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TRAVELS

IN

UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT:

UNDERTAKEN BY ORDER OF
THE OLD GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE;

BY

C. S. SONNINI,

ENGINEER IN THE FRENCH NAVY, AND MEMBER OF SEVERAL
SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY SOCIETIES.

ILLUSTRATED WITH FORTY ENGRAVINGS;

CONSISTING OF

Portraits, Views, Plans, a Geographical Chart, Antiquities,
Plants, Animals, &c.

Drawn on the Spot, under the Author's Inspection.

..... Tolerantia rerum
Spernebat cunctas insuperata minas.
Vertice nudato, ventos pluviasque ferebam.
Non mihi solstitium, non grave frigus erat.
.....
Quamvis exiguo poteram requiescere somno,
Et quamvis modico membra fovere cibo.
Corn. Gallus, Epig. 1. Senect. Descr.

Translated from the French,
BY HENRY HUNTER, D. D.

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CONTENTS.

VOL. II.

CHAP. XXII.

The banana-tree—Custard-apple—Mallow—Melochia—Bammia—Atlè—The buffalo—The water of the Nile—The plague—The climate of Egypt—Treatment of the dead—Burying-places—Diseases—Elephantiasis—Disorders incident to the eyes - - - - - **I**

CHAP. XXIII.

Circumcision of females—Sect of Saadi, or Serpenteaters - - - - - **29**

CHAP. XXIV.

Winter—Eel of the Nile—Turtle—Birds—The nightingale—Bird of prey—The little owl—White wagtail—Kingfishers—Heron—Purple gallinule—Spur-winged plovers—Hoopoes—Tenebrio—Orange-trees—Onions—Garlic—Lettuce—Colocasia—Ichneumon—Thaleb—Manner in which the Africans distinguish men—Rats and mice—

mice—Sheep—Goat—Preparations for quitting Rossetta—Meteorological observations—Gales of wind from the south - - - 44

CHAP. XXV.

Departure from Rossetta—Bedouins—Agreement with the Arabs—Tumult at Aboukir—Camp between Aboukir and Alexandria—Wild oxen—Consequence of the tumult at Aboukir—Inscription—Camp of Bedouins—Camels—Alarm in the camp—Manners and hospitality of the Bedouins—Opinion peculiar to them—Ancient cube - 87

CHAP. XXVI.

Journey across Bahire—Bedouins—Starlings—Beans—Damanhour—Reports spread respecting the author's journey—Cotton—Courtesans—Continuation of the journey as far as the desert—Wretched state of the country people—Superb plains—The desert—Hares—Birds—Wild oxen—Antelopes—A tiger—Ostriches - - - 113

CHAP. XXVII.

Lakes of natron—Coptic convent in the desert—We meet with a band of Arab robbers—Singular scenes that ensued—Difficulty of obtaining entrance into the monastery—Wild boars - 138

CHAP. XXVIII.

Departure of Hussein—Coptic monks—Their convent, chapel, church services, rites, food, dress, and garden—Fulful b eladi—Gypsum—Sal gem—Other convents in the desert—River without water—Bedouins—Ill behaviour of the monks—Fogs and rain - - - 159

CHAP. XXIX.

Departure from Zaïdi el Baramous—Zaïdi Sourian—Lablab—Tamarinds—Mr. Bruce—Amba Bishoï—Amba Monguar—Generosity of a Bedouin—Wardan—Route towards Cairo—Western 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. 180

CHAP. XXX.

Voyage on the Nile continued—Terrana—Dovecots—Wagtails—Ducks—Crows—A funeral—New species of plover—Ruins—Antique figures—Foua—Banks of the Nile—Return to Rossetta 197

CHAP. XXXI.

Political reflections on the Bedouins—Agriculture—Corn—Bread—Fennel-flour—Sesamum, or oily grain—Ptisans—Barley—Flax—Indigo—Sugar-canes

*canes—Coffee-tree—French colony in Egypt—
Olive-trees—Fig-trees—Date-trees—Hableziss*

218

CHAP. XXXII.

*Grebe—Ravens—Ruins and fragments of antiquity
—Terrana—Various fishes of the Nile—Arrival
at Cairo - - - - - 237*

CHAP. XXXIII.

*City of Cairo—Its inhabitants—Europeans settled
there—Its situation—Its government—Summary
view of the revolutions of Egypt since the time of
Augustus—Mamelucs—Pacha of Cairo—Ap-
proaching downfall of the Ottoman empire—Ali
Bey—Mourat Bey - - - 260*

CHAP. XXXIV.

*Generous actions of certain Mamelucs—Their wives,
warlike qualities, and cavalry—Egyptian and
Arabian horses—Audience of the Pacha—Castle
of Cairo—Joseph's well—Moors - - - 284*

CHAP. XXXV.

*Asses of Cairo—Ladies taking an airing—Asses of
Egypt—Aversion of the ancient Egyptians to these
animals—Mules—Jumarts—Horses of Cairo—
Its circumference, quarries, canal, dancing-girls,
and jugglers - - - - - 306*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVI.

<i>Marriages—Circumcision—Commerce—Nubian caravans—Black slaves—Nubian domestics—Scorpions—Ancient statue—Pyramids—Mummies' well at Sakkara—Bolti, bayatte, and benni, fishes of the Nile—Titlarks</i>	- - -	325
--	-------	-----

CHAP. XXXVII.

<i>Electricity—Meteorological observations made at Alexandria and Cairo—Winds—Columns of sand—General state of the weather in Egypt</i>		348
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TRAVELS

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UPPER AND LOWER EGYPT.

CHAP. XXII.

The Banana-tree—Custard-apple—Mallow—Melochia—Bammia—Attè—The buffalo—The water of the Nile—The plague—The climate of Egypt—Treatment of the dead—Burying-places—Diseases—Elephantiasis—Disorders incident to the eyes.

THE ripening fruit of the banana-tree adorns the gardens of Rossetta with its yellow hue during the three winter months. This tree is not indigenous to the country, and hitherto its cultivation has been confined to the north of Egypt. It is pretty common about Rossetta, and, as I am informed, in the environs of Damietta. A few may be seen likewise at Cairo, but none farther south. Indeed at Cairo it is so scarce, that a basket of its fruit, which is much esteemed for its soft and slightly acid pulp, is considered as a

rare and very acceptable present. The fruit of this species of the *musa* is known in the French West-India islands by the name of *figue banane*, and at Cayenne by that of *bacove**. It is less insipid, and more agreeable to the taste, than that of the plantain-tree †.

Growing with these exotics I noticed another tree, which also I had seen in America, and the fruit of which is equally pleasing to the taste and smell. The sweet-sop, or custard-apple, planted in these gardens, attains the height of a middling tree ‡. The fruit is covered with little papillary elevations, much resembling those of a fir-cone. When it is ripe, its colour is green mingled with

* *Musa spadice nutante, floribus abortientibus terminalibus deciduis. . . . Musa sapientum. Lin.—Musa sapientum, spadice nutante, floribus masculis deciduis. . . . Bacobe. Aublet, Hist. des Plantes de la Guiane, tome ii. p. 930. Musa fructu cucumerino breviori. Plum. Nov. Gen. 24.*

† *Musa spadice nutante, floribus abortientibus persistentibus. . . . Musa paradisiaca. Lin.—Aublet, loco supra citato.—Musa fructu cucumerino longiori. Plum. Nov. Gen. 24. [These two trees are confounded under one common name, *bananier*, by the French: in English their names are distinct.—T.]*

‡ It is the species described by Plumier, under the name of *guanabanus fructu cœruleo*, and by Linnæus under that of *annona squamosa*. Forskal describes it in his *Flora Egyptiaco-Arabica*, and calls it *anona glabra, keshta, foliis ellipticis, fructu globoso*.

yellow.



Fruit of the Kishta.



A

B

Atte. A. Trunk. B. Branch.



yellow. (See a representation of it, Pl. IX. fig. 1.) Its Arabic name is *keshta*, in English *cream*. Its soft pulp, indeed, is as white as cream. The kernels contained in it are numerous, brown, and oblong.

Under the shade of the trees that grow in these orchards, various plants are cultivated; and the roots of these plants are refreshed by water, conveyed to them in every direction through little trenches; each enclosure having its well, or reservoir, from which the water is distributed to the trenches by a wheel turned by oxen. A great deal of the common mallow *, called here *hobeze*, is cultivated in these orchards. It is boiled with meat, and is one of the most common culinary vegetables in Lower Egypt. In Upper Egypt it is not eaten, and little is to be seen.

Two other plants, likewise frequently used as food, are the *melochia* and *bammia*. The first, of which the Arabic name is *melochia* †, much resembles the marsh-mallow, and affords, like it, a mucilage on boiling. Its flowers resembling a rose, of a yellow hue mingled with red, and its

* *Malve rotundifolia*. Lin.

† *Corchorus olitorius*. Lin.—Forskal, *Flora Egyptiaco-Arabica*, p. 101.

whole appearance, would render it worth cultivating as an ornamental plant, were it not among the number of those which nature has destined to furnish nutriment for mankind. The second, which bears the Arabian name of *bammia* *, has likewise considerable affinity to the mallow tribe. Its flowers are yellow. It is the *kalalou* of America. This furnishes the most mucilaginous of all dishes.

These two plants, like the banana and *keshta*, are exotics, though they are very abundant in this country: but the *atlè*, a large species of tamarisk †, hitherto little known, appears to be peculiar to Egypt. Linnæus has made no mention of it; though it is described in the thirteenth edition of his *Systema Naturæ* by Gmelin, who took his account of it from Forskal.

This *atlè*, which differs from the common tamarisk ‡, both in size, and in its botanical characters, on which I shall adopt the expressions of a traveller, whose skill in this branch of natural

* *Hibiscus esculentus*. Lin.—Forskal, *Flora Egyptiaco-Arabica*, p. 125.

† *Tamarix orientalis*. Forskal, *Flora Egyptiaco-Arabica*, p. 206.—Lin. edit. 13.

‡ *Tamarix gallica*. Lin.

history cannot be questioned*, attains the height and bigness of an oak. Its leaves are alternate, long, very narrow, and of a pale green. I shall not enlarge upon its description, as I have given an engraving from a drawing of the trunk and one of the branches of this tree. (See Pl. IX. fig. 2.) It is to be regretted, that there were neither flowers nor fruit upon the specimen from which this drawing was taken. This tree is usually loaded with galls, adhering to the branches. These galls, I observed, before they were dried up, were filled with a liquor of a beautiful poppy red. Probably, therefore, they may be of considerable use in the arts; for they are very numerous, and the trees that bear them, grow all over Egypt, both Upper and Lower. This observation I think it important not to omit, as I have read, in a manuscript catalogue of plants, in possession of one of M. Tott's companions, "that the atlè
 " is a species of tamarisk, growing in Upper
 " Egypt, near Sahil." Now there is scarcely a village throughout Lower Egypt, which has not several *atlès* among the trees that surround it.

The wood of this tree is employed for several purposes, and among others for making charcoal.

* *Differt a tamar. galkica, cujus rami squamati, squamis alternis, sessilibus lanceolatis; ramuli breves, imbricati; foliis lanceolatis, confertis.* Forskal, loco supra citato.

There is no other tree in Egypt that can in any degree be termed common, which furnishes timber for mechanical purposes, or wood for fuel; whence it is a vulgar saying among the Egyptians, that the world would go badly with them, if *atlès* were to fail.

It is by no means uncommon to see a female buffalo tied by all four of her legs, under the shade of an *atlè*, near a peasant's hut, and feeding on the *barsim* with her calf. She affords her keeper abundance of very good milk, from which butter and several kinds of cheese are made. The buffalo* is an acquisition of the modern Egyptians, with which their ancestors were unacquainted. It was brought from Persia into this country, where it has multiplied greatly, and is at present very common. It is even more numerous than the ox, and equally domesticated: but its domestication is obviously of recent date, from the constant uniformity of its colour, and still more from a remnant of ferociousness, a savageness of disposition, and a fierce and lowering look, which are common to all half-civilized creatures.

These Egyptian buffaloes, however, are very far from being as fierce, or as much to be feared, as

* *Bos bubalus*. Lin.

those of other countries. Here they participate in the very striking tameness of other domestic animals, and have nothing remaining of their native wildness, except a few occasional freaks. The sight of any thing red is said to enrage them elsewhere, but in Egypt it appears to make no impression upon them. Almost all the inhabitants of the country, beside their red turban, have a shawl of the same colour, which they wrap round their neck and breast, and I never observed the buffaloes at all affected by it. When I have sometimes shot birds very near female buffaloes, attended by their calves, the report of the musket threw them into violent agitation, and they seemed in such extreme rage, that I should have been alarmed, had they not been tied very securely. The owner, however, to remove my apprehensions, assured me, that the violent movements of the animal were the effects of terror alone; so that the buffaloes of Egypt are not so dangerous in reality, as apt to inspire fear by the fierceness of their looks and occasional transports of rage. Persons who are not habituated to the sight of these animals, frequently cannot avoid a little dread of them. Hasselquitz relates, that the buffaloes, particularly near Rossetta, appeared to be enraged at him and his interpreter, because they were dressed in red, to such a degree, that their attendant janisary was obliged to drive them

away with his stick* : on which I need only observe, that an animal of such size and strength is not much to be dreaded, if a few blows with a cane be sufficient to drive him away.

I have said, that the buffaloes of Egypt are invariably of the same colour: they are all over blackish, except the tuft of hair on the forehead, and that of the end of the tail, which are of a yellowish white. Among the great number I saw, one only differed from the rest, in having the legs, belly, and sides of a beautiful white.

The Egyptians are too deficient in knowledge, to derive all the advantage they might from the buffalo. They neither yoke him to the plough, nor employ him in any other kind of labour. They rear the females for their milk, and the males to be slaughtered and eaten. The flesh is red, tough, and dry; and has besides a disagreeable musky smell. The Mahometans of Egypt, whether Arabs or others, far from considering it as unclean meat †, esteem it as a desirable dish. They even quote in its favour an aphorism of one of their ancient physicians, who deems the flesh of the buffalo the most wholesome of aliments, next to

* Travels in the Levant, French trans. Part I. p. 83.

† Michaelis's Eighty-fifth Question.

that of the sheep, which he compares to theriaca. Notwithstanding this authority, I cannot easily persuade myself, that it will ever become a favourite food with Europeans; not that it is disgusting to the eye, or apt to breed vermin, as Bochart affirms *, but because it is in general very tough, and has a smell to which none of the refinements of our cookery have yet accustomed us. Niebuhr appears not to have found it very disagreeable, since he fancies he has eaten it without knowing it †. It is scarcely possible, however, to mistake it; and when the same traveller adds, that people of distinction, and even European merchants, as well as the common people, eat a great deal of buffalo's flesh in the parts where this animal abounds, it must not be understood of the French merchants in Egypt, whose taste is too delicate to admit at their tables a dish so coarse, that it is banished even from those of the opulent Egyptians. The hides of the buffaloes form a considerable branch of the commerce of Egypt; and various articles are manufactured from their horns, which are flattish, and striated transversely.

There is no land animal which delights so much in water as the buffalo. He loves to lie down in it, and stay in it a long while. I have seen some

* Hierozoicon.

† Description de l'Arabie, p. 145.

remain in it the whole day. It is by no means uncommon for water drawn out of the Nile, near its banks, to have contracted the musky scent of this animal. He swims, too, with the greatest ease; crossing the river with facility, however great its overflow, or rapid its stream; and the peasants make use of him, to pass from one bank to the other. As the weight of the animal sinks him deep into the water, the peasant, that avails himself of this living boat, must hold very fast by his horns, or he will be carried away by the force of the current. In Upper Egypt I saw a young lad drowned, in consequence of the stream washing him off from a buffalo's back,

The female never has more than one calf at a time, or at least very rarely; and those accounts which ascribe to her two as the general number, with that of Maillet, who gives her four, are the exaggerations of credulity.

The water of the Nile has all the honour of these pretended miracles of fecundity; and its marvellous influence is not confined to beasts, for women too are said to feel it. It has been asserted, that, to become mothers, they have only to drink the new water of the Nile, or bathe in it * : and

* Voyages de Paul Lucas, vol. ii. p. 83.

our sailors from Provence were so firmly persuaded of its prolific virtues, that if they touched at Egypt in their voyages up the Levant, they never failed to fill a cask with the water of the Nile, and carry it home to their wives, as the most effectual means of obtaining a numerous progeny.

