
 ‡‡ Page 463 of this translation. §§ Page 494 of this translation.

Ce François me céda le Syrien. P. 8.

This Frenchman *ceded* the Syrian (his interpreter) to me. P. 8*.

Je restai la journée entiere à me promener le long du rivage du Nil. Un grand mouvement s'y faisoit remarquer — Des bateaux en nombre, rangés à la file, s'enfonçoient par degré dans l'eau—Malgré le bruit qui régnoit sur ces bords du fleuve un vol de canards sauvages, et qui néanmoins ne l'étoient guère, nageoient tranquillement sur une partie de la surface de l'eau. P. 11.

I remained the whole day walking along the banks of the Nile. *A great stirring* there attracted attention—*A great number of boats arranged in rows* sunk by degrees in the water—Notwithstanding the *tumult* which reigned upon the banks of the river, a *flight* of wild ducks, and which were, however, not entirely of that description, swam peaceably on a part of the surface of the water, &c. P. 10 †.

Les femmes ont des jours et des heures marqués pour prendre les bains—Pour nettoyer les cheveux, elles emploient une espèce d'argile que l'on apporte exprès de Turquie, et elles les arrosent avec des eaux odoriferantes. Mais ce n'est pas seulement un motif de santé ou le désir de la propreté qui les engagent à se rendre aux bains : elles y trouvent encore des parties de plaisir. Le calme silencieux cesse d'y régner : des jeunes et belles captives s'y livrent à la joie, à des aimables folies qui, *si faut en croire la critique*, ne sont pas toujours innocentes. P. 16.

The women have their appointed days and hours for visiting the baths—To *cleanse* their hair, they make use of a kind of clay, which is brought *express* from Turkey, and which they *bedew* with sweet-scented waters. But it is not solely a motive of health, or the desire of cleanliness, which tempts them to visit the baths : they form there parties of pleasure. Peaceful calm ceases to reign among them ; young and beautiful captives there abandon themselves to mirth, and to those amiable follies which, *if we must believe a certain critic*, are not always perfectly innocent. P. 14 ‡.

It would have been highly gratifying, if the reverend improver of Sonnini had given his readers a hint who the *certain critic* is to whom he here alludes.

Tourbillons et trombes. P. 22.

Whirlwinds and water-spouts. P. 20 §.

Here the Doctor certainly *sticks close to his text* ; but we find afterwards (page 24) that these *water-spouts* are—*columns of sand*.

* Page 496 of this translation.

† Pages 497 and 498 of this translation.

‡ Page 500 of this translation.

§ Page 504 of this translation.

De chaque côté, et de distance en distance, l'on voit de ces bâtimens inutiles, qui sous le nomme de monastères renferment des réunions d'hommes plus inutiles encore. Ils étoient peuplés de moines Coptes. P. 24.

On each side, and *from distance to distance*, you see those usefess buildings which, under the name of monasteries, *enclose* societies of men more usefess still. They were peopled by Coptish monks. P. 22*.

The preceding passage is truly elegant.

Je vis une pyramide très considérable dans les terres. P. 30.

I saw a *very remarkable* pyramid inland. P. 27 †.

This is rather a deviation from the original. Sonnini contents himself with saying that he saw a *very considerable pyramid*; but as the Doctor, from his superior knowledge of Egypt, has been enabled to inform us, that it was a *very remarkable pyramid*, he ought in justice to have given some description of this monument of antiquity. In the following passage the learned divine has corrected a geographical error in Sonnini.

Nous arrê tâmes à Zoule, village assez grand sur le bord *oriental*. P. 31.

We stopped at *Zoule*, a considerable village on the *western* shore. P. 28 ‡.

Un multitude d'oiscaux se repandent le long des eaux et dans les campagnes, pour chercher leur proie et leur pâture. P. 39.

A multitude of birds *spread themselves* over the waters, and through the country, to search for prey and *pasture*. P. 35 §.

This is a satisfactory answer to the question of the poet:

“ When did the owl, descending from her bow'r,
“ Crop 'midst the fleecy flocks the tender flow'r?”

La rive qui couvroient les ruines d'Antinoë. P. 47.

The shore, which *covers* the ruins of *Antinoë*. P. 42 ||.

This is a considerable improvement on Sonnini. The traveller, describing what he saw, talks of the shore which *is covered* by the ruins of *Antinoopolis*; but his translator, shrewdly imagining that the greater part of these ruins must be now buried under ground, has, with great propriety, made this alteration in the passage.

* Page 505 of this translation.

‡ Page 509 of this translation.

† Page 514 of this translation.

§ Page 518 of this translation.

|| Page 518 of this translation.

Sur le revers de la montagne qui termine, vers l'*orient*, l'ancienne enceinte d'Antinoë l'on distingue une grande quantité d'ouvertures. P. 50.

Here the learned geographer has again corrected a blunder in his author. In the next passage he displays his knowledge as a seaman.

Des sculptures ornoient sa poupe. Sans sa mâture la même que celle des autres bâtimens du Nil, c'est-à-dire à voiles latines, on l'auroit pris pour une corvette. P. 55.

On the opposite side of the mountain, which terminates towards the *west*, the ancient *enclosure* of *Antinoë*, you distinguish a considerable number of openings. P. 44*.

Its *poop* was ornamented with sculpture. But for its *mast*, like the other vessels of the Nile, that is to say, with its sails *in the form of hairs' ears*, it might have been taken for a corvette. P. 49 †.

Percnoptères. P. 61.

Percnoptères. P. 55 ‡.

For this new name of the aquiline vulture, English ornithologists are indebted to HENRY HUNTER, D.D.

Je venois d'avoir une preuve évidente. P. 83.

I was going to have an evident proof. P. 74 §.

La pastèque ou melon d'eau. P. 101.

The *pasteca*, or water-melon. P. 90 ||.

The English botanist is obliged to the learned divine for this new denomination of the water-melon.

L'on y trouvoit de petits abricots. On les fait sécher, ensuite cuire avec des viandes. Ce mets, qui garnit ordinairement la table des riches, est un des meilleurs qui sortent des cuisines égyptiennes. P. 101.

You find there small apricots. They are called *mischmisch*. They dry them, and afterwards dress them as *sauce* to meats. These dishes, which usually garnish the tables of the rich, are of the best sort which come from Egyptian kitchens. P. 90 ¶.

In the preceding passage the Doctor has displayed at once his purity of style, and his skill in the *culinary art*.

Le lépreux de Tahta étoit un propriétaire dans l'aïssance. P. 118.

The leper at Tahta was a gentleman quite at his ease. P. 105 **.

Probably a relation of the *Tripoline gentleman* that killed Buonaparte.

* Page 520 of this translation.

† Page 523 of this translation.

‡ Page 527 of this translation.

§ Page 539 of this translation.

|| Page 550 of this translation.

¶ Page 549 of this translation.

** Page 559 of this translation.

Le curé des Coptes Catholiques avoit la complaisance de m'indiquer les choses curieuses d'Echmimm et de ses environs. Ce *bon-homme* me conduisit chez lui—ce *brave Copte*. P. 142, 143.

The curé of the Catholic Copts had the complaisance to point out to me the curiosities of Echmimm and its environs. This *good man* conducted me to his habitation—this *valiant Copt*. P. 126*.

Sonnini does not describe the Coptic priests as men of valour; but Dr. Hunter, probably for the honour of the cloth, has added courage to the virtues of this Coptic *curé*. For myself, being merely a translator of Sonnini, I have rendered *ce bon homme*—this *inoffensive man*; and *ce brave Copte*—this *worthy Copt*.

Les milans se tiennent en troupes sur le bord de l'eau pour attendre le poisson au passage. P. 166.

The kites *form themselves into companies* on the banks of the river, waiting for the *fishes of passage*. P. 147 †.

It were to be wished, that the learned ichthyologist had informed his readers which are the *fishes of passage* that visit the Nile.

La *différenté* de toutes ses parties. P. 185.

The *deformity* of its parts. P. 164 †.

The following passage displays at once correctness and elegance unexampled.

Je fus long-temps avant de pouvoir en obtenir des renseignements. Ils s'occupaient à faire taire, à coups de poings les matelots. Enfin une décharge de fusils nous débarrassa bientôt d'une visite trop importune. P. 191.