The ancients had already extolled the qualities of the water of the Nile; but the moderns have gone beyond them. Yet, though some have said much in its praise, others have not been wanting to stigmatize it as insalubrious. Thus both praise and blame were heaped upon the Nile at the same time: the common fate of celebrity, when its subject is at a distance.

The author of the Philosophical Researches concerning the Egyptians and Chinese took upon himself the office of arraigning the water of the Nile, the only water drunk in a country destitute of springs, nay, the sole beverage of the inhabitants, except a bad kind of beer, which is more used at Saïd than toward the north. He has collected together every thing that travellers have said respecting its bad qualities, real or imaginary: he quotes Granger, Pocock, Hasselquitz, and from their testimony discovers a crowd of diseases floating down the Nile; as if mankind were not afflicted with every one of these maladies in all parts
of

of the earth, as well as in Egypt, the elephantiasis excepted, which is very rare in Lower Egypt, and absolutely unknown in Upper Egypt, where likewise the inhabitants have nothing to quench their thirst but the water of the Nile.

During my journey, neither I nor my companions had any thing to drink beside the simple water of the Nile. We drank it in all seasons, even when the inundation rendered it so turbid with mud, that it was thick, reddish, and perfectly disgusting to the eye; yet none of us experienced the least inconvenience from it, or suffered any complaint that could reasonably be attributed to its use. For my part I drank it in immoderate quantities, as I have always been tormented with a raging thirst in hot countries; yet it never did me any harm: on the contrary, I observed, that it passed off very speedily, of course its salubrity cannot be questioned. People who have resided in Egypt for several years, and who have had nothing to drink but the water of the Nile, speak highly in its praise: and, far from deeming it a source of disease, in their opinion it has been the cause of the health they have enjoyed. Such too is the general belief of the Egyptians, who not only esteem this water as very wholesome, but ascribe to it marvellous virtues.

One of the fables to which the Nile has given birth, is that of its fermentation, which, according to the superstitious tradition of the Copts, adopted by some travellers *, commences at the time when its water begins to rise, that is, at the summer solstice. They have gone so far as to fix the day and hour of the first signs of its rise, which are distinguished by a peculiar dew, known by the name of the *drop*, that falls just before the dawn of the day on which the Copts celebrate the feast of St. Michael, answering to the 17th of what was our month of June. To eyes fascinated by ignorance this dew is nothing less than the archangel himself, sent by the Deity, to produce a fermentation in the river, free the country it waters from the diseases that prevail, purify the air, and give new vigour to all being. At the very time while these wonders were operating, the water of the Nile was considered as particularly unwholesome, and productive of diseases: singular effects of the benediction of Heaven, and the arrival of St. Michael. This corrupted state of the waters, which accompanied the general purification, continued sometimes forty days, during which the inhabitants were puzzled where to get any liquid to quench their thirst with safety. All this has been said again and again, with many other things which I omit: but a

* See Vansleb *Nouv. Relation de l'Egypte*, p. 47, and following, with several others.

fable is not less fabulous for having passed through the pens of several writers. It appears to have grown obsolete even in Egypt, for I have seen the water of the Nile drawn and drunk at all times, and at all hours, without any one seeming to apprehend the least danger from its use.

The method employed in this country to purify the water of the Nile, when it is loaded with mud, is generally known. Savary has mentioned it; and before him Prosper Alpinus described it more at large. It is as follows: The water being put into a large jar, a few sweet almonds, slightly bruised, are beaten up in it, and the edges of the jar are also rubbed with almonds. The water is then left to settle for a few hours, in which time it becomes clear and limpid, all the heterogeneous matter contained in it subsiding to the bottom of the jar.

When the water has been thus purified, it is poured out for use into little vessels of clay, dried, but unbaked, which the Turks call *bardacks*, the Arabs *kollett*. These vessels are not glazed, either within or without, and being exposed to the open air, the water transudes through their pores, so that the continual evaporation cools it admirably. These vessels are formed with different degrees of elegance: the most valued are procured from Suez, and those in most common use are brought from

Kenne, a little town in Upper Egypt. These serve both for cups and glasses : at table, as well as between meals, every one drinks out of these common vessels. They are usually covered with a cap made of rushes ; and people of fortune burn in them Scio mastic, the penetrating odour of which pervades the porous substance, which remains impregnated with it a long time, and imparts to the water a perfume, that requires the aid of habit to render it pleasing.

If the use of the water of the Nile have been considered as the source of various diseases, the climate of Egypt has long been deemed the focus of the most dreadful maladies. A number of writers, particularly Mr. Pauw, who is perpetually decrying Egypt, have asserted this country to be the cradle of the plague, that irresistible instrument of death, and the theatre of its most cruel devastations. This opinion, repeated by one after another, has been transmitted even down to our own days. So lately as 1773, a physician at Paris affirmed, that Egypt was the birthplace of the plague *. Dr. Samoilovitz, a Russian physician, wrote also about the same time, that the plague

* *Expériences pour parvenir à déterminer la Nature du Venin pestilential, &c.* ; by Mauduit, M. D. *Journal de Physique*, August 1773.

prevailed habitually in Asia, and more particularly in Egypt. The world was not undeceived on this subject till Savary, and citizen Volney, published accounts of their travels, and perhaps the mistaken notion is not yet generally exploded.

It is a matter of absolute certainty, however, that the plague, which is epidemic in several countries of the East, is not so in Egypt, where it never originates. When it shows itself in this country, it has always been brought into it, either from some part of Turkey, or from the interior parts of Africa. The latter, which is called the Saïd plague, because it comes from Upper Egypt, is much dreaded : in reality it is much more fatal than that which is brought from other quarters.

One proof, that the climate of Egypt, far from producing the most destructive of all contagious diseases, appears rather to resist its introduction, is, that at the time of my journey, the plague had not made its appearance for more than twelve years, though the inhabitants employ no precautions against it. Vessels from Constantinople, the true focus of a contagion that continually exists, frequently arrived at Alexandria ; and caravans from the interior part of Africa came to Cairo several times in a year ; yet no symptom of the plague made its appearance. It is even known,
that

that in 1780, a Turkish man of war, having the plague on board, came into the old harbour of Alexandria. A man, that happened to be near a chest which was opened, dropped down dead, in consequence of the pestiferous miasmata that issued from it; yet all the Turks belonging to this ship came on shore, and walked about the city, without any person feeling the least uneasiness on account of it, and not the slightest accident ensued from their intercourse with the inhabitants.

Thus we need feel no anxiety for our countrymen, by whose labours and exploits Egypt is now honoured, as it was formerly by its civilization and works of art, and in whose fate we are so much interested. This country is by no means the *cradle of the plague*; the Arabs and Turks, by whom it is inhabited, are not the *authors of this epidemic disease*; they do not let it *spring up, as we may say, under their feet**; and the most simple precautions would be sufficient to banish it from Egypt for ever. When it does appear, which is rarely, it makes great ravages; which very circumstance is sufficient to prove that it is not an habitual occurrence. It spreads with rapidity, and its effects are felt in a terrible manner; so that the Turks consider it as much more fatal

* *Recherches Philosophiques, &c.* vol. i. p. 91.

than that amid which they are accustomed to live. It always made its appearance in the month of April; and, what is very singular, it never failed to cease at once at the summer solstice. This period accordingly was the term of the precautions taken by the foreign merchants at Alexandria. Their houses were opened again, and their usual habits of intercourse were resumed, before they had made any inquiry concerning the state of the disease; so firmly were they assured that its fury had reached its limits. The Alexandrians expressed the proverb they had adopted from experience in the lingua Franca: *Saint-Jean venir, gandouf* andar.*

It must be confessed, however, that, if the plague and other diseases, which derive their origin from putrid miasmata, were so rare, it was not for want of the Egyptians doing every thing in their power to render them common. They neglected the most ordinary precautions. Under the hands of these barbarians, not only were almost all the appearances of the ancient grandeur of Egypt effaced, but works indispensable to the fertility of the soil and salubrity of the air, were daily disappearing. Marshes occupied the place of useful lakes: some canals were filled up:

* The plague: in Arabic *koubbe.*

others,

others, on the point of being so by the quantity of mud left in them, were nothing but a body of stagnant water during one part of the year, the fetid effluvia of which were disseminated far around. The stench arising from the carcasses of dead animals infested the country, and sometimes even the precincts of the towns. In short, it seemed as if the inhabitants studied to render their country unhealthy. What an opinion, then, must we entertain of the goodness of a climate, which, in spite of the efforts of the spirit of destruction, in spite of the mischiefs of careless ignorance, had acquired no dangerous influence!

In fact, no epidemic diseases prevail here. The stranger newly arrived is attacked by none of those violent and inflammatory fevers, which collect the tribute imposed by death on our West-India islands; and is equally exempt from the torment of those tedious intermittents, which, in the same colonies, are the harbingers of dropsy and various obstructions. The days of the native, or of the stranger, are not threatened by frequent disease. Of us four Frenchmen, two only were attacked by indisposition. In Upper Egypt I was afflicted with an inflammation in one of my eyes; and our draughtsman was long before he could free himself from a cutaneous disorder, which he carried thither with him. All

the rest of the time we enjoyed perfect health. You may see Turks arrive from Constantinople, worn out by debauchery and diseases consequent to it, who, after a little stay in this country, resume at least the external appearance of health. All the reasoning in the world can be of no weight, when opposed to facts; and let a man add dissertation to dissertation, as Mr. Pauw has done, to prove that Egypt contains the seeds of an infinite number of diseases, experience, the most clear of all demonstrations, will attest the purity and salubrity of its air.

A few traces of the precautions taken by the ancient Egyptians in burying their dead, are still to be found among their modern successors. These are strangers to the art of embalming, it is true; but the care with which they dispose of the bodies of the dead, though this, it must be confessed, is connected with the precepts of the Mahometan religion, is the remnant, or, if you please, the shadow, of ancient and forgotten practice.

As soon as a person is dead, the Egyptians hasten to press the different parts of the corpse, to free it from all impurities; wash it several times; shave it; pull out all the hair; stop up every aperture closely with cotton; and pour over
it

it odoriferous waters, so that all its pores are penetrated with the perfumes of Arabia. After a profusion of these attentions to cleanliness, and marks of respect for the inanimate remains of the deceased, the corpse is committed to the earth, and deposited in the bosom of eternity. A little pillar of stone, terminated by a turban, is erected over the spot where the head of the deceased reposes; and to this mark his friends repair every Friday, to repeat their melancholy adieus. The women never fail to pay these visits, and express their hopes and regrets in religious ejaculations: the tears of the daughter water the face of the mother, and the sighs of the mother prolong in her mind with painful remembrance the existence of the children she has lost. I say nothing of the tears of husband and wife, for in this country their relation is merely that of master and slave.

This pious expression of regard to the dead, so neglected by us in the West, is a sacred duty among the people of the East, and is no where more punctually fulfilled. The idea, that in death we must renounce every mark of affection from all who have been most dear to us, afflicts the mind, and sinks it into despondency: but he who is assured that expressions of regret and the most tender sentiments will accompany him in the grave; that an affectionate and durable inter-

course will subsist between the living and the dead ; that, when his eyes are closed to the light, he will nevertheless be surrounded by those who were the objects of his regard ; feeling as if his mental enjoyments would be perpetuated, and be more delicious because less distracted by other objects, will enter with courage into that species of immortality which sensibility prepares for him.

However great the respect paid to the deceased by the Orientals, they do not think that the bodies of their departed friends have any right to injure those they leave behind them. Solitude and silence too are best adapted to the frequent and melancholy visits they receive. The last retreats of the dead are not mingled with the dwellings of the living. The cemeteries are large, still, separate enclosures, without the limits of the town ; and the bodies are covered with a bed of earth, so thick as to be secure against derangement from time : a delicate precaution, the source of which may be traced to the nicest feelings.

Biers covered with cloth, of no determinate colour, are employed in Egypt for conveying the deceased to the place of interment. A turban, the privileged head-dress of a Mussulman, is placed on the cloth over the head ; and that the corpse may be distinguished in all respects from
that

that of a Christian, it is carried with the head foremost. It is preceded by priests reciting passages of the Koran ; and women are hired to follow it with tears and lamentations. It may be presumed the number of priests and hired mourners that attend, will be in proportion to the money expended on the occasion.

At Rossetta there was no place destined for the reception of the Franks that might happen to die there ; so that they were conveyed to Alexandria, and interred in the convent of St. George. The corpse was attended by the clergyman, an interpreter, and a janisary ; and as the journey was made by land, the funeral was expensive.

After having spoken of the cemeteries of Egypt, it is natural to say a word or two of the diseases which most commonly lead to them. Putrid and inflammatory disorders, though neither frequent nor epidemic, attack persons of bilious temperaments. Dysenteries occur here, though they do not prevail so often as in Europe. Hernias are by no means rare ; though they are not occasioned by the water of the Nile, as some authors have asserted. Their real causes are the relaxation induced by the habitual use of the warm bath ; exercise on horseback ; and still more the excessive amplitude of certain parts of the dress worn in

this country *. Cutaneous diseases are common ; and would be still more prevalent, were it not for the use of the bath. The leprosy, and that horrible complaint the elephantiasis, sometimes make their appearance ; but they seem not to be very contagious, for individuals labouring under them are but rarely seen.

The last-mentioned species of leprosy, to which the ancient Egyptians also were liable, dries up and hardens the epidermis of the legs, and renders them very large, rugous, and similar in appearance to those of the elephant. It is peculiar to the northern part of Egypt ; very seldom appearing much beyond Cairo, as the ancients had already remarked †. Hillary, who observed this dry leprosy at Barbadoes, never saw both legs swelled at the same time ‡ : in Egypt, on the contrary, they equally acquire a hideous magnitude. No remedy for this disease is yet known : but the talents and researches of our French phy-

* Certainly a tight waistband must rather contribute to the production of hernia, than act as a preservative against it ; if we except the umbilical, which is far from the most common species.—T.

† *Est elephas morbus qui propter flumina Nili
Gignitur, Egypto in medio neque preterea usquam.*

LUCRETIUS.

‡ W. Hillary on the Glandular Disease of Barbadoes.

sicians

sicians will no doubt discover one. They will likewise have an opportunity of ascertaining the efficacy of the method employed for the cure of the elephantiasis by the Hindoo physicians, which is described with great care in the second volume of the Asiatic Researches, printed at Calcutta.

Perhaps there is not a country upon earth, where the disorder that corrupts the sources of future generations is more widely diffused than in Egypt. Its ravages, though checked by the warmth of the climate, copious perspiration, and warm baths, are not the less formidable; and, as no remedies are employed to stop their progress, they sometimes produce the most terrible effects,

Ophthalmia, or inflammation of the eyes, is a disease that may truly be deemed endemic here. Egypt is the country of the one-eyed and blind. Eyes perfectly sound, and eyelids neither bleared nor swelled, are rarely to be seen. Misfortune too has its bodies corporate; and the revolt of that of the blind at Cairo has sometimes made the government tremble.

If we may believe Hasselquitz *, the vapours that exhale from the stagnant waters are the chief

* Travels in the Levant, French translation, part ii. p. 117.

cause of these disorders of the eyes. But the ancient Egyptians paid the utmost attention to their canals: they cleaned them, and left in them no water to stagnate: yet they also were liable to ophthalmia. On the same principle, this author attributes the greater prevalence of complaints of the eyes at Cairo, than in any other part of Egypt, to the exhalations from the canal that traverses this city. Yet, in the month of August, the very period when the most fetid vapours exhale from this canal, I spent almost whole days at the window of an apartment looking over it, without perceiving the least inconvenience, except the offensive smell. If there be more blind persons at Cairo than elsewhere, it is because its population is very considerable; and besides, the poor repair thither from all parts, in hopes of finding more assistance. Disorders of the eyes, however, are equally prevalent in the other parts of Egypt; and though at Cairo I preserved my eyes unhurt, I was very near losing one of them at Saïd.

The excessive heat, the air impregnated with nitrous particles, the acrid and burning dust which the winds diffuse through the air, are the chief causes of disorders of the eyes. I have had frequent opportunities of experiencing this. If the wind blew a little strong, I could not expose myself to it for an instant in the middle of the
day.

day, on the terrace of the house in which I dwelt at Cairo, without experiencing a very painful inflammation in the eyes. The burning pain often continued for several days; and I could not get rid of it without the use of cooling lotions.

Among the causes of that blindness which is so common at Cairo and in all the large towns, must be reckoned the frequent watering of the streets and apartments. To temper the heat, a great quantity of water is sprinkled over them several times in a day. The ground, for the streets are not paved, being heated to a great degree, sends up after these waterings nitrous and fiery exhalations, which are offensive to the eyes. After I was cured of the ophthalmia, with which I had been attacked, my eyes remained very weak, and I observed, that whenever the ground was watered, or the gallery in which I was, I felt pain in my eyes, and was blind for a few moments. This is a remark, that I believe had never yet been made. There can be no doubt, that water, sprinkled copiously and repeatedly on a burning soil, which contains abundance of saline particles, must send up acrid vapours, which may be considered as one of the principal causes of blindness.

Some

Some secondary causes exist, to render diseases of the eyes more frequent than they were among the ancient Egyptians; as the bad quality of the aliments on which the present inhabitants of the country feed, and which impart to the fluids an acrimony that necessarily induces several disorders, particularly those of the organ of sight; to which must be added the extreme propensity of the Egyptians to pleasures which are seldom those of love*.

* *Multiplicatio coitûs est nocibilior res oculo.* Avicen. 3, cap. 5.

CHAP. XXIII.

Circumcision of females—Sect of Saadi, or Serpent-eaters.

EVERY one knows in what the circumcision of males consists: every one knows that the Jews and Mahometans are circumcised. Among the ancient Egyptians it was considered as an indispensable operation. Whether their climate necessarily required it, is a question which I shall not attempt to resolve here; though to me it appears almost incontestable, that circumcision, if not absolutely necessary, is at least of great utility in this country, among a rude and negligent people. It is practised likewise by the Copts, who, not thinking themselves sufficiently secure of an entrance into paradise in consequence of the baptism they receive as Christians, reckon circumcision among the precepts of their religion, as well as the Mahometans with whom they live. How strange is a religious practice, which nature disavows, and which cannot be mentioned without offence to modesty! The particulars of an operation, which is the same among all who follow the religion of Mahomet, will find their proper place in my Travels in Turkey: but in Egypt it is not confined

confined to males, there is a species of it appropriated to females likewise.

This was equally used by the ancient Egyptians, and has been transmitted by them to their descendants, by whom alone it is practised; for those foreigners who have come to settle in the country, have not submitted to it, and do not find it necessary. I am aware of the difficulty of treating subjects of such a nature, without exciting ideas different from those that arise in the mind of the naturalist intent on his researches; but this point of the natural history of man is too important to be passed over in silence, and no person before me has examined and determined it with accuracy. In my description I shall confine myself to the terms which the anatomist has consecrated to the use of science; for if in any case it be allowable to employ expressions not very intelligible to mankind at large, it is unquestionably on such delicate subjects.

It was well known that the Egyptian women were accustomed to the practice of circumcision; but people were not agreed on the motives which induced them to submit to the operation. Most of those who have written on the subject have considered it as a retrenchment of a portion of the nymphæ, which have been said to grow to an enormous

enormous size in this country. Others, among whom must be distinguished that illustrious traveller James Bruce*, have supposed, that it was nothing less than an amputation of the clitoris, the elongation of which, according to these authors, was a disgusting deformity. Mr. Bruce has given it the name of *excision*, a term which his able translator has introduced into the French language, and for which indeed it would not be easy to find a competent substitute.

Before I had an opportunity of ascertaining the nature of the circumcision of the Egyptian females, I too had supposed it to consist in the retrenchment of an elongation of the nymphæ or clitoris, adapted to the circumstances, and according as they were more or less elongated. Indeed it is very probable that these operations have been performed, not only in Egypt, but in several other countries in the East, where the heat of the climate, and other causes, may produce too luxuriant a growth of these parts: and this I have the more reason to think, since, on consulting several Turks who had settled at Rossetta, respecting the circumcision of their wives, I could obtain from them no other idea but that of these painful mutilations. They likewise explained to me the motives. Curious admirers, as has been seen, of smooth

* Travels to discover the Source of the Nile.

and polished surfaces, every inequality, every protuberance, is in their eyes a disgusting fault. They pretend, too, that one of these operations abates the ardour of the constitutions of their wives, and diminishes their facility of procuring illicit enjoyments. Barbarous refinement of tyranny, and last degree of debasement of one half of the human species, which the other moulds for its pleasure by cruelty, and at the will of its despotic jealousy!

Niebuhr relates, that Forskal, and another of his fellow-travellers, having expressed to a great man of Cairo, at whose country seat they were, the great desire they had to examine a girl that had been circumcised, their obliging host immediately ordered a country girl, eighteen years of age, to be sent for, and allowed them to examine her at their ease. Their painter made a drawing of the parts after the life, in presence of several Turkish domestics; but he drew with a trembling hand, as they were apprehensive of the consequences it might bring upon them from the Mahometans*. Mr. Niebuhr has not published this drawing made with a trembling hand †, and gives us no farther information respecting this circumcision. It is evident, how-

* Niebuhr's Description de l'Arabie, vol. i. p. 71.

† Professor Blumenbach has given a plate from it, by Niebuhr's permission, in his work *De Generis humani Varietate nativa.*—T.

ever, from what preceded, that this traveller saw nothing in it but the amputation of the nymphæ and clitoris, the enlargement of which is so much disliked by husbands in these countries.

I suspected that there must be something more in it than an excess of these parts : an inconvenience, which, being far from general among the women, could not have given rise to an ancient and universal practice. Determining to remove all my doubts on this subject, I took the resolution, which every one to whom the inhabitants of Egypt are known will deem sufficiently bold, not to procure a drawing of a circumcised female, but to have the operation performed under my own eyes. Mr. Forneti, whose complaisance and intelligence were so frequently of service to me, readily undertook to assist me in the business ; and a Turk, who acted as broker to the French merchants, brought into my chamber, at Rossetta, a woman, whose trade it was to perform the operation, with two young girls, of whom one was going to be circumcised, the other had been circumcised two years before. Mr. Forneti, the Turkish broker, the janisary of the consulship, and myself, were the only men present at the ceremony.

In the first place I examined the little girl that was to be circumcised. She was about eight years
VOL. II. D old,

old, and of the Egyptian race. I was much surprised at observing a thick, flabby, fleshy excrescence, covered with skin, taking its rise from above the opening of the labia, and hanging down it half an inch. A pretty accurate idea may be formed of its size, and even of its shape, from the pendulous caruncle on the beak of a turkey-cock.

The woman who was to perform the operation, sat down on the floor, made the little girl seat herself before her; and, without any preparation, cut off the singular excrescence I have just described, with an old razor. The girl did not give any signs of feeling much pain. A few ashes taken up between the finger and thumb were the only topical application employed, though a considerable quantity of blood was discharged from the wound. The woman touched neither the nymphæ nor clitoris, which parts did not appear externally, either in this girl, or in the other, who had been circumcised, and was older.

In this consists the circumcision of the Egyptian females; and it will easily be conceived that it is a necessary operation, since this elongated caruncle, as it may be called, increases with age, so that if it were suffered to grow, it would entirely cover the os externum. The woman assured me,
that,

that, by the age of five-and-twenty, it would exceed four inches in length. It is peculiar to women of Egyptian descent: all others, even those who 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, which arrives sooner here than in our more northern climes, but the Egyptian girls are generally freed from this inconvenient superfluity at the age of seven or eight. The women who are in the habit of performing this operation, which is attended with little difficulty, as may be judged from what has been said, come from Saïd. They travel through the towns and villages, crying in the streets, “Who wants a good circumciser?” A superstitious tradition has marked the commencement of the rise of the Nile as the period at which it ought to be performed; and accordingly, to the other difficulties I had to surmount, was added that of finding parents who would consent to the circumcision of their daughter at a season so distant from that which is considered as the most favourable; for this was done in the winter: but money removed this obstacle, as it did the rest.

If now we consider the nature of an excrescence, which is a distinguishing mark of the native Egyptian

tian women, we shall find in it some conformity with that which is peculiar to certain nations at the other extremity of Africa. Buffon refused to credit the testimony of the only traveller who had said that the Egyptian women have a kind of hard skin, growing above the os pubis, and hanging down very low, which they destroy by cauterizing it *. The account given by Thevenot, however, was true, and much less exaggerated than those of Kolben, and the Jesuit Tachard, when their imaginations led them to paint the natural apron of the Hottentots.

If it be true, that this natural veil is not exactly what was described, it appears at least, that peremptorily to deny its existence was wrong †; and if it be not common to all the women of the south of Africa, at least it can no longer be disputed that it is found among some of the nations inhabiting that part of the globe. A celebrated modern traveller at first supposed this peculiarity to be fabulous, because he did not meet with it in the districts which he traversed: but it afterwards came under his observation among some of the wild Hottentots, at a considerable distance from the Cape. He has given a delineation of one of

* *Hist. Nat. de l'Homme.*

† Sparmann's *Voyage au Cap de Bonne-Espérance*, vol. i. p. 239 and 245.

these female Hottentots, from which it seems, as if the peculiarity consisted in an elongation of the muscular substance covering the os pubis, which separates into two parts, as it falls perpendicularly over the labia. The author himself, however, who considers this singularity as the effect of art, or rather a whim of fashion, says, that it is an elongation of the labia themselves, the distention of which is commenced by rubbing and pulling them, and completed by the suspension of weights, till they sometimes attain the length of nine inches*. If Vaillant could have bestowed a little more time on his observations of a point so curious in the natural history of man, he would probably have found, that this extraordinary distention, which was represented to him as the effect of art, was the work of nature alone. In fact it is difficult to conceive, how the superior part of the labia can acquire any considerable length, whatever methods we may suppose to be employed for the purpose. When, too, we reflect, that at the opposite extremity of the same continent there is a people, whose females have a natural excrescence, differing from that of the Hottentots examined by Vaillant only in being single, and not bifurcated; when we are assured, that this excrescence is not the effect of any art whatever employed for the

* Vaillant's Travels into the interior Parts of Africa, Part I. vol. ii.

purpose, since the women are born with it, and are eager to have it removed; we are naturally led to the supposition, that it is not confined to the Egyptian women alone, but extends from their country to the Cape of Good Hope, in a line which includes the swarthy nations only, and not the negroes, among whom nothing of the kind is to be seen. This conjecture acquires some weight from the certainty we have, that the Abyssinian women practise circumcision as well as the Egyptian; and though we have no certain information respecting the motive for performing this operation in Abyssinia, it is more than probable that it arises from a similar conformation in both; particularly as the women who make a trade of circumcising girls in Egypt, come from that part of the country which is nearest to Abyssinia.

I contrived to procure myself also in my own house a spectacle of a different kind. Nature had afforded the subject of the former; but this was a remarkable specimen of the extravagance of man. The race of Psylli, the people who flattered themselves with possessing the quality of setting serpents at defiance, charming them, making them follow them at their call, and curing their bites, still exists in Egypt. There is a sect called *Saadis*, from the name of their founder, a saint highly venerated by the Mahometans in this country.

This

This *Saadi* had an uncle, a great man in Syria. Being sent one day for a bundle of sticks, when he had cut his faggot from the shrubs that grow in the wilderness, he was at a loss for a band. After much search to no purpose, he bethought himself of tying together a few serpents, and with this living cord he bound up his sticks. The uncle, delighted with his nephew's ingenuity, said to him, "Go about your business; you may now be left to yourself, for you know more than I." Immediately on this the learned youth set out upon his travels, charming serpents by his wonderful and supernatural skill, and had a great number of disciples, to whom he communicated his talent. His tomb is near Damascus, and is filled with serpents and other venomous creatures, among which you may lie down and sleep, without the least danger.

Such is the superstitious origin of a very numerous sect in Egypt, every individual of which inherits the art of its founder. Every year they celebrate his festival, in a manner suitable to their institution. They walk in procession through the streets, each holding in his hand a living serpent, which he bites, gnaws, and swallows piecemeal, with frightful grimaces and contortions. This festival, however, which I had a wish to see, is celebrated in the summer; and I was extremely

desirous of a close examination of one of these serpent-eaters. For this purpose Mr. Forneti and I took the same steps as we had done in the business of the circumcision, and a *saadi* came to my apartment, accompanied by a priest of his sect. The priest carried in his bosom a large serpent of a dusky green and copper colour, which he was continually handling; and, after having recited a prayer, he delivered it to the *saadi*. I observed, that the teeth of the reptile had been extracted; it was, however, very lively.

With a vigorous hand the *saadi* seized the serpent, which twisted itself round his naked arm. He began to appear agitated; his countenance was discomposed; his eyes rolled; he uttered terrible cries, bit the animal in the head, and tore off a morsel, which we saw him chew and swallow. On this his agitation became convulsive; his howlings were redoubled, his limbs writhed, his countenance assumed the features of madness, and his mouth, distended by terrible grimaces, was all in a foam. Every now and then he devoured a fresh morsel of the reptile. Three men endeavoured to hold him, but he dragged them all three round the chamber. His arms were thrown about with violence on all sides, and struck every thing within their reach. Eager to avoid him, Mr. Forneti and I were obliged
sometimes

sometimes to cling to the wall, to let him pass, and escape his blows. We could have wished the madman far away. At length the priest took the serpent from him; but his madness and convulsions did not cease immediately; he bit his hands, and his fury continued. The priest then grasped him in his arms, passed his hand gently down his back, lifted him from the ground, and recited some prayers. By degrees his agitation diminished, and subsided into a state of complete lassitude, in which he remained a few moments.

The Turks, who were present at this ridiculous and disgusting ceremony, were firmly persuaded of the reality of this religious fury: and it is very certain, that, whether it were reality or imposture, it is impossible to see the transports of rage and madness exhibited in a more striking manner, or have before your eyes a man in a state more calculated to inspire terror.

The great number of these serpent-eaters has led some to believe, and in particular Dr. Shaw, that they feed upon these reptiles. According to this English traveller, there are more than four thousand persons, in Cairo and its environs, who live wholly on serpents*. This, however, is a

* Shaw's Travels, vol. ii.

mistake. Serpents make no dish at the tables of the *saadis*; and though in their ceremonies they devour a few raw and alive, they by no means use them as food. In Egypt these men are much respected; but they are only laughed at by the Turks in other parts of the Ottoman empire.

I had an opportunity of conversing with a sheik, or priest of this sect, who was a man of great candour; for, while he assured me, that several of them had an extraordinary power over serpents, he confessed, that he had not the least claim to it, but, on the contrary, was much afraid of them. From this priest I learned a few particulars, which I shall relate. That they may have serpents always ready when wanted, they keep them in their houses; but they take the precaution to extract their teeth. If any person be bitten by a serpent, he runs to a *saadi*, who says a few words over the wound, scarifies the part with a razor, and, after having filled his mouth with lemon-juice, sucks out the blood repeatedly. These men cure likewise the *serpent's breath*, a name which they give to certain inflammatory pustules, to which those who sleep in the open air with any part of the body uncovered are liable, and which they pretend are occasioned by the pestilential breath of a serpent. The remedy they employ is ceruse mixed with oil of sesamum.

With

With this liniment they rub the pustules, never failing, at the same time, to mumble out certain words, without which no application would have any effect. Such is the lot of human kind, that there is not a people in the universe, of whose history many pages are not occupied by superstition.

CHAP. XXIV.

Winter—Eel of the Nile—Turtle—Birds—The Nightingale—Bird of prey—The little owl—White wagtail—Kingfishers—Heron—Purple gallinule—Spur-winged grovers—Hoopoes—Tenebrio—Orange-trees—Onions—Garlic—Lettuce—Colocasia—Ichneumon—Thaleb—Manner in which the Africans distinguish men—Rats and mice—Sheep—Goat—Preparations for quitting Rossetta—Meteorological observations—Gales of wind from the south.

IF there be any thing capable of consoling us for the errors that torment mankind, and are so frequently the cause of misery to them, it is unquestionably the contemplation of nature. In my frequent visits to the country round Rossetta, I forgot the absurdities and evils which tyrannize over every society of men, and the gloomy shades of melancholy, that occupied my mind, gave way to more pleasing thoughts.

The end of December was now arrived, which is the depth of winter in this country. The winds
 raged

raged with impetuosity, and furrowed with waves the Nile, now confined within its banks. Rain, sometimes accompanied by thunder, watered the land previously moistened by the river, which had but just retired to its bed. The agitation of the sea seldom allowed a vessel to venture out of port; and the rashness of those sailors who were not to be restrained by the danger, exposed them to certain risk, of which their lives were not unfrequently the forfeit. Of two *germes*, which, notwithstanding the threatening appearance of the weather, quitted the tranquil coast of Rossetta, and set sail for Alexandria, one was lost on the *Boghass*; the other, after having escaped the dangers of the bar, could not resist the fury of the waves, and foundered at sea. Each of these vessels had on board, beside the crew, fifteen or twenty *galliongis*, or Turkish marines, who belonged to a ship of war at anchor in the old port of Alexandria, and not a single person was saved from either of them. Amid this tumult of nature troops of porpoises sported in the mouth of the Nile, the seat of danger and of death, and shewed themselves more frequently before the walls of Rossetta, than at any other season.