It was a long time before I was able to *settle the counterfeits*. They employed themselves in *stopping the mouths of the sailors with fifty-cuffs*. At last, a *discharge of musketry* very soon freed us from a visit too *impertinent*. P. 169 §.

S'agissoit-il de saigner? C'étoit bien autre cérémonie. P. 234.

Was it expedient to let blood? *Oh!* this was altogether another ceremony. P. 206||.

The introduction of the Irish *εμφωνησις* *Oh!* adds inexpressible force and beauty to this passage.

* Page 572 of this translation.

† Page 586 of this translation.

‡ Page 597 of this translation.

§ Page 600 of this translation.

|| Page 625 of this translation.

L'huile du sésame. Elle ne passera jamais chez les Européens que pour propre à brûler et à faire des fritures—la manipulation des huiles. P. 256.

Mallum Poctor vint me féliciter de ce que j'avois eu le *bon esprit* de renoncer au voyage—il fut venu me faire la même confiance sur son compte, dans la vue d'obtenir quelque nouveau présent. P. 284.

Je trouvai quelques charançons de dix lignes *de tour*. P. 319.

This, I have no doubt, is a very just correction of Sonnini in entomology.

Un bâtiment du nombre de ceux destinés à la caravane. P. 368.

Thus, from the title-page to the very last paragraph of the work, does the Doctor continue his *improvements*. These Levant coasting vessels, which are called *caravans*, he, no doubt very properly, supposes to be solely *appropriated to supply caravans*.

I now bid the learned Doctor adieu, hoping that I may soon have an opportunity of again admiring his unrivalled excellence. I flatter myself that he will one day favour the world with an improved *Encyclopædia*, or, at least, a new *Systema Naturæ*. He, indeed, may boast of his well-earned laurels; but for my part, I must not forget the passage in scripture which he so pertinently quotes ||: “LET NOT HIM WHO PUTTETH ON HIS HARNESS
“BOAST AS HE THAT TAKETH IT OFF.”

* Page 638 of this translation.

‡ Page 677 of this translation.

Vol. i. p. 83.

The oil of *sesame*. Europeans will never consider it for any other use than *to employ* in the *lamp and the frying-pan*—the *manipulation* of oils. P. 225*.

Mallum Poctor called to congratulate me on my *good fortune*, in having given up the journey—he would have told the *self-same* story of the other, with a view to *extract* some fresh present *out of me*. P. 248 †.

I discovered some weevils about ten lines *in length*. P. 280 ‡.

A vessel of the number of those *appropriated to supply caravans*. P. 323 §.

† Page 656 of this translation.

§ Page 706 of this translation.

I N D E X.

A

- ABD ILLA*, chief of the Bedouin robbers, 346.
- Abidus*, an ancient Egyptian city, 518.
- Abnoub*, a large village in Upper Egypt, 602.
- Abouamer*, village in Bahira, 329.
- Aboubrillor*, village in Lower Egypt, upon the site of ancient Therenuthis, 376.
- Aboujeda*, a chain of mountains on the east bank of the Nile, in Upper Egypt, a resort for banditti, 521.
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- Aboutige*, a town in Upper Egypt, the ancient Abotis, 678.
- Abyssinia*, project of a journey into, 492. 494. 540. Obligated to be abandoned, 543.
- Acacia*, yellow-flowered, 205. The real acacia grows in Egypt, 636. There produces the gum-Arabie, *ib.* Is useful in restoring to fertility those lands which have been long neglected, 637.
- Accola*, a fish of Malta, called by the French *thon blanc* (white tunny), 42.
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- Adventure*, a pleasant one with the commandant at Cette, 13.
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- Alps*, maritime, their appearance, 21.
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- Barfim*, a beautiful variety of trefoil, cultivated in Egypt, 151.
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- Page 31, line 3, for Valguaraera, *read*, Valguarnera.
- 36, — 1, for and perceived in the water large turtle, which the seamen of the Mediterranean call monks; *read*, and we perceived a large turtle, and several of those fishes which the seamen of the Mediterranean call monks.
- 49, — 6, for datoli, *read*, datyls.
- 16, for fish, *read*, fishes.
- 83, — 8, for Antinoc, *read*, Antinoopolis.
- 101, — 11, for bats, *read*, rats.
- 104, — 1, for inches, *read*, lines.
- 193, note, for Dr. Shaw's Voyage, vol. ii. *read*, Shaw's Travels, p. 427.
- 197, line 5, for schifm, *read* schifmè.
- 198, — 1, *dele* The.
- 206, — 23, for throats, *read*, necks.
- 241, — 14, for striated, *read*, perfoliate.
- 320, — 11, for Plate IX. *read*, Plate XI.
- 379, — 23, for are, *read*, is.
- 381, — 2, for Tavoued el Bahari, *read*, Zavoued el Bahari.
- 596, — 14, for Plate XXVI. *read*, Plate XXIV.
- 672, — 13, for Kéné, *read*, Kéné.
- 681, — 10, for than the one, *read*, than that of the one.
- 717, — 13, for côtes, *read*, côtés.

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Cleopatra's Needle.

Pompey's Pillar.





Fossil Tooth.

natural Size

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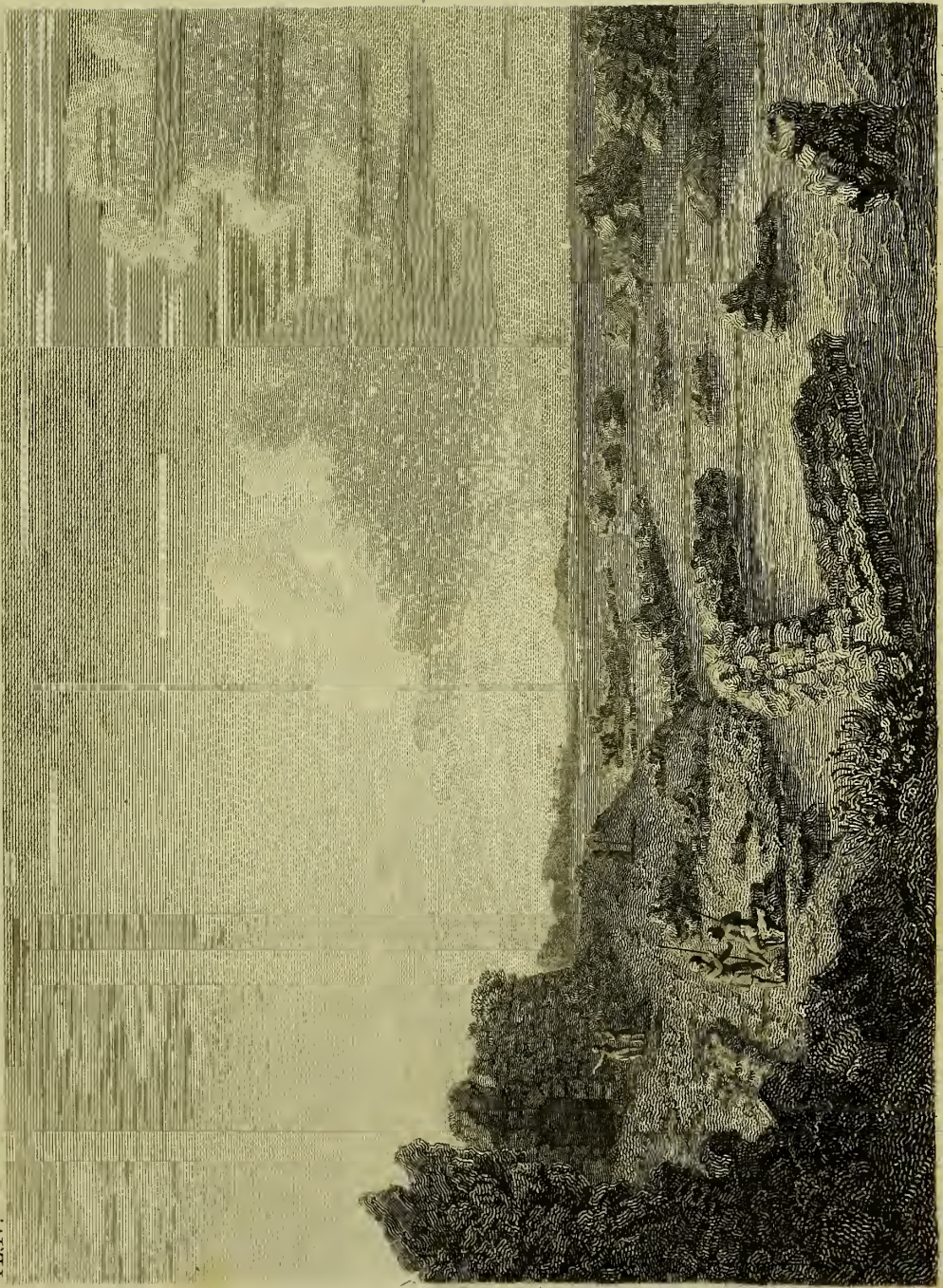


A. Trunk B. Branch. p. 247.

Fruit of the KISCHTA. p. 246.

HENNÉ

A. Flowers. B. A Flower of the natural size. C. A Branch with the Berries upon it. D. A Seed of the natural size. E. A Leaf of the natural size.



J. Debreit sculp.

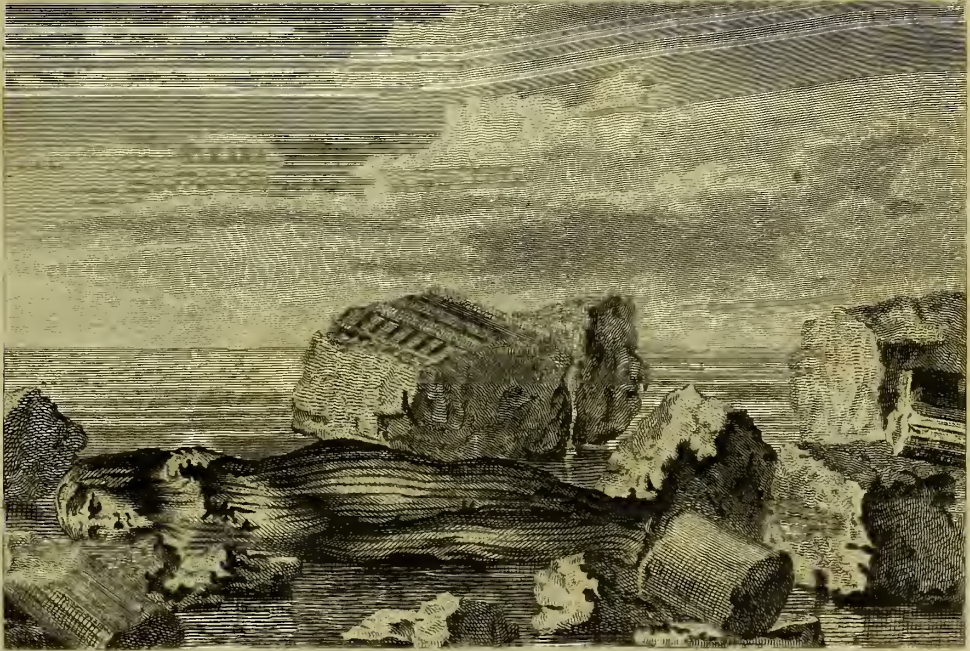
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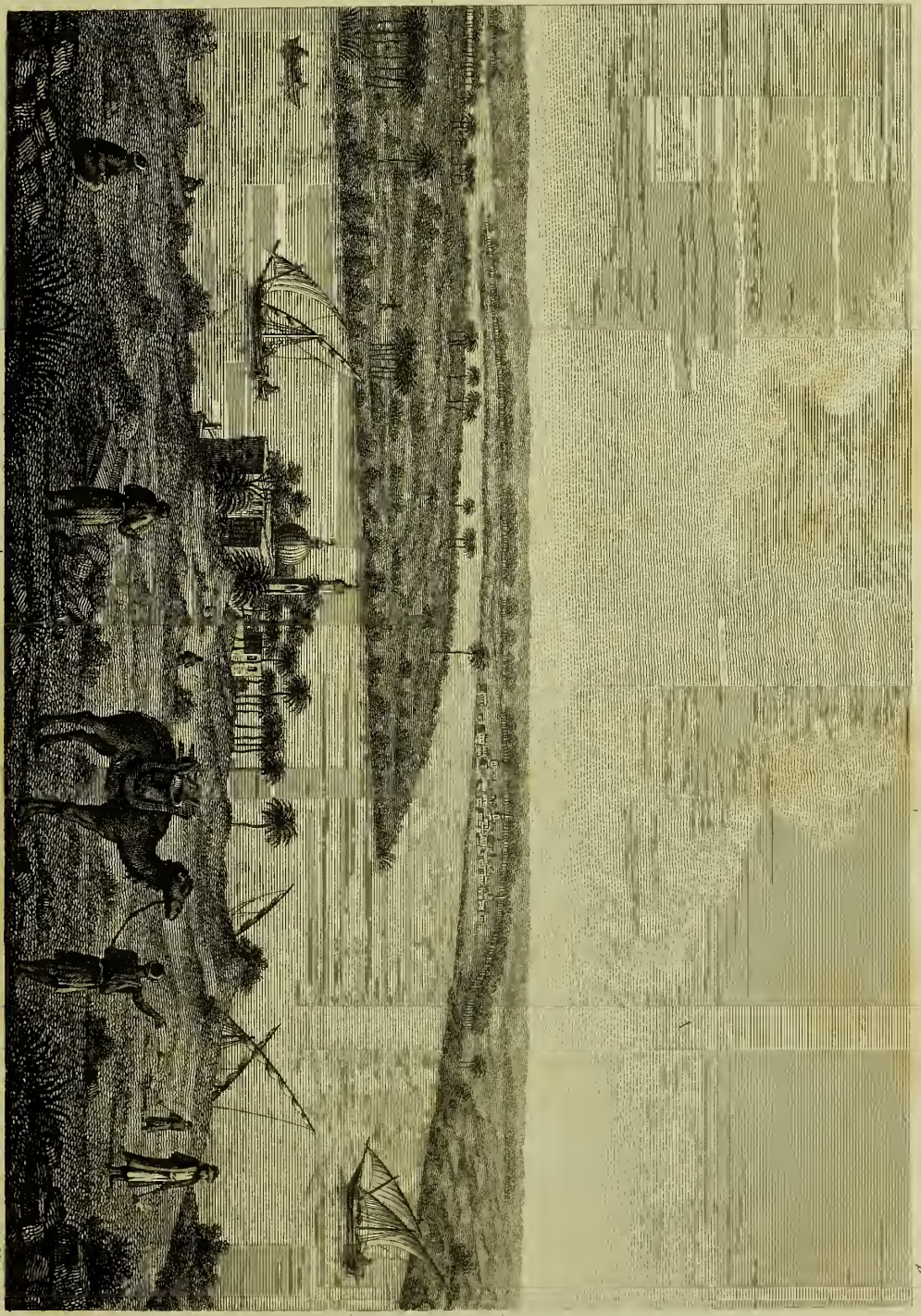
FIG.1.



Part of the Ruins of Canopus.



A fluted Statue at Aboukir.



A. The Mosque of Abou-mandour.
 B. Kamys on banks of the Nile.
 C. Part of the Delta

ABOU-MANDOUR.