The branch of the river that passes by Rossetta, affords different species of fish, which I shall have occasion to mention. One of the most common in this season is the eel of the Nile, which, according

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ing to Herodotus, was regarded as sacred by the ancient Egyptians*. The priests had stamped this fish with the seal of divinity, to prevent the people from eating it, because probably they had observed some noxious effects arising from its use. For this reason Mr. Pauw has called it the *pernicious eel* of the Nile †. At present the Egyptians eat it without the least scruple; the Europeans follow their example, and neither of them have experienced any bad consequences from it. The Turks alone refrain from it, but it is in consequence of their aversion to an animal, which, in their opinion, engenders with the serpent. At Rossetta these eels were very common: for ten-pence you could buy three, each upwards of two feet long; and I found them as delicate eating as our European eel.

This eel, however, has some slight differences from ours, and may constitute a distinct species, or at least a variety. The principal marks of distinction are:—1st, The little cirrhi of the upper jaw are longer than in our eel: 2dly, the dorsal fin terminates near the head, while in our eel it scarcely extends beyond the middle of the body: 3dly, the teeth are not arranged in the same manner: 4thly, in the lower jaw of the eel of the Nile are little holes, very apparent, which in the com-

* Lib. II. § 72.

† Recherches Philos. vol. i. p. 154.

mon species are not perceptible : 5thly, they differ in colour, all the upper part of the head and body of the eel of the Nile being of a deep black, shining with a changeable coppery lustre ; the sides of a lighter hue, with a similar lustre ; the under part of the head and body, of a beautiful and brilliant white ; and the eyes yellow. The Egyptians call it in Arabic *anesh*, the generic name for the serpent.

The fishermen of this country make use of different kinds of nets, among which I observed that which has the shape of a bag, and is called in France *truble*, or *trouble*.

A turtle was brought to me, that had been caught at the entrance of the Nile, on the *Boghass* itself, by a bait fastened to a large hook. It was three feet and a half in length, measuring from the end of the nose to that of the tail, which was only two inches long. The greatest breadth of the animal, including the shell, was two feet. In this species I readily discovered that which Forskal has distinguished by the denomination of *three-clawed* *. Its finformed feet are in fact furnished with three large projecting claws each, of a dull white colour. The upper jaw has at its extremity

* *Testudo triunguis*. Thirsé. Forskal, *Fauna orient.* p. 9.

an excrescence, in which the nostrils are placed, and which gives the muzzle some resemblance to the snout of a hog. The shell is roundish, and covered with asperities, but flattened and smooth at the edges. The under part of the body, that is to say, all which the shell does not cover, is white: the upper part is of a greenish gray: the head is gray, mottled with a whitish intermixture.

Is it a sea-turtle, or a fresh-water species? Forskal appears to consider it as an animal belonging to the Nile, because he says it is rare in this river*. But, supposing it to inhabit the Mediterranean, may it not sometimes enter the river with the water of the sea, when, driven by violent gales from the north, it comes to mingle with that of the Nile, imparting to it a saltness, which renders it very unpleasant to drink even above Rossetta? This being a circumstance of unfrequent occurrence, it would necessarily follow, that the turtle would seldom make its appearance along the banks of the Nile. I know well, that naturalists have agreed to consider finformed feet, such as this turtle has, to be a distinguishing character of the salt-water species, and obtuse and contracted feet, to be peculiar to those of the fresh-water: but the methods of natural history are not those of nature,

* *In Nilo rarior.* p. 9.

whom we see every day sport with them and demolish them, as conventions to which she was not called.

No place could be better calculated to increase this perplexity, than that in which my turtle was caught. It was taken at the very spot where the sea, enraged at being unable to extend its domain farther, comes to break against the natural barrier that stops it, and confound its turbulent waves with the sweet and tranquil water of a river; at the very confines unappropriated to either. The people of the country, however, by whom it was caught, and others to whom I showed it, and who knew the species, assured me that it was a sea-turtle. They called it *thirse*; a name, which, as I have already observed, is common to the whole genus, including every species, and serving no more to distinguish these amphibious animals from one another, than the French word *tortue**. The species in question is at least very excellent food. This the fishermen, who sold it to me, told me; and I was of their opinion, when I had tasted it, after it was dressed in its shell, in the West-India manner.

The bad weather had confined me within doors for several days, during which the sun was com-

* Answering to *testudo*, including both the land and water species, our *tortoise* and *turtle*.—T.

pletely obscured by the clouds; but the first appearance of his rays was to me a signal for new excursions, and I repaired to the country in quest of fresh amusements. There I found the same numerous families of birds, as I had been accustomed to see. The smaller kinds, to which were added some that I had never before observed, as the epicurean warbler, wren, titmouse, &c. were in the most lively agitation. The beams of the sun, of which they had been some time deprived, diffused joy among all their tribes. They intermingled with each other, flitting about, and hopping from spray to spray. They seemed as if they were mutually exciting each other to mirth. In the midst of this pleasing delirium some appeared to have forgotten their ordinary habits. The wagtails, desirous of participating the common joy, mixed with these animated groups, and perched like them on the bushes. I was cautious not to disturb and interrupt this festival of nature, and paid my homage to the beneficent orb, the gentle influence of which was celebrated with such charming ardour by these birds.

At some distance a more tranquil and solitary bird crept among the thickest of the large reeds. The nightingale* is known to spend the season of

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et pl. enlum. No. 615, fig. 2.
—*Motacilla luscinia*. Lin.

our winter in Lower Egypt: I have met with several in different parts of the Delta, where they prefer the closest covert, and places near the water. Here they do not display their art, or exhibit that melodious voice, those brilliant modulations, which make our forests and orchards resound with admirable tones: the only sound they utter is that kind of hoarse note, that rattling in the throat, which in our country succeeds their ravishing strains, when they have ceased to warble their loves.

Thus the assertion, that there are no nightingales in Africa*, appears to be very erroneous: they are to be found at least in the most eastern part of this quarter of the globe. They arrive here in autumn, and depart in spring; songsters of nature repairing to our woods, to celebrate her revival there. It appears, that they disperse themselves more freely through Syria, and other districts of Asia. Hasselquitz, who is quoted by Guenau de Montbeillard †, had already said, that they were found among the willows and olive-trees of Judea. I know not why some have affected to doubt his assertion, and chose rather to repeat, that the parts to which the nightingale retired in winter were unknown. On this subject there can no longer remain any doubt: I have seen them in Egypt,

* Mauduit, Enc. méthod. art. *Rossignol*.

† Hist. Nat. des Oiseaux, art. *Rossignol*.

where they were common ; and I have since been present at the period of their emigration in the islands of the Archipelago, where they rest themselves, probably on their way to Asia.

These scenes of happiness and joy, which I had before my eyes, were on the point of being interrupted and terminating in blood. Birds of prey, attracted by these assemblies of pleasure, hovered in the air, and their piercing eyes had already marked out the victims of their voracity. I resolved to be the protector and avenger of these little societies, and declared war on these ravagers of the feathered tribe. As often as I made a successful shot at one, I congratulated myself on having preserved the lives and peace of innocent beings, the delicate works of nature, and so sensible to her benefits.

Several of these birds of prey were of a species new to me. No order of birds is so refractory to method, or has so often baffled arrangement : accordingly I shall not attempt to assign the place this species ought to hold in this system or in that ; I shall merely describe it, a proceeding of more advantage to natural history, than discussions which frequently teach nothing. It appeared to me, however, that this bird approached nearer to the falcon, than to any other genus.

The

The principal distinctions of this bird consist in a very hooked beak, and a thick membrane covering its base, in which the nostrils are situate: wings a little longer than the tail, and having the first feather serrated along the exterior vane: legs short, and covered with feathers on the fore part, almost down to the toes: talons sharp and crooked: a tail with feathers of nearly equal length, the outer ones being the longest, and the others diminishing gradually to the middle ones, which are a little shorter than the rest, but so little as to be imperceptible, except when the tail is spread out.

Its dimensions are: total length, eleven inches and half: length of the beak, twelve lines and half: of the leg, seventeen lines: of the tail, four inches, eight lines: of the wings, ten inches and half; these, when closed, extending beyond the tail eight lines.

The forehead, all the under part of the body and tail, and the inner covert feathers of the wings, are of the most beautiful white: the upper part and anterior angle of the eye are covered with small, slender, black feathers: the upper part of the body and head, and greater wing coverts, are ash-coloured, slightly tipped with gray, with black shafts; the jagged vane of the first, white: the two middle feathers of the tail are white, mingled
E 3 with

with ash-coloured gray; the rest are white on the inner side, and of a light gray on the outer: the iris of the eye is of a brilliant orange colour: the cere and legs are yellow: the beak and claws are black.

The bird, from which the above description was taken, was a male. The right testicle was much larger than the left. The intestinal tube was seventeen inches long. There was a gall-bladder, but I could discover no cæcum. The trachea was very hard, and almost bony down to its bifurcation, whence it was cartilaginous and soft. The stomach was perfectly empty; but the bird had not been accustomed to fast, for it was very fat.

Birds of prey of this species are frequently to be seen in the country, particularly over fields of rice stubble, and near the banks of the Nile. They fly singly, and remain a long time in the air, without changing their place, supporting themselves by the motion of their wings. With their eyes fixed on the ground, they look for their prey; and if they discover none, they fly a little farther, and take a new station, remaining suspended in the air, till they discover some one of the animals they are accustomed to devour, when they dart upon him with the rapidity of a shot. I have never seen one settle on the ground: sometimes they perch on the
date-

date-trees, and are not very difficult to be approached.

The little owl is still less shy. Several shots that I fired, in order to procure a couple, did not frighten them sufficiently to make them fly to any distance; they contented themselves with merely removing from one tree to another. In general they are seen in pairs, at least at this season of the year; and from comparing them together I could not discover any perceptible difference between the male and female, either in size or colour.

Among the great number of wagtails* dispersed over the cultivated soil of Lower Egypt, I distinguished one, the plumage of which was entirely white, except that a slight tinge of gray extended over the upper part of the head and body, and formed a semicircle on the forepart of the neck: the rest of the bird was of a dazzling whiteness.

Near the water may be seen flocks of birds attracted thither by the facility with which they find food in abundance. Kingfishers† skimmed over

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et pl. enlum. No. 652.—
Motacilla alba. Lin.

† In this country there are two species: the kingfisher properly so called, *alcedo hispida*, Lin.; and the black and white kingfisher, *alcedo rudis*, Lin. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. pl. enlum. No. 116, the 24th species of Brisson.

the surface of the water ; while other birds, standing on their long legs, waited for their prey as it passed by. Among the number of these was the patient and melancholy heron, who is rendered extremely suspicious by his habitual state of wretchedness, and betakes himself to flight the moment he perceives the fowler. So true is it, that the habit of suffering does not always produce distaste of life : they only sink under it, who, not being moulded to misfortune, fall into it on a sudden, without having learned, that existence itself is an enjoyment even to the miserable.

Near the pools of water were numerous troops of curlews : water-hens concealed themselves amid the large reeds that grew there : and that beautiful bird, with plumage of the finest shining blue, with purple beak and legs, the natural and living ornament of the temples and palaces of the ancient Romans, which, from the stateliness of its port, as well as the brilliancy of its colours, has obtained the title of *sultana**, was also to be observed there. From delighting in rice-grounds this bird has acquired the name of *poule de riz* (rice-hen). I kept several of these beautiful birds at Rossetta. Those that were caught when old were not easily familiarized to the loss of liberty :

* *Poule sultane*, or *le porphyrio* : Buffon's Hist. Nat. pl. enlum. No. 810.—*Fulica porphyrio*, Lin. the purple gallinule.

restless and agitated, they were perpetually striving to escape from the aviary in which they were confined. At the commencement of their captivity they were fierce and shy; and if any person offered to touch them, would bite his fingers severely.—The cry they uttered from time to time nearly resembled the laugh of a person masked, who assumes a feigned voice. Sometimes their cry was more plaintive, when it was shorter, and not interrupted like the former. They fed on rice in the straw, freeing the grain from its husk, and frequently employing the assistance of their feet to convey it to their mouths and bruise it. As soon as they had eaten a grain of rice, they constantly ran to their store of water, and appeared to bite or chew it while drinking*.

The most numerous, and generally diffused, of all these aquatic birds, were the spur-winged plovers, noisy animals, which might likewise be called *mannerly* (*révérencieux*), for they have a hasty and almost continual movement of the head and neck, drawing them up briskly, and then quickly stretching them forward, almost as if they were making hasty and eager bows.

* The ancient naturalists had made this observation: *Solus morsu bibit*: Plin. lib. 10, § 63, lib. 11, § 79.

To finish the enumeration of these feathered tribes of the fine districts of Egypt, I shall observe, that there is scarcely one sandy spot, however small, provided it be in the neighbourhood of cultivated land, where hoopoes are not seen scratching with their feet, and thrusting their long bills into the ground.

These sands indeed are the retreat of numbers of insects, which burrow in them with facility. In one hole they had made I found a number of tenebrios, real animals of darkness, for they are entirely of a dull black. They were of the species described by Geoffroi, under the appellation of *ténébrion canellé**, but were larger than his, some being of the length of fifteen lines.

Amidst this profusion of animated nature, vegetation displays its most splendid treasures. Almost all kinds of fruit are in a state of maturity. Beside those I have already mentioned, delightful orchards display abundance of oranges, lemons, limes, bergamot lemons, and shaddocks. Who would not exchange the finest of our springs for such a winter?

Every one has heard of the onions of Egypt; every one knows how greatly they were esteemed

* Hist. des Ins. des Env. de Paris.—*Tenebrio muricata*. Lin.

by the ancient Egyptians; and no one can be ignorant how much they were regretted by the Hebrews, when forced to quit this land*. This culinary vegetable is still extremely common here: it is the most usual diet of the people, and almost the sole food of the lowest class. The allowance of a labourer in the country for his victuals, was a *medin* a day, equivalent to about five *liards* of our money †. With this trifling salary he buys as much bread and onions as he can eat, and has still a few *bourdes* left, a small copper coin, eight of which are equal in value to a *medin*. Onions are sold in the streets, and in the markets, raw or dressed, for the merest trifle. The Egyptians eat them raw with their food, to which they serve as sauce; and I was fond of eating them in the same manner, when they were young, green, and tender. These onions have by no means the same degree of acrimony as those of Europe: they are mild, and neither sting the mouth disagreeably, nor make the eyes water on cutting them. Still they are onions, and as they differ from ours only in having a less pungent taste, a less acrid flavour, there can be no

* “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, xi. 5.

† The French *liard* is equal only to half an English farthing; but, according to the table in the Encyclopædia Britannica, the *medin* of Egypt is equivalent to one penny two-thirds of our money, or above thirteen *liards*.—T.

doubt that the excessive use made of them in Egypt contributes greatly to augment the disposition to diseases of the eyes in that country.

Leeks, too, are eaten in Egypt, though in less quantity than onions: but garlic does not grow there, or more properly it grows there no longer; for it appears to me, that it must have been cultivated by the ancient Egyptians; since it is in the list of articles so much regretted by the Hebrews*; and Dioscorides, whom Mr. Pauw seems to charge with mistake, also reckons garlic among the plants of Egypt †. Be this as it may, it is no longer to be seen in the kitchen-gardens about Rossetta; and the people assure me, that the soil has been incapable of producing it from time immemorial. In some parts of South America various attempts have been made to cultivate onions, but to no purpose, so that they are imported from France, and I have seen a dish of onions at Cayenne considered as a great luxury. I cannot say whether similar attempts have been made with garlic in Lower Egypt: and it is possible, that the people being ignorant, and slaves to old customs, the present gardeners pretend that it will not succeed on their land, for no other reason, but because their fathers sowed

* See the first note in the preceding page.

† Recherch. Philos. sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. p. 138, in a note.

none; and this reason, which would amount to a demonstration in their eyes, would be sufficient to prevent them from entertaining the slightest thought of making a trial.

Notwithstanding this, a considerable quantity of garlic is still consumed in Egypt; but it is brought from Syria, and sold by the name of *grain of Damascus*.