D. Village.
 E. Wood of Date Trees



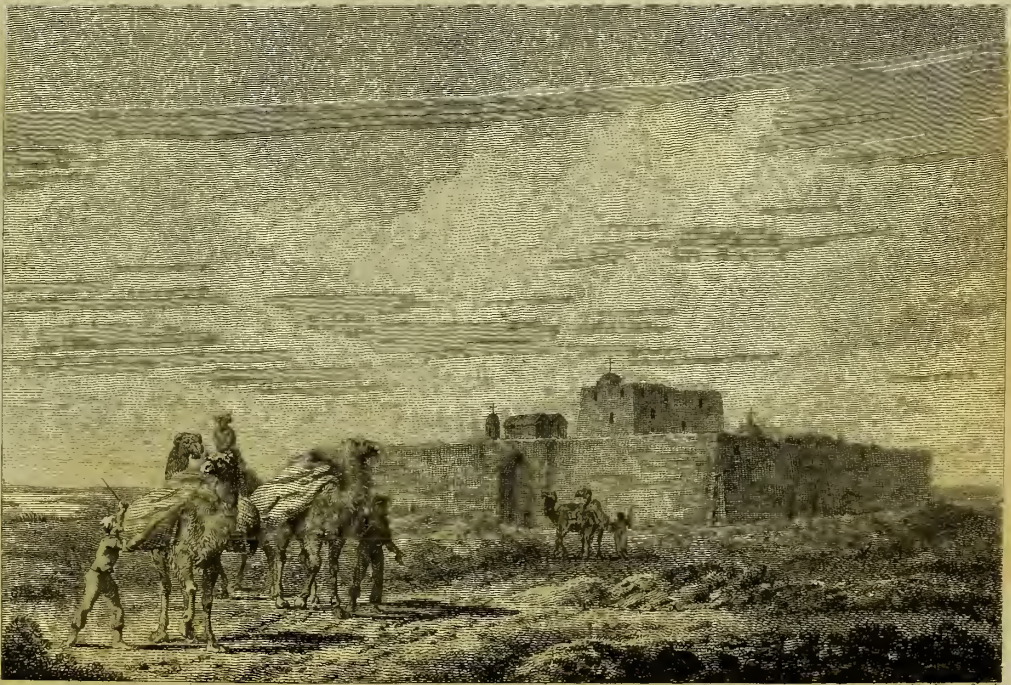
View of Terané.



Tent of the Bedouins.

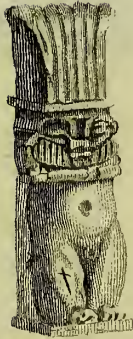


Pigeon Houses of Alguan.



T. Mulqn. Sculp.

Zaidi el Baramous.



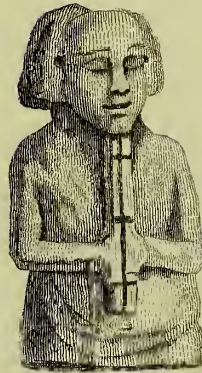
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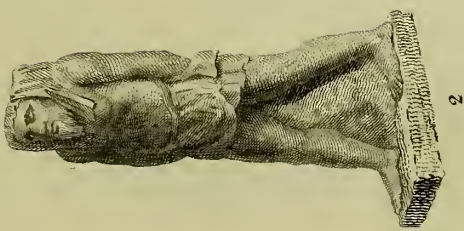


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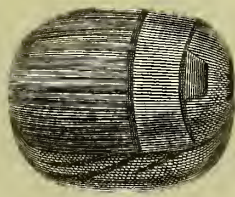


3

Egyptian Idols.



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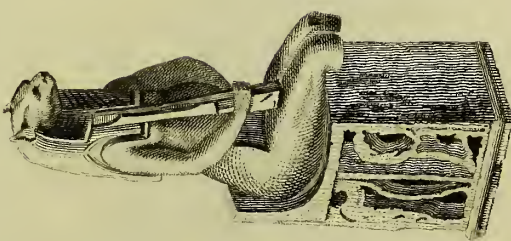
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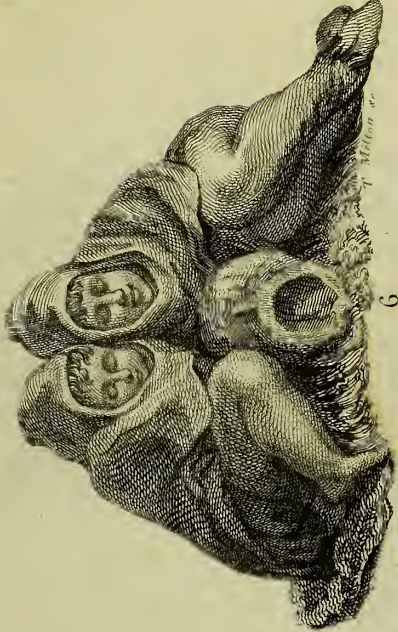
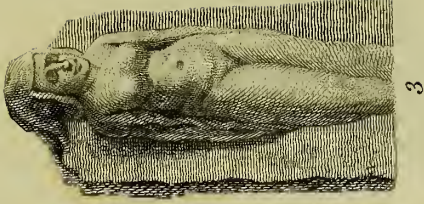
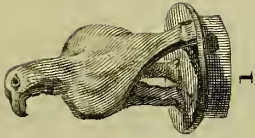
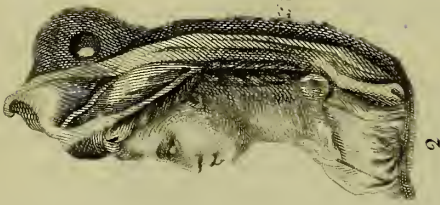
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T. Milton, sc.



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Egyptian Idols.



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Egyptian Idols and Figures.

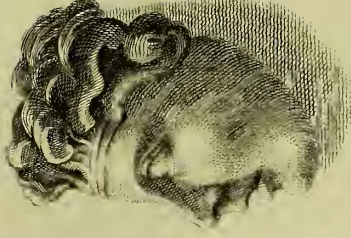
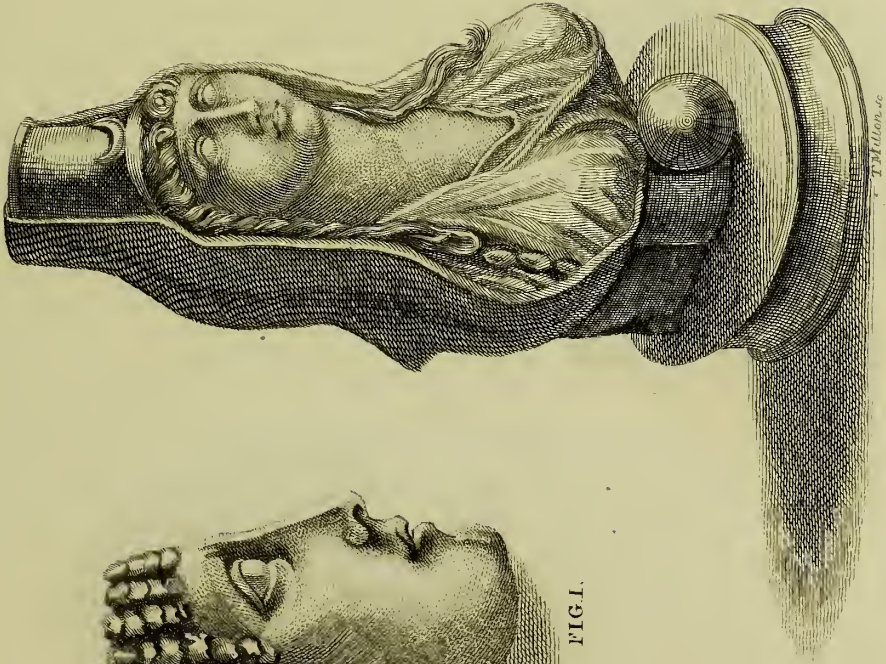


FIG. 2.



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Bust of Isis.

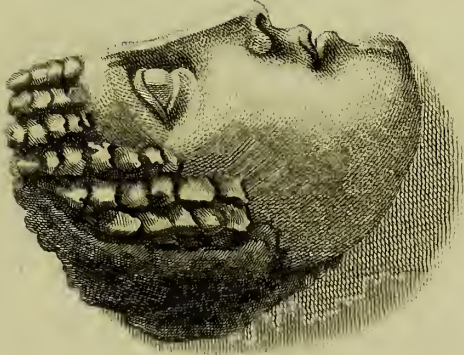


FIG. 1.

FIG. 1.

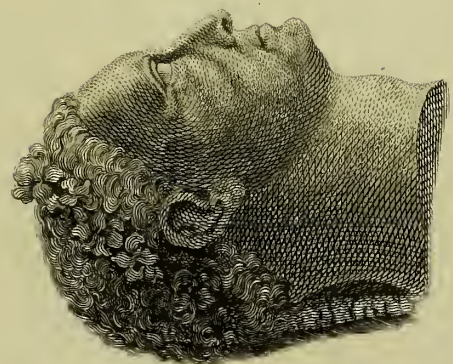
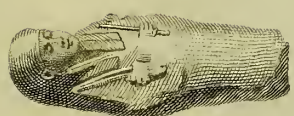


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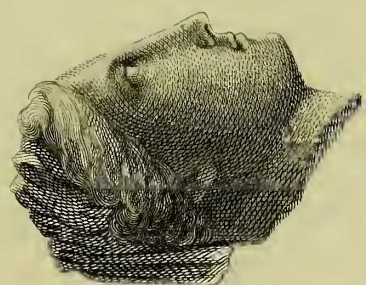


FIG. 3.

FIG. 4.



Antique Head.

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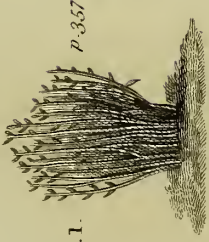


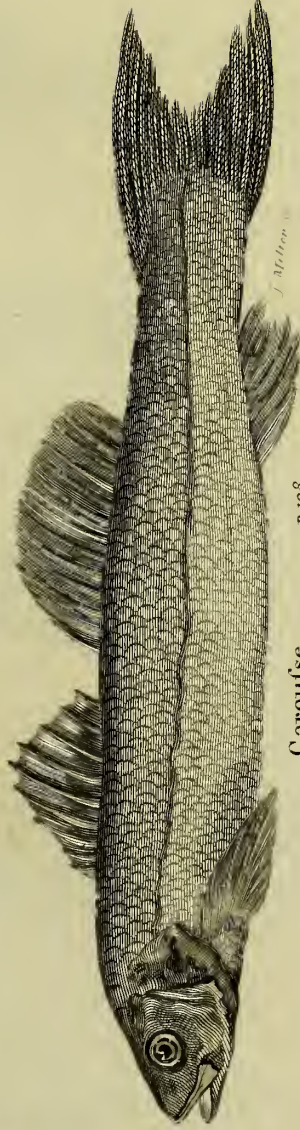
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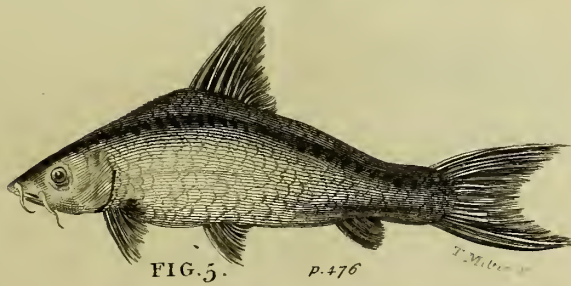
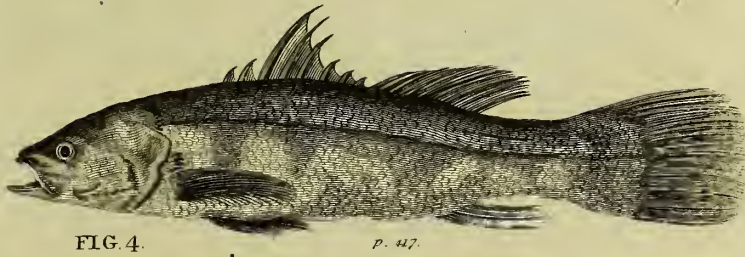
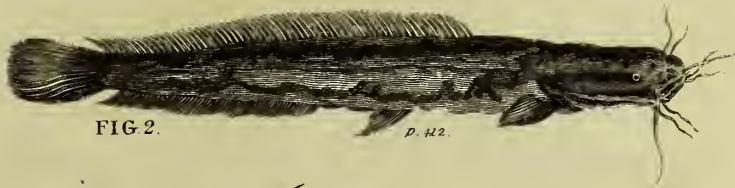
FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.



Caroufse



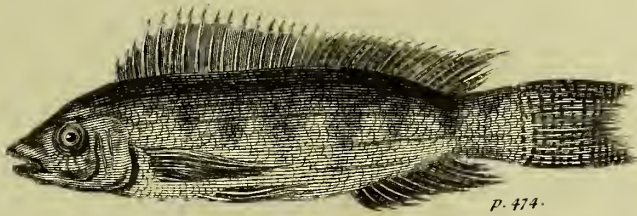


FIG. 1.

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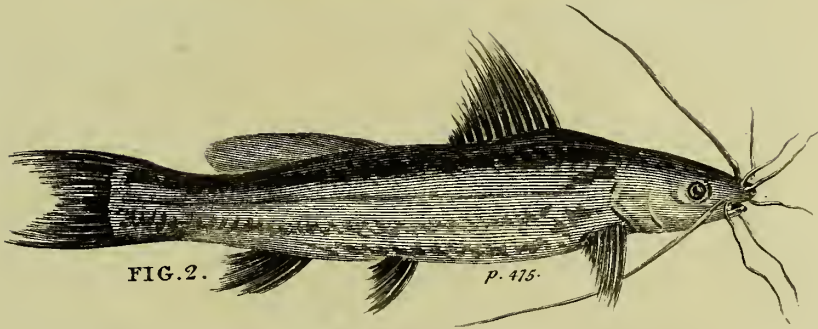


FIG. 2.

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FIG. 3.

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FIG. 4.

p. 417.

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Statue found in Thebais.