Almost every species of culinary vegetable found in Europe abounds in the gardens about Rossetta; but the art of horticulture being very imperfect there, they have not acquired the numerous vegetables that adorn our kitchen-gardens and cover our tables. On the other hand, some are cultivated there very extensively. The Roman lettuce, for instance, covers whole fields. It is eaten raw, and a very good oil is expressed from its seeds. Other plants are cultivated for food, which are not employed for this purpose in Europe; as the *colocasia* *, a species of arum well known to the ancient Egyptians, the roots of which, when boiled, resemble our potatoes in taste.

As the Delta forms an island, it has not been found difficult to free it from wild beasts. Though on one side it borders on the skirt of the desert,

* *Arum colocasia*. Lin.

the cultivated plains of Rossetta are equally undisturbed by their presence. The sands of the desert, or the solitude of forests, are requisite for them: the bustle and effects of cultivation repel them to a distance. Those, however, whose nature it is to surprise the poultry bred by man, or the birds attracted by his fields, remain willingly near him, because they are certain of better success in the chase than elsewhere. Thus we frequently find the *nems*, or ichneumon, and the *thaleb**, committing depredation.

The *thaleb* is an animal somewhat resembling the jackal, but differing from it in some striking particulars, and principally in its habits. Buffon has given a very good figure of it, in his Supplement to the Natural History of Quadrupeds, by the name of *chacal-adive*. If the jackal be to the common people of Egypt the *father of Soliman*, the *thaleb* is to them in like manner the *father of Hussein*. I was never able to discover the origin of these two singular appellations. They lead me to remark, however, that, among these same people, a person who attracts their notice by any striking circumstance or feature, is quickly known by the name of father of that feature or circumstance.

* *Canis aureus*, Lin. *Canis vulpes*, Forskal, Fauna Egyptiaco-Arab. p. iv. It must be observed, that the thaleb differs from the fox.

My large nose often obtained me the title of *father of the nose*; and one of my companions, who wore very bushy whiskers, bore no other name, during our journey, than *father of the whiskers*. This jocular manner of distinguishing people, without having occasion to inquire their names, appears to be general in Africa. The negroes at Cape Verde used to call a clerk of the African company, who had lost one of his arms, *father of the arm*; and the Jalofs knew the governor of Goree by no other title than *borombir*, or *father of the belly*, because the rock which forms that little island, has to them the resemblance of a great belly.

There is every reason to believe, that whatever has been said of the fox of Egypt, by ancients or moderns, must be understood of the *thaleb*, who in fact has many features of resemblance to the fox. His hair is of a bright fawn-colour, deeper on the upper parts of the body than on the belly. He is particularly remarkable for a fine tail, striped transversely with black and gray. His eyes are as lively as his movements. His countenance is that of artifice and cunning: and while the jackals, which are merely ferocious, frighten away their prey by their noise and number, so that their nocturnal excursions are frequently fruitless, and they are sometimes reduced to the necessity of appeasing their hunger by food the most disgusting, or most repugnant

repugnant to their taste, the *thaleb*, more successful, because more adroit, never associates with others, but travels singly, approaches even in open day the houses, near which he fixes his subterranean abode, and, carefully concealed under thick bushes, creeps without noise, surprises the poultry, carries off their eggs, and leaves no traces to mark the devastations he has made, but the devastations themselves. In hunting birds, his habitual occupation, he displays the greatest possible agility and cunning, so that there are none that can escape him. One of the prettiest of quadrupeds, perhaps he would be one of the most amiable, if his tricks and talents for depredation did not bear too strong marks of knavery and falsehood.

One day, as I was meditating in a garden, I stopped near a hedge. A *thaleb*, hearing no noise, was coming through the hedge toward me, and, when he got out, was just at my feet. On perceiving me, he was seized with such surprise, that he remained motionless for some seconds, his eyes fixed upon me, without even attempting to escape. His perplexity was depicted in his countenance in a manner of which I could not have supposed it susceptible, and which denoted great delicacy of instinct. On my part I was afraid to make any movement, lest I should put an end to this situation, which afforded me much pleasure. At length,
after

after he had taken a few steps on this side and on that, as if too much confused to know which way to flee, and keeping his eyes still turned toward me, he retired, not running but stretching himself out, or rather creeping, with a slow step, setting down his feet alternately with singular precaution. He was so much afraid of making a noise in his flight, that he held up his large tail almost in a horizontal line, that it might neither drag upon the ground, nor touch the plants.

On the other side of the hedge I found the fragments of his meal, that had consisted of a bird of prey, great part of which he had devoured.

I believe, too, that both the thaleb and jackal are careful to cover their dung with earth or sand like the cat, for I have observed several of these hidden treasures in the sand, and in cultivated ground, which must have been deposited there by those animals. Such an instance of cleanliness would render the thaleb still more interesting, were he not so thievish.

Far more injurious animals, and at the same time very abundant, are the rats and mice. These would be such a scourge to Egypt, as to render it uninhabitable, had they not numerous enemies.

Of quadrupeds, the cat, ichneumon, thaleb, &c.; of birds, the ibis, stork, vulture, and different species of the rapacious order, are in the habit of hunting them for food. Man, too, is their enemy on the same principle; for there are several villages in the neighbourhood of Rossetta, the inhabitants of which catch rats to eat them, as soon as the waters of the Nile have retired from the plains.

The inundation of the river destroys a still greater number; but their fecundity is so prodigious, that in spite of so many instruments of destruction, they are still so abundant, as to appear to breed in full liberty, or spring even from the very obstacles that oppose their excessive increase. As soon as the Nile, after having enriched the land, leaves it free for cultivation, innumerable multitudes of rats and mice are seen to issue in succession from the moistened soil. Hence the Egyptians have been led to believe that they were produced by the earth itself. Some of them, who had the reputation of being more sensible than the rest, asserted, and, notwithstanding all I could say to them, maintained with the utmost effrontery, that they themselves had seen mice at the very instant of their pretended formation, which had one half of their bodies only flesh, the other half still of mud. This absurdity is not confined

fined to the inhabitants of Egypt ; authors have not been ashamed to disgrace their pages with the tale*.

All those animals that made war on the rats and mice were sacred in ancient Egypt, and under the protection of the laws both civil and religious. The moderns, who inhabit the same country, barbarous as they are, equally refrain from destroying them, and have preserved somewhat of the ancient veneration with respect to them. The French will readily perceive the importance of similar precautions, and abstaining from a sport, which would be productive of general detriment. On this the prosperity of the colony depends.

If from noxious animals we pass to those of most utility, we shall find two, which, greatly multiplied in Egypt, afford considerable resources to the inhabitants. These are the sheep and the goat. Of all domestic animals the ewe and the ram are the most common in this country. Their wool constitutes an important article of commerce, and their flesh is almost the only kind of meat used in Egypt, that of the ox being scarce, and that of the buffalo very far from good.

* Macrobius, Porta, and others.

Few of the orientals castrate their rams. This operation was prohibited by the law among the Hebrews; and ancient custom occasions it to be equally rejected by the present Egyptians. It would be the means, however, of rendering the flesh more tender and juicy, and depriving it of a slight taste of the grease or wool, which injures its flavour. The breed kept in Lower Egypt is the Barbary sheep*. If the breed in general be not so good as in Europe, the ewes are more fertile. They yean twice a year, and commonly two lambs at a time.

The species of goat bred in Lower Egypt is the Syrian †. It has been called, likewise, the *mambrine* goat, or goat of Mambre, or Mamre, because it is common on the mountain of this name, in the south of Palestine, near Hebron. It is almost always of a bright reddish colour: its horns are small; its body is slender: and its hair is short. Its head is longer than in the other breeds of goats, and more arched before; whence its countenance has an air of more ease, yet at the same time a little stupidity. One mark by which it may be

* Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Ovis laticaudata*, Lin.

† *Chèvre de Syrie*, Brisson, Règne animal, p. 72.—*Chèvre Mambrine, ou Chèvre du Levant*, Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, art. *Chamois: Capra Mambrica*, Lin.

readily distinguished at first sight, is its ear, which is of great length, and pendulous, an unequivocal sign of its having been long domesticated*.

In the humid plains of Lower Egypt goats of this breed are but indifferent eating. We may even presume, that their flesh is not very wholesome, particularly as the dietetic rules of the ancient physicians forbid its use in the Mendesian Nome and its environs, that is to say, in the part most inundated; while it was permitted in the mountainous countries of Thebais, where the sheep was prohibited in return, for what reason it is not easy to say. Though these goats are of a tolerably large size, they are by no means fit for the saddle, or to be employed as beasts of burden, which Bochart has asserted. They afford abundance of good milk, of which great use is made. Every morning they are driven about the different parts of the city of Cairo in little herds, and people see the milk drawn from them as they want it.

Those writers, who have exaggerated the fecundity of the cow and the buffalo, have spoken in a similar manner of the goats of Egypt. According

* Some authors have asserted, that its ears were so long as to trail on the ground, and that the orientals cut off one, that the goat might be able to feed. But these are mistakes; the ears do not touch the ground, and they are not cut off.

to Maillet, they bear six or seven kids at a time; and as they have young ones twice a year, it is not in the least extraordinary to see a goat followed by fourteen kids, to all which she has given birth within six or seven months*. It is very true, that the goats as well as the sheep bear young ones twice a year: but it is equally true, that they bring forth only two, or three, or, which very seldom happens, four kids at a time.

I had now been upwards of two months at Rossetta, and the disturbances in Egypt, far from being at an end, seemed to increase. A bey, of the name of Ismael, had succeeded in driving from Cairo two other beys, Mourad and Ibrahim, who were at the head of the government. These had taken refuge at Said, whence, aided by some Arabian chiefs, they menaced Ismael, who raised an army, to march against them. The petty governors, or *ki-aschefs*, had quitted the places of their command, and followed their master. The Bedouins, availing themselves of their absence, infested all the roads, and pillaged on all sides. The villages made war on each other; and from them issued bands of robbers, more dangerous and more cruel than the Bedouins. In short, the most complete disorder desolated the face of the country, and

* Description de l'Égypte, part ii. p. 5.

every attempt to travel was thought madness. But I was weary of remaining in a state of inactivity; and it grieved me to see my time passing away, as well as the very scanty allowance I received from government, without any attempt to accomplish the object I had in view, that of traversing Egypt. These considerations overpowered all the remonstrances of prudence, and even those of friendship; and since it was impracticable for me to penetrate into Upper Egypt, full of soldiers without discipline, and robbers who knew no control, I determined to visit that portion of the Libyan desert, which is called the desert of Nitria, or Saint Macarius.

I had written to Cairo, to obtain from Ismael Bey, at that time, though for a very short period, governor-general, or *sheik el belled*, orders to his subalterns to protect me, and the strongest recommendations to all, whose possessions I should have occasion to traverse. The high degree of honour in which the profession of physic is held among the oriental nations is well known: it is a more powerfulegis than all the recommendations of authority. With this I took care to cover myself: and that nothing might be wanting to my disguise, or rather to the precautions, without which it would have been vain to attempt to travel in that country, I assumed the name of *Yousef* (Joseph).

(Joseph). Conformably to circumstances, and according to the persons with whom I had to deal, I was *malloom*, master; or *kavonadgi*, merchant; or even *sidi*, sir. I did not hesitate even to wear the red turban, which, added to my dress, and that of my three companions, who wore the habit of the soldiers of the beys, made me pass more than once for a *Kiaschef*, or Mameluc officer, having the command of some district.

Before I take my leave of Rossetta, I shall insert the meteorological observations I made there in November and December, the period of my stay. To these I shall add what I made during part of February, after my return. For these observations I used a mercurial thermometer, made by Assier Perica, of Paris, a skilful artist for 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 appear from the following tables.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS,

MADE AT ROSSETTA,

In the Month of NOVEMBER 1777.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
6	8 A. M.	18°	N. N. W.	At three in the morning there was a pretty heavy shower, and this was the first in the year. At seven there fell again a little rain; and a rainbow appeared. At nine there was another storm, which continued ten minutes, the wind having come round to the north. Weather cloudy. The wind blowing hard as the rain came on, and abating after it was over.
	Noon.	19°	N. N. E.	Cloudy weather. Strong gale. At one o'clock, a slight small rain, which continued four or five minutes.
	6 P. M.	18°	N. N. E.	Strong gale. Many clouds.
7	8 A. M.	18° $\frac{1}{2}$	E. N. E.	Light wind. Fine weather.
	Noon.	19°	N. E.	Light wind. Many scattered clouds.
	6 P. M.	18°	N. E.	Very little wind. Sky a little cloudy.
8	8 A. M.	17° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Almost calm. Clear sky.
	Noon.	18°	N. E.	Light wind. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	18°	N. E.	Light wind. Clear sky.
9	8 A. M.	17° $\frac{1}{2}$	Calm.	Very thick fog.
	Noon.	18°	N. E.	Light wind. Sky a little cloudy.
	6 P. M.	18°	N. E.	Very little wind. Fine weather.
10	8 A. M.	18°	E. S. E.	Almost calm. Foggy.
	Noon.	18° $\frac{1}{2}$	E. S. E.	Light wind. Sky misty. After 12 o'clock the wind came round to the East, and a little after to the N. N. E.
	6 P. M.	18°	N. E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
11	8 A. M.	17° $\frac{1}{2}$	E. S. E.	Little wind. Foggy.
	Noon	20°	E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	19° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
12	—	—	—	Absent.
13				
14				

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
15	8 A. M.	17 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Strong gale. Fine weather.
	Noon.	18 ⁰	N.	Strong gale. A little cloudy.
	6 P. M.	17 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Weather cleared up.
16	8 A. M.	17 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Light wind. Sky cloudy toward the East.
	Noon.	18 ⁰	N. by W.	Strong gale. Cloudy.
	6 P. M.	17 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Strong gale. Very cloudy.
17	8 A. M.	18 ⁰		Calm.
	Noon.	19 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Very little wind.
	6 P. M.	19 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Very little wind. Fine weather during the whole of the day.
18	8 A. M.	19 ⁰	W.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon.	20 ⁰	W.	Strong gale. Appearance of the sky threatening a thunder-storm.
	6 P. M.	19 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Light wind. Fine weather.
19	8 A. M.	17 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Light wind. Thick fog.
	Noon.	20 ⁰	W.	Light wind. Fleecy clouds.
	6 P. M.	19 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Light wind. Cloudy. During the whole of the evening it lightened in the East, but no thunder was heard.
20	8 A. M.	18 ⁰	W.	Almost calm. Cloudy.
	Noon.	19 ⁰	W.	Fresh breeze, with violent gusts of wind. Dark cloudy weather.
	6 P. M.	18 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Little wind. Rain.
21	8 A. M.	18 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	Calm.	During the greater part of the night it rained. In the morning cloudy.
	Noon.	19 ⁰	N. E.	Strong gale. Cloudy weather. In the afternoon the wind came round suddenly to the S. S. W. and it rained till 5 P. M.
	6 P. M.	18 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	Calm.	A great deal of lightning in the East, without thunder. Rain almost the whole of the night.
22	8 A. M.	17 ⁰	S. W.	Strong gale. Very cloudy weather. Rain at intervals.
	Noon.	17 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	S. W.	Very strong gale.
	6 P. M.	17 ⁰	S. W.	Strong gale. Frequent squalls of rain during the course of the day.

N. B. To this period, inclusively, I kept my thermometer near the window of my chamber, the doors and windows of which were constantly open except at night: but on the 23d I removed it into the shade, in a place constantly exposed to the air, whence the great difference the reader is about to observe.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
23	8 A. M.	11° $\frac{1}{4}$	S. S. W.	Very violent gale ever since midnight. A few scattered clouds.
	Noon.	14°	S. S. W.	Very violent gale. The air rendered thick by the quantity of sand blown along by the wind.
	6 P. M.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	S. S. W.	Gale still very violent. I have seldom seen a gale so violent, and of so long continuance. After sunset it abated a little, but still continued to blow with great violence. The air still thick with sand.
24	8 A. M.	10° $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Before day the wind had come round to the West, blowing violently, and several squalls of rain occurred throughout the morning.
	Noon.	12° $\frac{1}{2}$	W. N. W.	Strong gale. Cloudy.
	6 P. M.	14° $\frac{1}{2}$	W. N. W.	Strong gale. The sky besprinkled with clouds in every quarter. At 9 P. M. a squall of rain.
25	8 A. M.	10°	W.	Strong gale. Tolerably fine.
	Noon.	14°	W. S. W.	Strong gale. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
26	8 A. M.	14° $\frac{1}{2}$	S. by W.	Strong gale. Fine. At 6 A. M. the wind was very piercing, and the cold very sharp; the thermometer, however, was not lower than 9° $\frac{1}{2}$.
	Noon.	15°	W.	Very violent gale. The sky besprinkled with little clouds. At 2 P. M. a squall of rain, accompanied with a very violent gust of wind, and a rainbow. At 8 P. M. another squall of rain, more considerable than the former.
	6 P. M.	14°	W. by S.	Heavy gale. Rain. Both the gale and the rain continued all the night.
27	8 A. M.	10° $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	Strong gale. Rain.
	Noon.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	Strong gale. Rain.
	6 P. M.	12° $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	Strong gale. Rain, which continued almost all the night.
28	8 A. M.	10° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Strong gale. Rain till 9 A. M.
	Noon.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Strong gale. Tolerably fine; but this did not continue long, for there were some squalls of rain in the afternoon.
	6 P. M.	11°	N. N. W.	Very strong gale. Cloudy. Frequent squalls of rain during the night.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
29	8 A. M.	$10^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	W. by N.	Little wind. Rain during the whole of the morning.
	Noon.	$12^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Little wind. Rain. After noon the weather cleared up a little.
	6 P. M.	11°	W.	Little wind. Cloudy, without rain.
30	8 A. M.	$11^{\circ}\frac{3}{4}$	W.	Little wind. A slight small rain for a few minutes. Cloudy.
	Noon.	$15^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	$14^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.