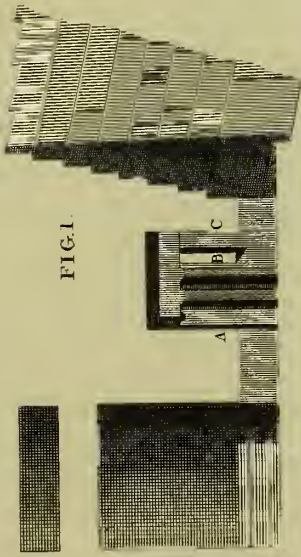


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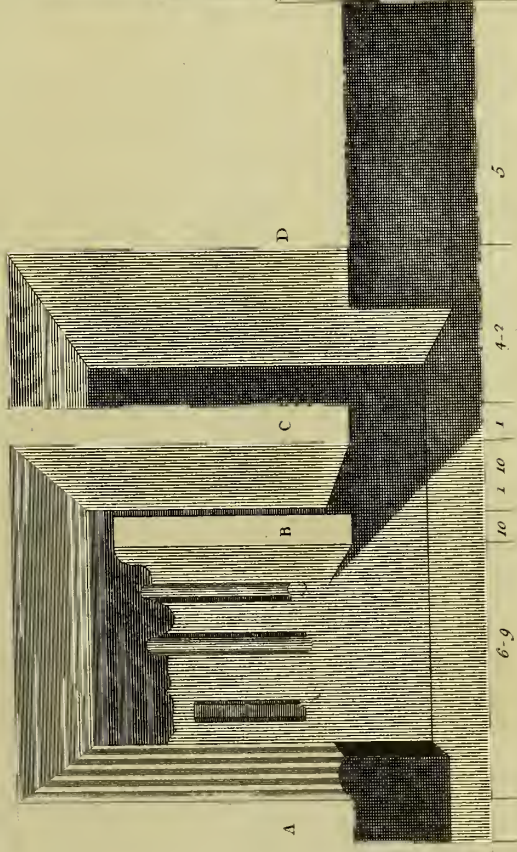
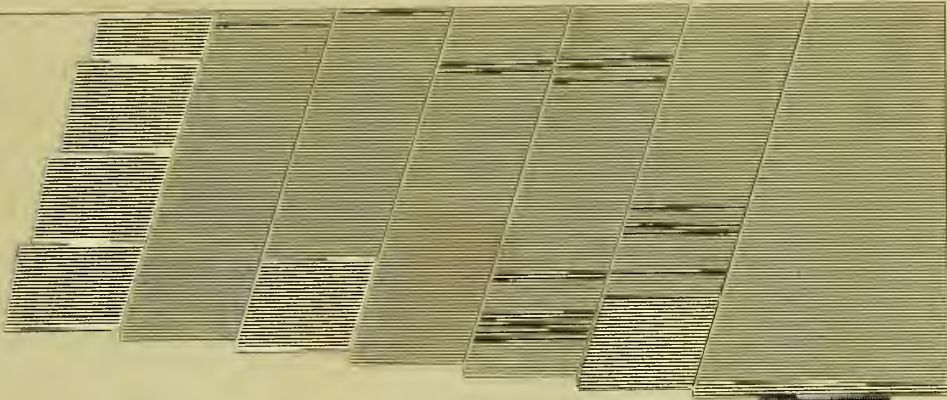
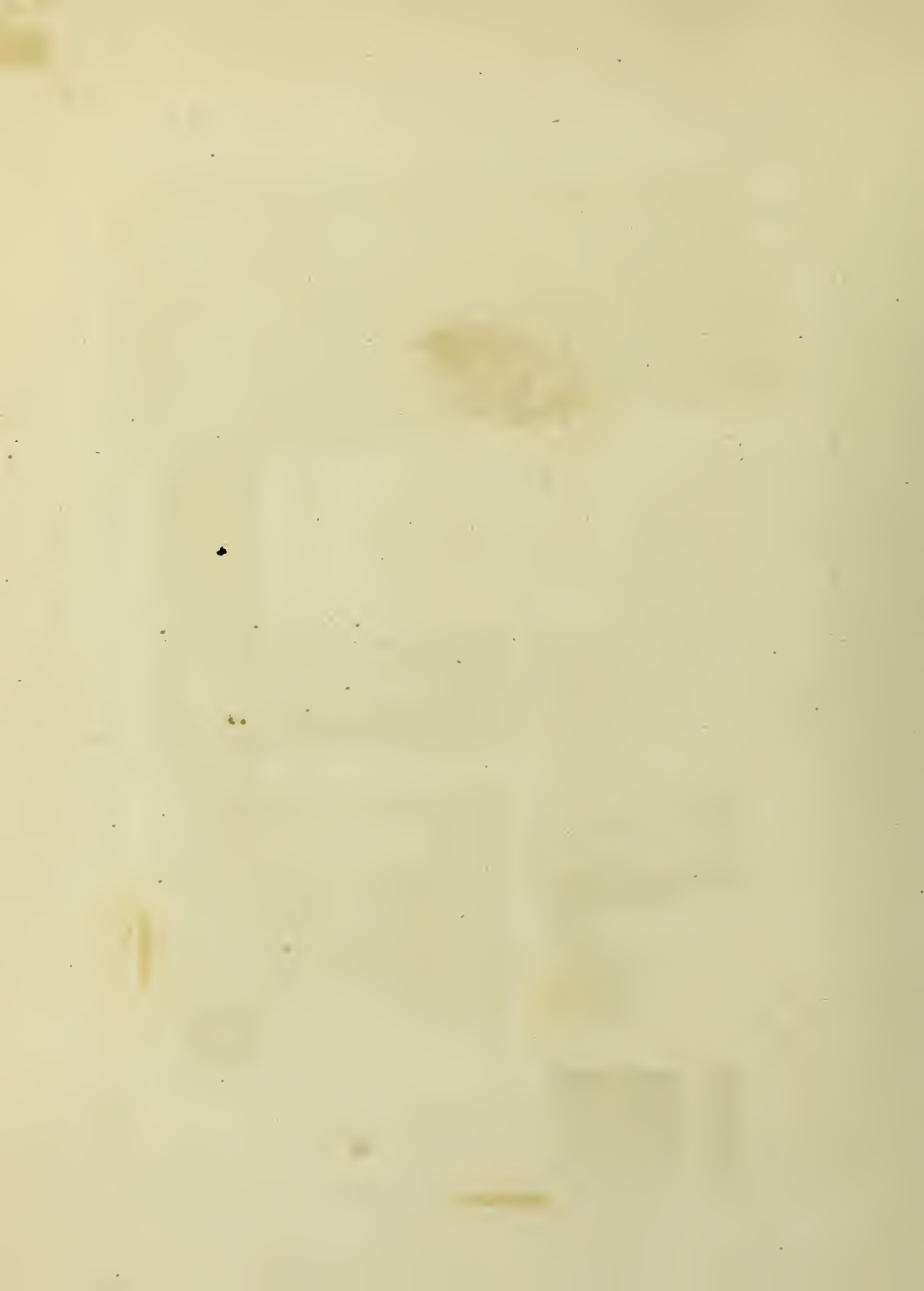
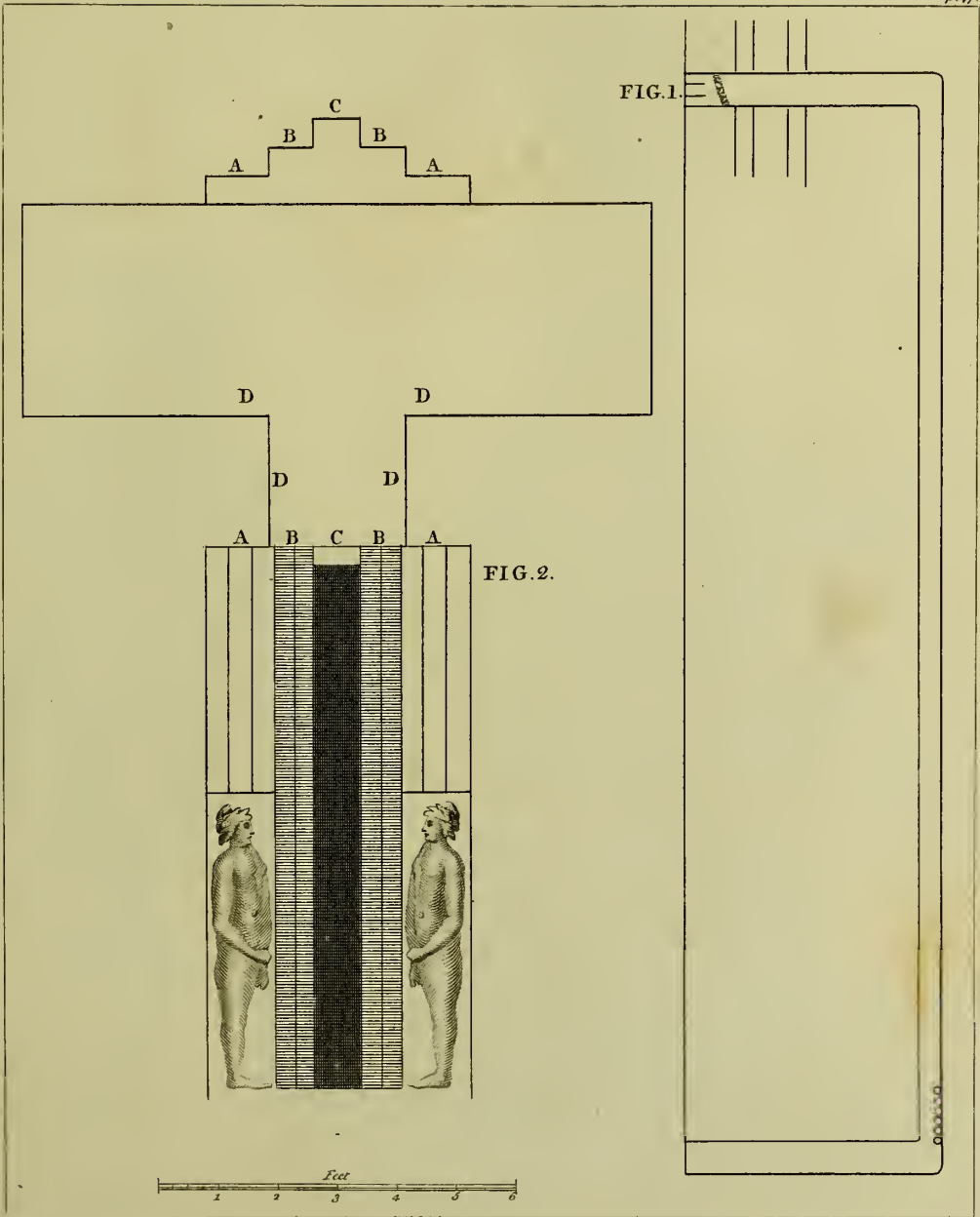


FIG. 2.

Section of the Pyramid of Gisah.