Remarks on the preceding Table.

The first days of this month were the beginning of winter, at Rossetta, Alexandria, and on all the coast of Egypt. The first rain of the year fell on the 6th, and the bad weather was almost incessant during the whole course of the month. From the 1st to the 6th, when I was unable to make any regular observations, the wind was to the north, or north-north-east; and every morning there was a thick fog, which continued sometimes till ten o'clock.

The wind varied greatly during the course of the month; yet it blew longer from the westward than from any other quarter. It frequently blew with violence; but the hardest gale was on
the

the 22d, at south-west, and the 23d, when it was at its greatest height, at south-south-west. It is seldom that so strong a gale continues two days with equal impetuosity. These southerly gales are the winds that prove so dangerous and fatal to caravans and travellers, who happen to be at the time on the sands of Egypt, and run the risk of being suffocated by the burning blast, or stifled by the mountains of sand it raises. On the 23d, though there are no large tracts of sand in the neighbourhood of Rossetta, the air in this town was so loaded with fine particles of sand, that they penetrated into the apartments, notwithstanding both windows and doors were shut. This extraordinary quantity of sand was brought by the wind from the desert of St. Macarius, and its environs.

After my thermometer was exposed to the open air, that is to say, during a space of eight days, the highest degree of heat it indicated was 15° , on the 30th at noon, and it never fell below 10° . The cold, however, was very perceptible to my feelings, chiefly in the morning.

I observed a rainbow twice: the first in the morning of the 6th, after which fair weather ensued; the second in the afternoon of the 26th, which

which was followed by very foul weather. This serves to confirm the vulgar opinion, that the appearance of this phenomenon in the morning indicates fair weather, in the evening, foul*.

* In some parts of England, at least, the vulgar saying is precisely the reverse of this. At any rate, two such instances can have very little weight in establishing or controverting a general rule.—T.

DECEMBER, 1777.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
1	8 A. M.	11°	S. S. W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	Noon.	14°	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	13°	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
2	8 A. M.	11° $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	Noon.	15° $\frac{1}{4}$	N. W.	Little wind. The sky besprinkled with a few blackish clouds.
3	6 P. M.	14°	N. W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	8 A. M.	11° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. W.	Little wind. Fine weather. Ever since sunrise there has been a slight fog.
	Noon.	15°	N. E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
4	6 P. M.	14°	N. E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	8 A. M.	12° $\frac{1}{2}$	E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	Noon.	16°	E. N. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather. A few large dark clouds.
5	6 P. M.	15°	E. N. E.	Strong gale. Cloudy.
	8 A. M.	11°	Calm.	Fine weather.
	Noon.	14°	N.	Little wind. Fine weather.
6	6 P. M.	13°	N.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	8 A. M.	13°	Calm.	Foggy.
	Noon.	17° $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Very little wind. Weather a little cloudy.
7	6 P. M.	14°	N.	Very little wind. Less cloudy than at noon. A slight fog.
	8 A. M.	12° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Almost calm. Slight fog, with fleecy clouds.
	Noon.	16°	N.	Little wind. Fine weather.
8	6 P. M.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Very little wind. Fine weather.
	8 A. M.	15°	N. N. E.	Little wind. Cloudy.
	Noon.	16°	N. N. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
9	6 P. M.	14°	E. N. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
	8 A. M.	14° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon.	16°	N. N. E.	Strong gale. Small scattered clouds.
10	6 P. M.	14°	N. N. E.	Very little wind. Sky almost entirely clear.
	8 A. M.	15°	N. N. E.	Strong gale. Many clouds.
	Noon.	17°	N. E.	Strong gale. Sky almost entirely clear.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
10	6 P. M.	15 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Strong gale. Clear sky.
11	8 A. M.	14 ⁰ $\frac{3}{4}$	E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	Noon.	17 ⁰	N. E.	Strong gale. Sky almost entirely clear.
12	6 P. M.	16 ⁰	N. N. E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	8 A. M.	13 ⁰	N.	Almost calm. Cloudy.
	Noon.	16 ⁰	N. N. W.	Fresh gale. Cloudy.
	6 P. M.	14 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Fresh gale. Cloudy. The wind afterwards increased, and the weather cleared up. During the whole night the wind was very violent.
13	8 A. M.	12 ⁰	N. W.	Violent gale. Weather cloudy, and threatening rain. The Nile considerably raised by the wind, which also occasioned in it a great swell. About noon there was a little squall of rain, in very fine drops, driven on with rapidity by the wind.
	Noon.	9 ⁰	N. W.	Very violent gale. Cloudy. In the afternoon a small rain for a few moments.
	6 P. M.	9 ⁰	N. W.	The strength of the gale diminished a little. Weather cloudy.
14	8 A. M.	12 ⁰	W.	Strong gale. Cloudy. A slight rain.
	Noon.	14 ⁰	W.	Strong gale. Slight small rain at intervals.
	6 P. M.	12 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Strong gale. Cloudy. A few squalls of rain in the evening, and during the night.
15	8 A. M.	13 ⁰	N. W.	Little wind. Cloudy.
	Noon.	15 ⁰ $\frac{1}{4}$	W.	Little wind. Cloudy.
	6 P. M.	14 ⁰	W. N. W.	Very little wind. Cloudy.
16	8 A. M.	11 ⁰	S.	Very little wind. A few small white clouds.
	Noon.	13 ⁰	S.	Little wind. The horizon cloudy in the south.
	6 P. M.	12 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	S.	Strong gale. Sky cloudy, and threatening a storm.
17	8 A. M.	11 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	S. E.	Little wind. Weather a little cloudy. About 10 o'clock it cleared up, and continued very fine the remainder of the day.
18	8 A. M.	13 ⁰	W.	Little wind. A fog, which reascended into the atmosphere, and the sky became covered with clouds.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
18	Noon.	16°	W.	Fresh breeze. Cloudy.
	6 P. M.	15°	W.	Little wind. Cloudy.
19	8 A. M.	13°	W.	Fresh breeze. Sky cloudy, and very gloomy toward the north.
	Noon.	16°	W.	Strong gale. Clear sky.
20	6 P. M.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	The horizon cloudy to the westward. At 9 o'clock in the evening a little rain.
	8 A. M.	11° $\frac{1}{2}$	S. S. W.	Very little wind. Fine weather.
	Noon.	16° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. W.	Very little wind. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	15°	N.	Very little wind. The horizon cloudy in the north-west.
21	8 A. M.	11° $\frac{1}{4}$	Calm.	Foggy.
	Noon.	15° $\frac{1}{2}$	E.	Almost calm. The sky besprinkled with scattered clouds.
	6 P. M.	14° $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Very little wind. Sky cloudy, and very black in the north.
22	8 A. M.	11° $\frac{1}{2}$	S. S. E.	Fresh gale. Cloudy.
	Noon.	15°	S. E.	Fresh breeze. Cloudy. At 2 P. M. a little rain fell for a few minutes.
23	6 P. M.	13°	S. E.	Little wind. Cloudy.
	8 A. M.	13°	W. S. W.	Little wind. Very cloudy weather. Drizzling rain all the morning.
	Noon.	15°	S. W.	Fresh gale. Very cloudy. Drizzling rain.
	6 P. M.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	S. W.	Strong gale. Very cloudy. Drizzling rain.
24	8 A. M.	12°	W.	Fresh breeze. The clouds, which had completely covered the sky, began to break.
	Noon.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	S. W.	Fresh breeze. The clouds more separated than in the morning.
	6 P. M.	11°	S. W.	Fresh breeze.
25	8 A. M.	9°	S. W.	Strong gale. At sun-rise there was a considerable rain, which continued till 11 o'clock.
	Noon.	14°	W. S. W.	Strong gale. The horizon cloudy, and very black. In the afternoon a few squalls of rain.
	6 P. M.	12°	S. W.	The sky almost wholly free from clouds: but the horizon thick toward the south.
26	8 A. M.	11°	S.	Little wind. Cloudy.
	Noon.	15°	S. S. E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	13° $\frac{1}{2}$	S. S. E.	Little wind. Fine weather.
27	8 A. M.	12°	W. S. W.	Almost calm. A little fog. - Gloomy weather. At 9 A. M. a little drizzling rain began to fall, and continued till near noon.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
27	Noon.	15°	S. W.	Little wind. Weather cloudy, and gloomy.
	6 P. M.	13 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	Very little wind. Weather cloudy, and gloomy.
28	8 A. M.	10 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W. S. W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	Noon.	12 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Clear sky. Very fine weather.
	6 P. M.	11 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Little wind. Very fine weather.
29	—	—	—	Very fine weather. <i>Left Rossetta.</i>

Remarks on the preceding Table.

The month of December was in general finer than that of November. The wind, to the 15th, blew almost always from the northern quarter; and the remainder of the month from the southern. There was but one storm of wind, from the north-west, on the 13th, which was less violent, and of shorter duration, than that in the month of November.

The greatest heat indicated by the thermometer was 17⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$, on the 6th. The wind was northerly, but almost a calm: in the morning the weather had been foggy, and it was a little cloudy the whole day.

The coldest day was the 13th. The thermometer, after having been at 12° in the morning, fell

fell to 9° . Before noon the wind blew very violently from the north-west: the weather was very cloudy, and some rain fell.

Thus the difference between the hottest day and the coldest in this month was $8^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$, and the mean between the two $13^{\circ}\frac{1}{4}$.

FEBRUARY, 1778.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
1	8 A. M.	13°	W. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Large and dense black clouds. At half after 11 a small rain fell, and continued for a quarter of an hour.
	Noon.	14°	W. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Several large scattered clouds.
	6 P. M.	14°	W. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Clear sky.
2	8 A. M.	$11^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	S. E.	Little wind. Sky misty, with some scattered clouds. At 9 A. M. a little squall of rain.
	Noon.	16°	NW. by N	Little wind. The horizon loaded with thick vapours.
	6 P. M.	14°	N.	Little wind. Fine weather.
3	8 A. M.	13°	N. N. W.	Strong gale. From midnight till 9 A. M. a heavy rain fell, with a strong N. N. W. wind.
	Noon.	13°	N. W.	Very strong gale. Several large scattered clouds.
	6 P. M.	$11^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	N. W.	Very strong gale. The horizon covered with black clouds. At 7 P. M. it began to rain, and continued part of the night.
4	8 A. M.	11°	N. W.	Little wind. Cloudy. At 9 A. M. the wind came round to the west, with rain.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
4	Noon.	11 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Little wind. Rain.
	6 P. M.	11 ⁰	W.	Little wind. Cloudy. At 8 P. M. a very heavy rain fell, which continued the whole night.
5	8 A. M.	11 ⁰ $\frac{1}{4}$	N. W.	Little wind. Cloudy. At 9 A. M. rain, which continued all the morning.
	Noon.	11 ⁰	N. W.	Little wind. Rain, which continued the whole of the day and night, in heavy squalls, accompanied with violent gusts of wind.
6	8 A. M.	8 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Strong gale. Rain.
	Noon.	10 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Strong gale, with a very heavy rain, during the remainder of the day, and part of the night.
7	8 A. M.	10 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Little wind. Cloudy. Some rain in the morning.
	Noon.	15 ⁰	N. N. W.	Fresh breeze. Less cloudy than in the morning, and the sun appearing at intervals.
	6 P. M.	12 ⁰	N. N. W.	Little wind. Less cloudy than at noon.
8	8 A. M.	11 ⁰	S. S. W.	Little wind. Clear sky. Fine weather.
	Noon.	14 ⁰	S.	Little wind. Very fine weather.
	6 P. M.	11 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
9	8 A. M.	10 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	S. S. E.	Fresh breeze. Air loaded with dense vapours.
	Noon.	15 ⁰	S. E.	Fresh breeze. Cloudy.
10	6 P. M.	12 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	E.	Strong gale. Less cloudy than at noon.
	8 A. M.	10 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	S.	Almost calm. Fine weather.
	Noon.	16 ⁰	W.	Strong gale. Fine weather.
11	6 P. M.	13 ⁰	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	8 A. M.	10 ⁰	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
	Noon.	15 ⁰	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
12	6 P. M.	13 ⁰	Calm.	Very fine weather.
	8 A. M.	10 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	S. W.	Little wind. Very fine weather.
	Noon.	15 ⁰	W.	Little wind. Very fine weather.
13	6 P. M.	11 ⁰	W. N. W.	Almost calm. Very fine weather.
	8 A. M.	12 ⁰	N. W.	Little wind. A few scattered clouds.
	Noon.	15 ⁰ $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. W.	Fresh breeze. A few clouds.
14	6 P. M.	13 ⁰	N. by W.	Almost calm. A great many clouds.
	8 A. M.	13 ⁰	N. N. W.	Almost calm. Cloudy.
	Noon.	16 ⁰	N. by W.	Little wind. Cloudy.
	6 P. M.	13 ⁰	N.	Almost calm. Cloudy.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Therm. of Réaum.	Wind.	REMARKS.
15	8 A. M.	$10^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	S. S. E.	Fresh breeze. Fine weather.
	Noon.	$17^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	S. E.	Strong gale. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	$13^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	S. S. E.	Strong gale. The sky obscured by dense vapours.
16	8 A. M.	$10^{\circ}\frac{1}{4}$	S.	Strong gale. Fine weather.
	Noon.	$17^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	W.	Strong gale. Fine weather.
	6 P. M.	13°	W.	Little wind. Fine weather.
17	8 A. M.	$10^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$	S.	Little wind. Very thick fog. <i>Left Rossetta.</i>

Remarks on the preceding Table.

Of the first seventeen days in the month of February, the 15th was the hottest, and the 6th was the least warm. On the 15th the thermometer at noon was at $17^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$; on the 6th at noon it was at $10^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$, after having been at $8^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$ in the morning. On this day the wind blew a strong gale from the west, and it had rained incessantly for two days. On the 15th, the day of the greatest heat, the wind blew from "the south-south-east and south-east, and the weather was fine. The difference of heat between these two days was 7° , and the mean term of heat was 14° .

During these seventeen days the wind was very variable; yet it blew more frequently from the westward, than from any other quarter. The weather was very bad, and the rain almost continual,

tinual, accompanied with violent gusts of wind. During the bad weather the wind was westerly.

It must be observed likewise, that, whenever the wind blew with any strength from the south-east or south-south-east, the weather was thick and misty. This was a general remark I made during the whole time of my observations at Rossetta: for in the month of December the wind was three times south-east, or south-south-east, with thick weather; and so in November the wind blew for two days together from the east-south-east, and the air was obscured, in the morning, with a thick mist.

CHAP. XXV.

Departure from Rossetta—Bedouins—Agreement with the Arabs—Tumult at Aboukir—Camp between Aboukir and Alexandria—Wild oxen—Consequence of the tumult at Aboukir—Inscription—Camp of Bedouins—Camels—Alarm in the Camp—Manners and hospitality of the Bedouins—Opinion peculiar to them—Ancient cube.

THE 29th of December was fixed upon for the day of my departure. We had mules to ride on, the beasts usually employed for the saddle on the road to Alexandria; and a camel to carry our baggage, which was contained in two *caffass*, a handsome kind of large covered panier, fastened one on each side of the camel. The consul would make his janisary accompany me as far as Aboukir, where I hoped to find means of reaching the desert of Nitria; and at nine o'clock in the morning we set out on our journey.