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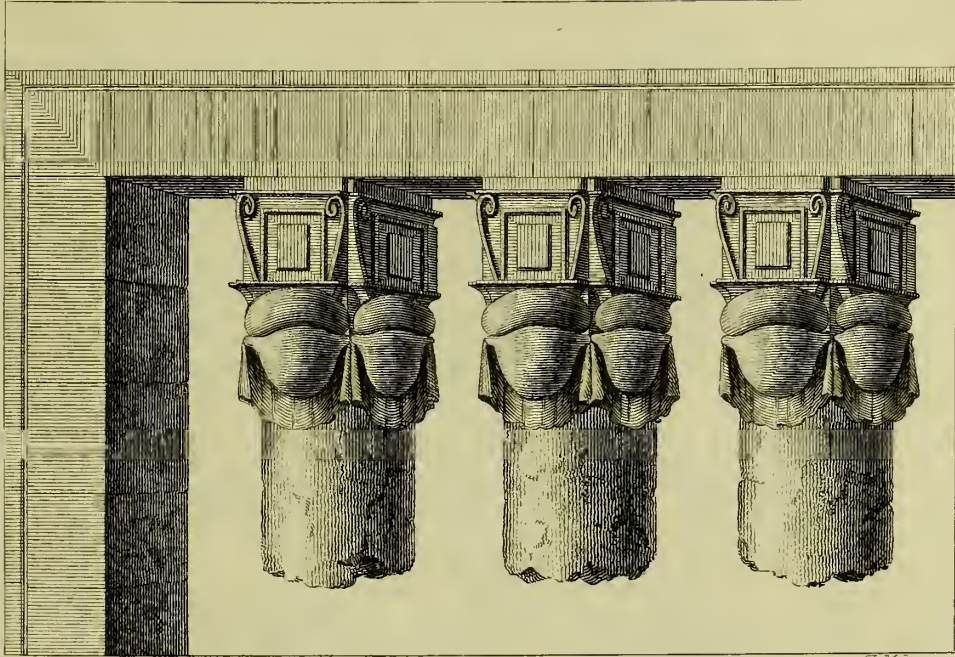
General Plan of the Catacombs, or Mummy-Pits at Saccara.



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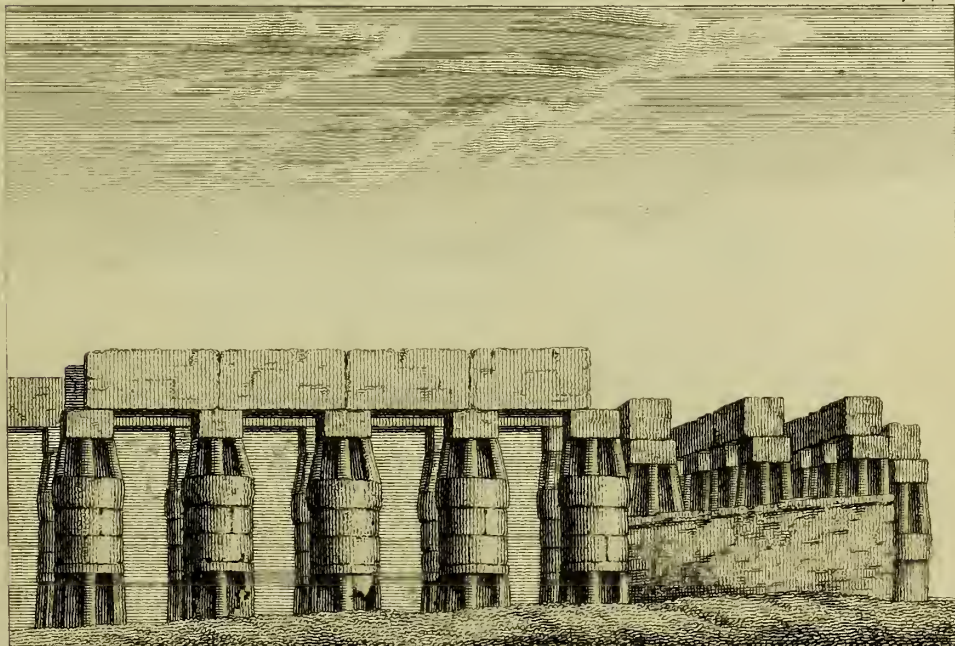
*Column at Antinoópolis
and
Figure found at Eschmim*

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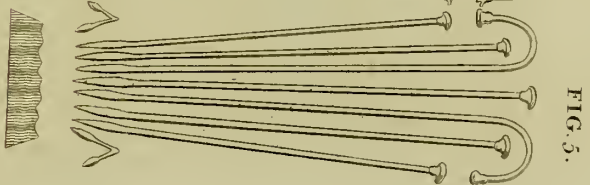
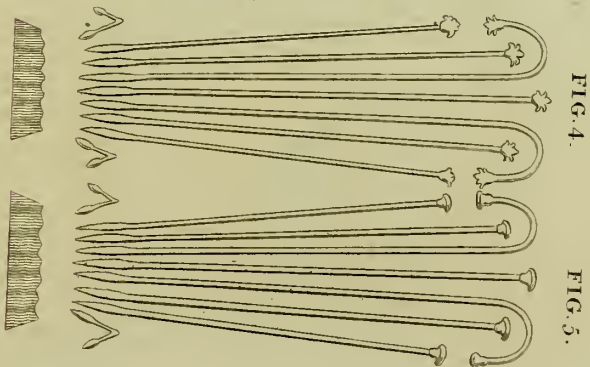
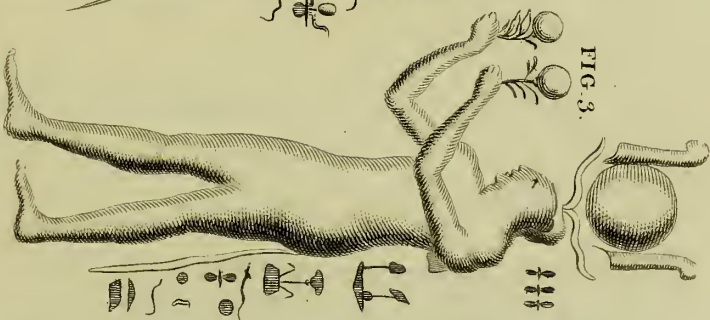
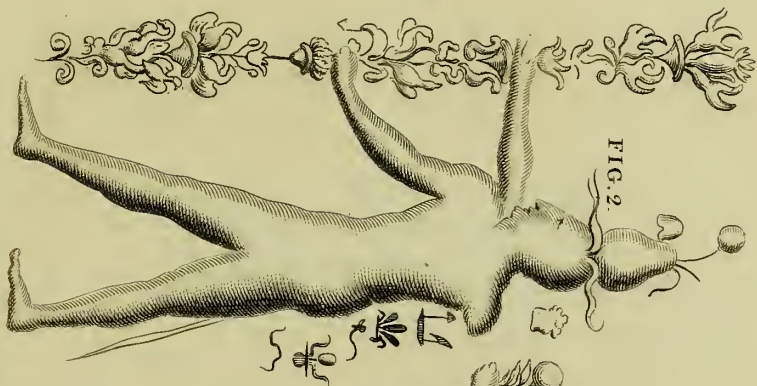
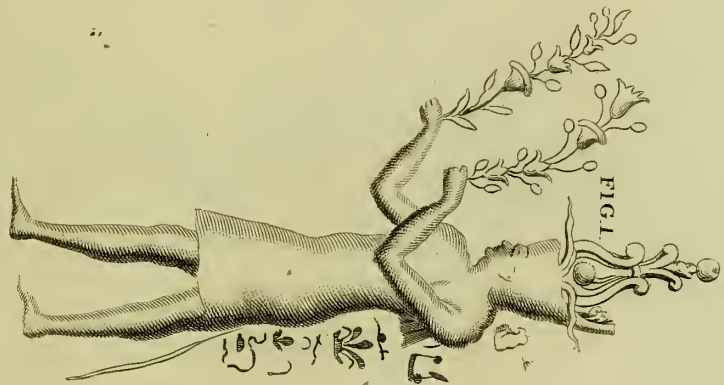
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Capitals of the Colonnade of the Temple of Dendera.



J. M. W. Turner sc.

Colonnade of Thebes.