This time we found, at the Lake of Maadiè, a commodious decked boat. Half a league beyond this ancient mouth of the Nile was a small camp of Bedouins. They presented us with water, according to custom, and were very pressing for us to pass the night under their tents. A few days

before, some European merchants, coming from Alexandria with their wives, and detained at the ferry for want of a boat, had been obliged to sleep in the camp of these Bedouins, and spoke much in their praise. Not having the least mistrust of them, I hired some of them to escort the camel, whose slowness had greatly retarded the progress of our journey, while we went before with the janisary and our mules, and arrived at Aboukir about eight o'clock in the evening. We alighted at the house of the Jew interpreter, who received us with testimonies of sincere hospitality.

When the good Jew was informed of the object of my journey, and I requested him to procure me camels, that I might proceed to the desert, he exclaimed against the rashness of the undertaking; represented it as extremely dangerous, nay even mad; and finished with declaring that he would do nothing in it, because he would not be the cause of my destruction, which he considered as inevitable. When he found I grew angry, and assured him that nothing could make me change my resolution, for I was determined on the journey, he gave up the point.

A sheick, or chief of the Bedouin Arabs, was encamped at a little distance from Aboukir. He was a man well known, brave, and intrusted with
guarding

guarding the road from Alexandria to Rossetta. For him the interpreter sent, though with great reluctance, and at midnight he arrived. Our agreement was made at the instant. The Arab was to furnish us with a horse and four camels, and to accompany me for four patacas * a day, without my being at any expense for food, either for him or his beasts. At day-break a notary of the country drew up our agreement in Arabic, the Jew interpreter having noted down the conditions. He wrote in Spanish, like all those of his countrymen who reside here, but with Hebrew characters; just as our German Jews employ these characters for writing German. The contract was signed by witnesses, a precaution at which I smiled within myself; for to what tribunal should I have brought my Bedouin, if he had not fulfilled his engagement? The contracting parties, the notary, the witnesses, the Jew, the janisary, and my companions, all sat on the ground in a circle; and when the contract was signed, each stretching out his hand, made a short prayer to God and to Maho-

* *Pataca* is the name used in the Egyptian trade to denote a silver coin of Hungary, worth five livres ten sous, or four shillings and seven pence. It is a corruption of *aboutaka* (father of the window), which the Arabs have given the piece, because they mistake the coat of arms for a window. In the same manner they call the dollar of Holland *aboukelb* (father of the dog), on account of the awkward figure of a lion upon it, which they take for a dog.

met, which he finished by taking hold of his beard, or chin, with the right hand, the mode of swearing to fulfil a promise, which guarantees the performance of every agreement, written or verbal.

While these preliminaries were settling, the people of Aboukir, who had found the pyramidal stone, which I had purchased on my first journey, and which had given birth to a multitude of difficulties, assembled together on hearing of my return, and stirred up their fellow-townsmen, under pretence that I had carried away a treasure from their country, and was hiring camels to carry off others of still greater value. Again they demanded of me the price of the great riches of which I had deprived them. The tumult became general; the barber governor would likewise have his share of the ingots of gold I had taken, and of those I was preparing to carry away from him beside. He made his shop ring with imprecations against the Franks in general, and me in particular. The Jew interpreter quaked for fear: the janisary harangued the mob, to convince them of their mistake: my companions were alarmed; and I was not without my apprehensions, though I concealed them, and affected unconcern and contempt for all this uproar, which, in fact, was not unlikely to lead to more serious consequences. That no doubts might be entertained of my security, I detained the mules
from

from Rossetta, and resolved to traverse that part of the coast which lies between Aboukir and Alexandria.

At eight o'clock in the morning I set off. I passed through a little village very near Aboukir, on the west side of it, which is called *Kasr Dsjami*, or Castle of the Mosque. In fact there is a temple in it. Beyond this village I met with nothing, on my way to Alexandria, but several spacious houses, all standing single, though at no great distance from each other. They are inhabited by farmers; are tolerably well built, of modern construction, and among the stones employed in building them are some fragments of granite, the remains of ancient edifices. Each of these houses bears the appellation of *kasr*, or castle, to which some particular word of designation is added. Though they are inclosed within walls, they are not secure against the depredations of the Bedouins, who sometimes break through the walls to plunder them. I sought in vain for the castle of the Cæsars, *Kasr Kiassera*, mentioned by Danville in his *Ancient Geography**, and laid down on his map of Egypt, as if it still existed under its Arabian name. I inquired of the

* "A little distance from Alexandria, and on the shore, a place, the name of which, *Nicotolis*, perpetuated the remembrance of an advantage obtained by Augustus over Antony, is now called *Kasr Kiassera*, or Castle of the Cæsars,"—*Geographie ancienne, par Danville, tome i. p. 11.*

inhabitants of the coast ; but they all assured me that they never heard of *Kasr Kiassera*. This castle of the Cæsars, however, was probably a dependancy of *Taposiris*, which Strabo mentions * by the name of *Taposiris parva*, to distinguish it from another town of the same name. Thither it was that Antony frequently repaired, to forget the grandeur of the Roman name in the lap of pleasure, and barter his glory for the charms of the beautiful and voluptuous Cleopatra.

All this coast is formed of hillocks of sand, behind which a low land, often subject to inundations, affords a few spots capable of cultivation.

After I had taken some refreshment under the shade of a few date-trees, within two cannon-shots of Alexandria, I returned toward Aboukir, and passed by two or three tents of Bedouins. They kept a few wild oxen, which having been caught very young, were become as tame as the common ones. A few shades of colour excepted, they greatly resembled the *zebu* described by Buffon †.

On my return to Aboukir I found the people in still greater fermentation than before my departure. Some atrocious villains, such as are to be found in the midst of all disturbances, impudent calumniators, affirmed, that they had seen me several times

* Lib. 17. † Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.

arrive in their neighbourhood by night, load my beasts with gold and depart immediately. This was enough to raise the tumult to its height. They agreed to suffer us to load the camels, which the Bedouins were to bring me with their riches ; and then to fall upon us, and massacre us, in order to recover the treasures of which we were robbing them. This scheme, which alarmed my comrades, greatly diminished my apprehensions. I had resolved not to allow myself to be attacked with impunity. The next day the Bedouins came for me with the camels. The dissolute and imbecile populace surrounded us: but seeing that I had not the least appearance of being afraid of them, and in particular observing that the camels took away nothing but men, and the paniers which we brought with us, they suffered us to depart quietly, except bestowing on us a few menaces, to which I paid little regard.

On taking leave of the Jew interpreter, he importuned me afresh to relinquish my design, of which he said he was sure I should not fail to be the victim. He urged me to reflect on the danger to which I should be exposed, in districts where I could hope for no protector, and of which I might judge from what had just passed in a town, where the habit of seeing Europeans and their ships had not prevented me from incurring considerable risk. I thanked him for his anxiety ; the janisary resumed

sumed the road to Rossetta ; and we directed our course to the south-east.

I had given the janisary a letter for Mr. Forneti, in which I acquainted him with the tumult that had taken place at Aboukir, of which I had been the occasion, and in which my life had been at stake. This he imparted to the Aga of Rossetta, who fell into a great passion with the people of Aboukir; called them *dogs*, which was putting them upon a level with Europeans; offered Mr. Forneti to have them punished; an offer, which, as may be supposed, was not accepted; and added, that, if I chose to make the same journey again, I should be accompanied by one of his people, before whom all Aboukir would tremble: a mode of governing worthy of men subject to such chiefs.

We crossed a sandy plain, uncultivated, and entirely destitute of inhabitants. A numerous herd of antelopes* appeared at a distance. On our way we found the tomb of a Mussulman saint. These tombs are usually enclosed within a little chapel, and pious Mahometans never fail to enter them, and put up their prayers. I entered without ceremony into this, with my Bedouin sheick, who was called *Hussein*. In it I observed a fragment of beautiful white marble, on which a Greek inscription

* Pasan. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Antilope oryx*, Lin.—*Capra gazella*, Forskal, Fauna Egypt.-Arab. p. iv.

was engraved. Half of the first line was obliterated; the rest was in good preservation, but the characters were rudely formed. On my expressing some desire to have this marble, Hussein, who felt no scruple about profaning the place, pulled it up from the pavement of which it made a part, and sold it to me. It was twenty-two inches long, sixteen wide, and a little more than four inches thick. It was among a great number of curiosities, which I had intended for the national collections, and of which I have been robbed; though for this scandalous breach of faith I can accuse neither the Arabs, nor any of the Orientals. I shall insert the inscription here, with a translation, for which, as well as the notes accompanying it, I am indebted to citizen Gail, the learned professor of Greek literature in the College of France.

.....ΦΛΕΥΤΟΛ
 ΤΟΣΕΠΑΡΧΤΟΥΙΘ-
 ΑΙΓΥΠΤΙΑΚΗΣΔΙΟΙ
 ΑΓΑΙΑΠΟΘΕΜΕΛΙ
 ΒΑΘΟΥΣΠΗΧ'ΔΕΚΑ
 ΑΜΗΚΟΥΣΠΗΧ'ΔΙ·
 Π'ΑΡΡ'ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ
 ΤΟΥΤΑΓΜΑΤΟΣΚΑΙ
 ΓΥΠΤΙΑΚΗΣΔΙΟΙ

. EUTOLTUS,
GOVERNOR OF THE NINETEENTH (*Nome*).
IN HONOUR OF THE EGYPTIAN JUPITER.
THIS (*monument*) HAS AT ITS FOUNDATION TEN
CUBITS.

ITS PERPENDICULAR ELEVATION IS FORTY
CUBITS. THE HEIGHT OF ITS SIDES IS A HUN-
DRED CUBITS.

IN HONOUR OF ALEXANDER,
OF HIS ARMY, AND
OF THE EGYPTIAN JUPITER.

“ This inscription, which, at the first sight, ap-
peared easy to me, offers great difficulties.

“ I shall not attempt to divine the import of the
first two letters φ and λ, the points preceding them
indicating an hiatus. The dash after *επαρχ*, de-
notes an abbreviation, which it was not more dif-
ficult for me to supply, than to guess at the ellipsis
of the word *νομος*, or *department*. The third line
appears to me susceptible of two significations.
Αιγυπτιωικης Διοι may signify, either in honour of
the Jupiter of the land of Egypt (*χωρας* being un-
derstood after *αιγυπτιωικης*), or in honour of the
Egyptian Jupiter, 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

“ At the word Δ_{101} some grammarian might stop me. This, I shall observe, is the genitive of $\Sigma_{\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma}$: $\Sigma_{\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma}$ having Δ_{105} in the genitive case, for which Δ_{101} is put ionically. Here let me remark by the by, that the modern Greeks, as probably the ancients did likewise, pronounce the diphthong oi like our i [ee], whence the Latins appear to me to have derived their genitives and nominatives in i .

“ $\Theta_{\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\iota}$ I take to be 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 $\pi_{\epsilon\chi\upsilon\varsigma}$, $\pi\eta\chi_{\epsilon\omicron\varsigma}$.

“ *Its perpendicular elevation is forty cubits.* In the Greek we have ΔI , which would signify either four and ten, that is to say fourteen, or perhaps four multiplied by ten, or forty. The first appears to me too little: and as the second is merely conjectural, I would rather suppose, that the Δ was included in a large Π , in this manner $\overline{|\Delta|}$; and, as the Δ included in a Π has its value increased five times, I should thus have fifty-one. However, I shall have occasion to return to this subject again, when I discuss the arithmetic of the Greeks, which I purpose to investigate thoroughly.

“ $\Pi'APP'$. As the first three letters here given are never found connected together in the Grecian

arithmetic, I suspect an error of the artist, by whom the inscription was engraved. Instead of Π'APP' I would propose to read ΠΑΡ by abbreviation for πλευρα, which signifies *sides*, and the second P will express a hundred.

“ *In honour of Alexander.* Is this Alexander Severus, or Alexander the Great? The investigation of this question, and of two others which I put to myself on reading the inscription over again, would form the subject of an important dissertation, which my present occupations will not allow me to undertake.”

At five o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at a camp of Arabs. It was Hussein's. We had left Aboukir at nine in the morning, and I estimated our day's journey to be about seven leagues.

Our arrival was expected in the camp. Hussein's tent was prepared for my reception: it was spread with carpets, which the women manufacture with their own hands; and a few faggots covered with the same carpets, served as cushions. The beasts, which are accustomed to share the shelter of the Bedouin, had all been dismissed from this tent, except one young ox. All the tents of these Bedouins have the same shape, and differ from each other only in size. They who lead the most wandering



Tent of the Bedouins.



wandering lives, have them smallest, that they may be carried about with most facility. Hussein and the Arabs of his tribe were husbandmen as well as nomades, 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. It is the lee side which is left open; and as the north winds chiefly prevail in this country, it is almost always the north side which is closed. The stuff of which they are made is fabricated of camel's hair. I caused a drawing of Sheick Hussein's tent to be taken. (See Plate X.) It was distinguished from the rest by nothing but a large plume of black ostrich feathers, placed on the summit.

This drawing will serve for an answer to Michaëlis, part of one of whose questions to the travellers sent into the East by the King of Denmark was, What is the form of the tents of the Bedouins *? With regard to the second part of the same question, whether they have retained the custom of pitching their tents so as to be overshadowed by some tree, I shall observe, that in general those of Egypt encamp in places destitute of trees; and if any happen to be on the spot, they pay no attention to them in pitching their tents.

* Voyageurs sav. et cur. Quest. ix. tom. i. p. 20.

This camp was pitched about a hundred paces from the canal of Alexandria, the waters of which, turned through the land by the labour of the Bedouins, fertilized a considerable tract of ground. Different kinds of food for cattle were cultivated there, on which horses, camels, sheep, and a few oxen, were seen grazing.

If we follow the distinction made by Aristotle and Pliny, and adopted by Buffon *, between two species of animals, which nature has discriminated by a constant and very striking mark, there are no camels in Egypt. In fact there is no animal of this kind here with two bunches on the back †; all that are found in this country have only one, and are consequently of the dromedary species. But the generic name of camel is so commonly used for the latter species with only one bunch also, and that of dromedary is so generally applied to a peculiar breed of these animals, that the reader probably would not understand me, were I to adopt a distinction necessary to the precision of science, but which might occasion some confusion in my narrative. The Arabic word *dsjemmel*, which answers to *camel*, is likewise the only one

* Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, art. Chameau.

† Cnameau. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes. *Camelus bactrianus*. Lin.

used by the inhabitants of Egypt for that breed, which is the most common, most useful, of greatest size and strength, heavy of foot, and employed for carrying burdens*. On the contrary, that which is less tall and bulky, and possesses great agility, is called a *dromedary* by the Europeans, and *hadjin* by the Arabs †, because it is the animal which the *hadjis*, or pilgrims, usually ride.

Besides the camels of these two breeds, there is a third in Egypt, which is much less known. I have seen a few of them among the Bedouins; they are of a shorter make, their body is more round, they are not so tall, their hair is longer and thicker, and they are of a sallow colour inclining to brown.

Nature, when she covered the soil of these burning regions with deserts, gave man the camel to traverse them. Without this animal, which she formed to endure hunger, thirst, and all the inconveniences attending heat and drought, vast plains of sand and stones, and arid mountains rugged with rocks, would have proved insurmountable barriers to man: with him, numerous troops tread the moving sands, and exhibit a wonderful

* Dromadaire. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.—*Camelus dromedarius*. Lin.—*Camelus vulgaris*. Forskal, Fauna Egyptiaco-Arabica, p. iv.

† *Camelus dromedarius*. Forskal, ib.

spectacle to the observer, who is astonished to behold men, in places which appear formed to repel every thing that breathes : with him circulate all the treasures of the East : with him the solitary traveller fears not to enter the spacious void that separates one people from another.

With qualities of such general utility these valuable animals possess a great degree of instinct and intelligence. They are said, indeed, to be extremely sensible of injustice and ill-treatment. The Arabs assert, that, if a person strike them without cause, he will not find it easy to escape their vengeance ; and that they will retain the remembrance of it till an opportunity offer for gratifying their revenge, having in this point a striking similarity of character with their masters. They are the least patient in rutting-time. At this season they frequently emit a kind of hoarse lowing, a strong rattling in the throat, and push out of their throat a reddish bladder, as large as a hog's, and of a disgusting appearance. It is said, that in their fits of rage they sometimes take up a man in their teeth, throw him on the ground, and trample him under their feet. Eager to revenge themselves, they no longer retain any rancour, when once they are satisfied : and it is even sufficient, if they believe they have satisfied their vengeance. Accordingly, when an Arab has excited the

the

the rage of a camel, he lays down his garments in some place near which the animal will pass, and disposes them in such a manner, that they appear to cover a man sleeping under them. The camel knows the garments of him by whom he has been treated with injustice; seizes them in his teeth; shakes them with violence; and tramples on them in a rage. When his anger is appeased, he leaves them, and then the owner of the dress may make his appearance without fear, load and guide wherever he pleases the animal, who submits with astonishing docility to the will of a man whom before it was his wish to destroy.