Figures in the Temple of Dondou.

FIG. 4. p. 325, 6.



FIG. 1. p. 325.

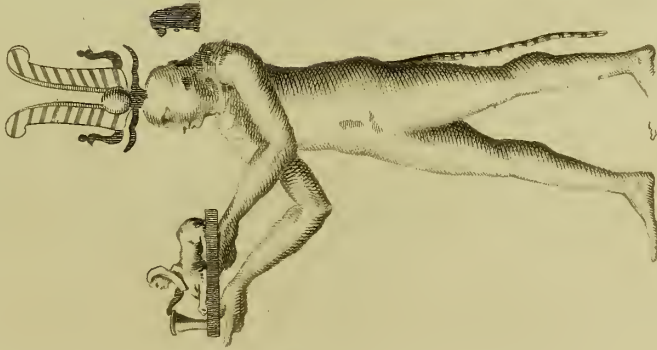
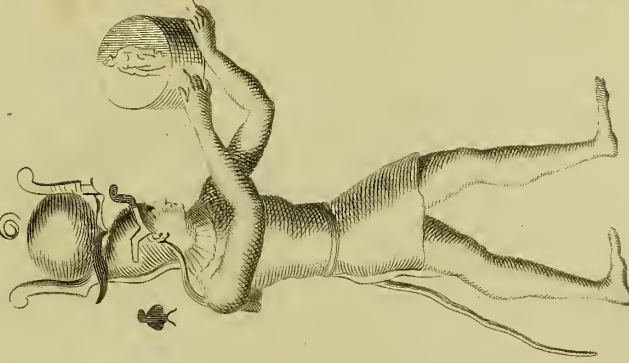
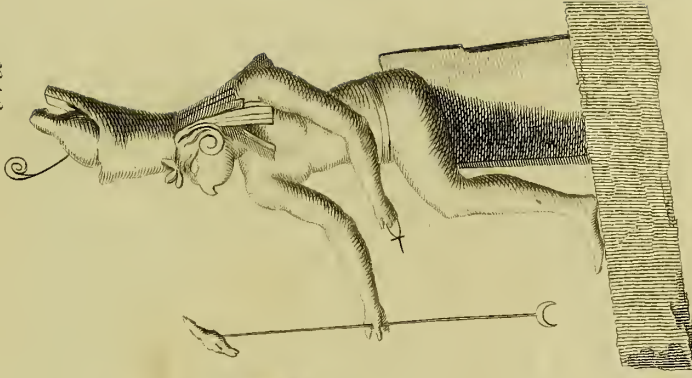


FIG. 2. p. 324.



J. Millon sculp.

FIG. 3. p. 324.



Figures of the Temple of Deudera.



FIG. 1.

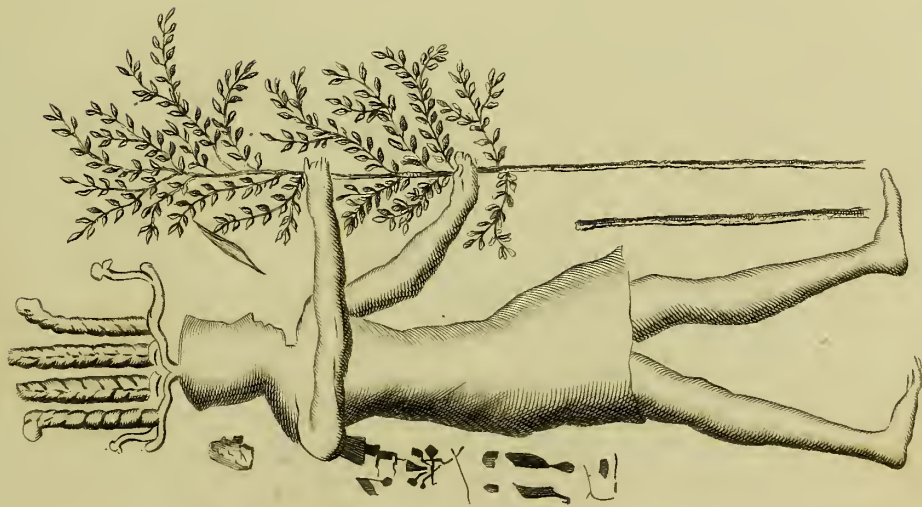
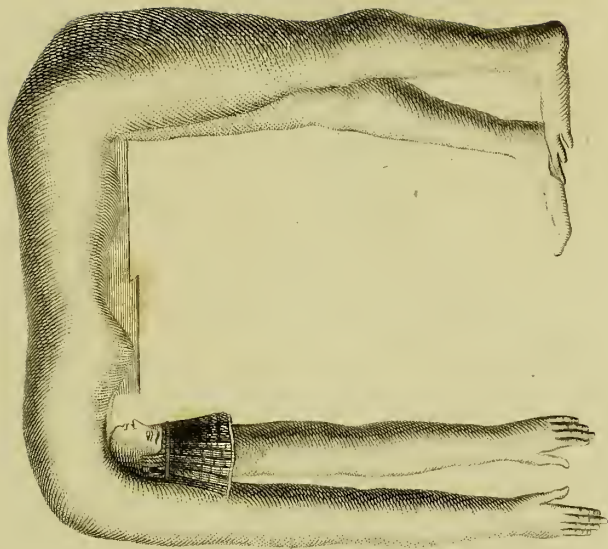


FIG. 2.



Figures in the Temple of Dendera.

FIG. 3.

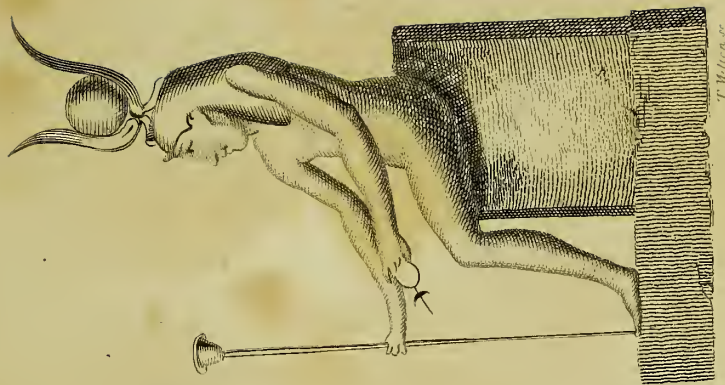


FIG. 2.

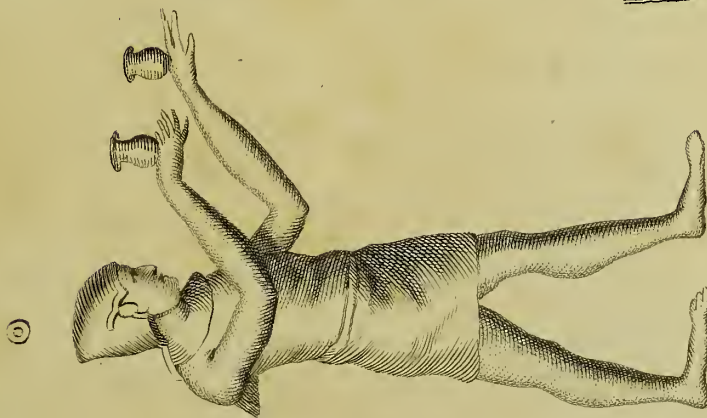
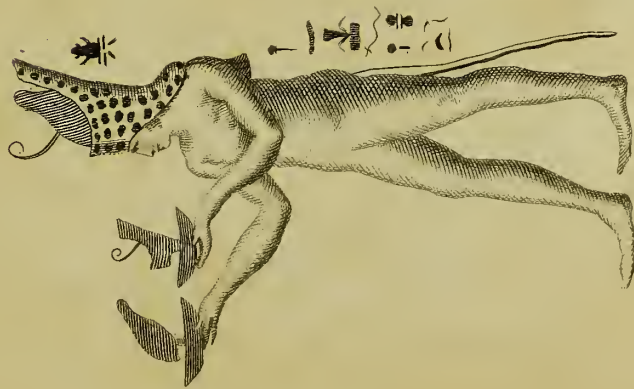


FIG. 1.



Figures in the Temple of Dendera.





Mosque of Abou Mandour.

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