I have sometimes seen *hadjins*, or dromedaries, weary of the impatience of their riders, stop short, turn round their long neck to bite them, and utter cries of rage. In these circumstances the rider must be careful not to alight, as he would infallibly be torn to pieces: he must also refrain from striking his beast, which would only increase his fury. Nothing can be done but to have patience, and appease the animal by patting him with the hand, which frequently requires some time, when he will resume his way and his pace of himself. The pace of these dromedaries is a very long trot, during which they carry the head high, and the tail stretched out stiff in a horizontal position. The

saddle, or rather pack-saddle, on which the rider sits, is hollowed in the middle, and has at each saddle-bow a round piece of wood, placed vertically, which he grasps firmly with each hand, to keep himself in his seat. Some of these saddles are more simple, not so well stuffed, and less convenient, than those of the Arabs; and the handles at the saddle bows are horizontal. These are brought from Sennaar, the capital of Nubia. A long pocket on each side, to hold provision for the rider and his beast; a skin of water for the rider alone, as the dromedary can travel a week without drinking; with a leather thong in the hand, to serve as a whip, are the whole of the traveller's equipage; and thus equipped he may cross the deserts, travelling fifty, nay four-score leagues a day. This mode of travelling is fatiguing to excess: the loins are broken by the rough and quick shaking of the dromedary's pace; the hands are soon galled, and very painful; and the burning air, which you divide with rapidity, impedes the breath, so as almost to induce suffocation. The most extraordinary journey of this kind, which I ever heard mentioned, was made by a Bedouin, who was often pointed out to me at Cairo. He travelled from that city to Mecca, a distance of more than four hundred leagues, in five days; for which the caravan of pilgrims employs upwards of thirty.

When

When the traveller is not in haste, or accompanies a caravan, the progress of which is always slow, on account of the camels of burden, a kind of covered litter is fixed on one of these animals, in which he is tolerably at his ease, and may even sleep if he choose. The women usually travel in this manner; and sometimes there are five or six of them together in a litter.

Pliny has repeated from Xenophon, that camels, and under this generic term dromedaries are included, cannot bear horses. Others have said, that they have an equal aversion for asses and mules. But the truth is, that all these animals, at least in Egypt and Turkey, live and travel together; and there is always an ass at the head of a file of loaded camels, whom he leads, the first of them being fastened to the ass, and following him step by step. Others have agreed in the assertion, that camels must not be beaten to make them go on, and that singing and whistling are sufficient to quicken their pace. It is true, they must not be beaten too much, or on improper occasions, which would soon make them turn restive: but the drivers of the loaded camels have a stick, with which they beat them, and they who ride upon camels whip them with a long strap of leather. Both are likewise urged on with a clicking of the tongue, much like that

that employed by us in Europe to spirit up our horses. It is proper to remark, likewise, while on this subject, that the Bedouins never whistle; and that it gives them pain, if a traveller, ignorant of their customs, whistle in their company. I am persuaded too, that, when they sing, their only object is to beguile the tediousness of their journey.

The Hebrews are not allowed to eat the flesh of the camel * : but the Arabs, and other inhabitants of Egypt, Christians excepted, consider it as a dainty, and even as very wholesome food : nay, in those cities where fanaticism is at the highest pitch, as in Cairo and Alexandria, it is not allowed to be profaned by being sold to the Franks, who, however, are by no means desirous of it, for, though it has no disagreeable flavour, it is hard and dry. In Barbary, camels' tongues are salted and smoked, for exportation to Italy and other countries; and make a very good dish.

The camel, so adapted by nature to the countries of the East, where it constitutes the chief wealth of nations, by whom it is venerated as the gift of Heaven, was not among the sacred animals of ancient Egypt. Under a government, the sole tendency of which was to keep its people separate from

* Leviticus, chap. xi. v. 4.

all others, and to occupy them wholly in cultivating the land, every thing not conducive to these purposes was a matter of indifference; every thing militating against them was an object of detestation. Hence it was, that the horse, the ass, and the camel, animals necessary to commercial nations, were to the Egyptians objects of contempt.

The present inhabitants of Egypt keep a large number of camels, which are bred and sold to them by the Arabs. They fetch a pretty high price. At Cairo they are worth four or five hundred livres apiece: in Upper Egypt they were not so dear, their price varying from two to three hundred livres. They are equally numerous in Barbary: but they become more scarce as you proceed along the western coast of Africa, and are hardly to be met with beyond Cape Verde; for I never saw more than one or two in the possession of some great men in the country of the Jaloffs.

Beside the two highly beneficial properties of its utility for the saddle, and as a beast of burden, the camel possesses others not less valuable. Its hair is an important article of commerce, and serves likewise 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 countries where wood is extremely scarce* : from the same substance sal ammoniac is obtained : and the milk of the females affords one of the simple and salutary aliments of the Bedouins.

We had not been with Hussein's Bedouins an hour, when an alarm was spread through the camp, at the sight of a troop of hostile and predatory Bedouins, which was discovered in the plain. Every person was roused : the women shrieked for fear : the men ran to their arms ; some leaped upon the first horses they could meet with, others set out on foot in pursuit of these robbers. In the midst of this unexpected bustle, we remained quiet with the old men and women to guard the camp. Reflecting on this sudden appearance of a troop with hostile designs, the thought suggested itself to my mind, that we were its object ; and that its march was the consequence of the tumult at Aboukir, and the opinion propagated there of the immense treasures we had taken away with us. I would not render my companions uneasy by imparting to them my suspicions, but the sequel shewed that they were well-founded.

* In some parts of England, where wood is scarce and coal dear, cow-dung is used in the same manner for the same purpose.—T.

Tranquillity being restored, hospitality, a sacred duty among these nations, resumed its rites; the exercise of which nothing less than the necessity of self-defence could have suspended. A live sheep, intended for the supper of my little party, was brought me at Hussein's tent, which was become mine, and which I shared only with the young ox, my companions being accommodated in different tents: but on its being observed that I was tender of depriving the poor animal of life, we were supplied with delicious milk, and a sort of little cakes, that were crisp and very good; Hussein's wives asking me every instant whether I would eat any thing.

It is in the midst of these societies in the desert we must look for that frank cordiality, which instantly converts a host into a friend and brother. Here that hypocritical politeness, those lying expressions of civility, with which people mutually overwhelm each other in our fashionable circles in Europe, while they reciprocally agree to place no confidence in them, are unknown. Here simple and natural offers are made of objects equally simple, to refuse which would excite real pain in the minds of those who make them, while the acceptance of their hospitable gifts is sure to fill them with gratitude, and at the same time you run no risk of being burdensome to your host.

Jealousy,

Jealousy, the daughter of pride, is here as far from tyrannizing over the women. Luxury and factitious pleasures, bringing immorality in their train, have not attempted to establish themselves on these parched and thirsty sands. The manners of their inhabitants remain pure, simple, and such as they were described in the ancient histories of the same people. The women are not afraid, like those of the other nations of Egypt, to exhibit their faces uncovered, to converse freely with a stranger, and to display that pleasing and natural gaiety which is the companion of virtue unchecked by remorse. I have already said, that these women, when young, may pass for not destitute of beauty, notwithstanding their tawny hue, and though European eyes cannot easily familiarize themselves to those painful compartments, which they impress indelibly on the lower part of their faces with a needle and black dye. This whimsical ornament is common to several people, chiefly Africans: it is even introduced into Malta, where the people make similar impressions, not on their faces, but on other parts of their bodies. Most of the sailors of Provence, who touch at this island, make a point of getting themselves marked by men, who practise the art of tracing upon the arms and hands figures of every kind, but chiefly objects of devotion. The grenadier of marines, whom I had with me, had been silly enough to have himself marked, wear-

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ing a representation of a crucifix, which extended from the wrist to the elbow *. I did not perceive this till we reached Cairo, when it was too late to dismiss him : but surely a crucifix was a strange recommendation in a country where Mahometan bigotry is carried to the highest pitch.

The Bedouins in general are very handsome men. Their lives, simple, uniform, and uninjured by excesses, are extended to the term fixed by nature. They live to be very old, and in their advanced age they are conspicuous for a respectable and truly patriarchal appearance. There is one race, however, one portion of this nation, degenerated from its natural state through want, continual excursions, and the hardships of a wretched and unquiet life. These, always wandering, always robbers, and always miserable, are in general of a small and sorry figure, in which it is difficult to discover any traces of their original beauty.

* This practice is not confined to Malta, I believe, and certainly not to the sailors of France. It is by no means uncommon for English seamen who sail up the Mediterranean, to have their arms or hands tatoed in this manner, commonly with a crucifix, and often with the initials of their names.— Protestant seamen wear this indelible symbol of the Catholic religion, that their corpse may receive Christian burial; they say, if they should be cast away, and their bodies be thrown upon the shore of a Catholic country.—T.

I found

I found a singular opinion entertained by my hosts, which tradition had rendered sacred among them! They assert, that their ancestors were Europeans and Christians, who, having been shipwrecked on the coast of Egypt, were plundered, and reduced to live in the desert. All they have retained of the pretended Christianity of their forefathers, is the sign of the cross, which they make with their fingers, or trace upon the sand. I know not how far this story deserves credit: but this much is certain, it was related to me at different times, by several men of the camp, without being drawn from them, and I never heard a similar story from any other tribe.

I remained awake the whole night, being so tormented by a prodigious number of fleas, that I could not get a wink of sleep. They are attracted by the animals and the fire kept under the tents: the ground and the carpets are covered with them, and I could not but admire the insensibility of the Bedouins, who sleep profoundly in the midst of these insects.

A Bedouin had found a small antique cube of bronze, which I obtained from him. The length of its sides was nine lines. The two letters LV engraved upon it are probably Roman numerals, answering to 55. (See a representation of it Plate XIII. fig. 5.)

CHAP. XXVI.

Journey across Bahire—Bedouins—Starlings—Beans—Damankhour—Reports spread respecting the Author's journey—Cotton—Courtesans—Continuation of the journey as far as the desert—Wretched state of the country people—Superb plains—The desert—Hares—Birds—Wild oxen—Antelopes—A tiger—Ostriches.

AFTER having made a few trifling presents to my host's wives, we set out, on the first of January 1778, at eight o'clock in the morning. I was mounted on a very fine horse, that would have carried me over a great deal of ground, if the extreme slowness of the camels, which conveyed my companions, and which were of the small breed, had not retarded my progress. A village named *Karioum* appeared on a height, about a league to the north-west of the camp. We pursued our way along the canal of Alexandria, directing our course south-east. On this side there were only some very small tracts cultivated; the rest being a mere plain of sand, less parched indeed than what we had crossed the day before in coming from Aboukir; whence it may be presumed, that rigid despotism and the barbarous state of the inhabitants

have condemned this bank to sterility. The opposite bank exhibited a less melancholy aspect, a line of villages appearing to range parallel with it at a little distance.

I had gone on before with my horse, and arrived at a village called *Bersik*, near which some Bedouins of the same tribe with Hussein were encamped. The Scheick, without knowing who I was, conducted me to his tent. On giving him to understand that I was a Frenchman, I was immediately surrounded by a crowd of Bedouins, who looked at me, examined me, felt me, as if I were some extraordinary being. These made the sign of the cross with their fingers, or on the sand, like those I had just left. The women too were desirous of seeing me, but they accompanied their curiosity with presents of excellent milk. I was pressed upon on all sides, till at length the arrival of our party freed me from my friendly but too troublesome companions.

On leaving *Bersik* the arid plains of sand were exchanged for fertile fields, in which were a prodigious quantity of larks, flying in large flocks.

About noon we reached a village, or rather three villages situate very near each other, all bearing the name of *Sentaw*. Near them, in the midst
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of a herd of cows, I saw a numerous flock of starlings*, the first that I had observed in Egypt, where they were arrived to pass the winter.

Hussein conducted us to the *Sheick el Belled*, or chief of the country, to whom I presented the letter or order of Ismael Bey. The Sheick could not read, but he was well acquainted with the seal of the commander in chief. Just in the same manner the savages of Guyana pay obedience to him who bears the seal of the governor of Cayenne. He gave us a dinner disgusting enough in itself, and still more from the slovenly manner in which the Bedouins and peasants fell upon the dishes.

At two o'clock we resumed our journey across the plains, which on every side were bounded only by the horizon, and embellished by cultivation. They were covered with beans † in full bloom, diffusing through the air a sweet and pleasing odour. The winds, passing over these beds of flowers, bear away with them the fragrant scent, with which they perfume the towns. This plant was an abomination to the ancient Egyptians; they not only abstained from eating beans, but they were even forbidden to sow them; and the priests could not

* Etourneau. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Oiseaux, et pl. enlum. No. 75.—*Sturnus vulgaris*. Lin.

† *Vicia faba*. Lin.

bear so much as their very sight. At present they cover vast fields, and this species of pulse constitutes one of the most common articles of food for the sheep and beasts of burden. I know no plain capable of being compared with that which we were traversing. A few little hills appeared as if they were placed in it expressly for the purpose of interrupting the brilliant uniformity of the flowers, and some ruins of deserted habitations rendered the prospect still more picturesque.

In the evening we arrived at *Guebil*, a village on the western bank of the canal of Alexandria, and, like all that I had seen, built of mud. The *Sheick el Belled*, of whom I inquired whether there were not some vestiges of antiquity in his village or its environs, informed me that a superb figure was to be seen in the mosque. Thither I desired to be conducted, and found, that this famous figure was half a lion's head, antique it must be confessed, which the inhabitants had enchased in one of the walls of their temple. On the 2d of Jan. at day-break, I perceived a considerable flight of cranes * passing over the village. Opposite *Guebil* we crossed the canal of Alexandria perfectly dry-shod, and reached *Damanhour* by ten o'clock in the morning. The road between these two places led

* Grue. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Oiseaux, et pl. enlum. No. 769.—*Ardea grus*, Lin.

through fields covered with clover, and with beans in blossom. This extent of cultivated district makes part of the province of *Bahire*, of which *Damanhour* is the capital, and which is one of the finest countries in the world.

I stopped at the entrance of the town, to inquire whether some dealers in cotton, who carried on a constant intercourse in the way of trade with our merchants at Rossetta, were at home. I had been promised at Rossetta that they should be informed of my journey, and requested to afford me any services in their power. They had heard nothing of it: nevertheless they sent a son of one of the partners to conduct me to their house, where I met a very friendly reception. The next day, on their finding I said nothing about the purchase of cotton, which they supposed to be the object of my journey, I perceived a little coolness in them, and took leave of my too mercantile-minded hosts. From them I went to take up my abode in a sort of dirty and gloomy chamber in a caravansary; but I was scarcely in possession of my new lodging, before I received an express from Rossetta, with a letter of recommendation to the cotton-merchants. As soon as they were acquainted with it, they came to entreat me to return to the lodging I had quitted in their house, for which I coolly gave them my thanks, without accepting their offer.

Mr. Forneti wrote to me, that it was said at Rossetta the roads were unsafe, consequently I ought to be upon my guard. He advised me, too, for my own security, to give up all thoughts of continuing my researches. “The stone which you have carried to Damanhour,” added he, “has made a great deal of noise here; and I own I am far from easy, as several persons have assured me, that a stranger, accompanied by some Arabs, was travelling about the villages in quest of treasures, and had found one near Damanhour.”

How rapidly spread these reports, the offspring of barbarism and ignorance! They had reached Damanhour before me, where the people talked loudly of the gold I had already collected, and that which the camels of the Bedouins were intended to carry away. A merchant of the country, firmly persuaded of the truth of these notions, came to me in secret, and offered to enter into a partnership with me. He said he would be at all the expense of conducting me wherever there were any ruins, digging, &c. on condition he should have half of the treasures I caused to rise out of the ground. I contented myself with laughing in the silly fellow's face; but he was so nettled at my refusal, that he did all in his power to increase my vexations, and give currency to the idle tales that were spread.

Nothing in the world could dissuade these people from the opinion they entertained respecting travellers; since they could not conceive that a man would quit his country, spend a great deal of money, and expose himself to a thousand dangers, solely to make a few drawings, examine plants or animals, and collect a few fragments of stones. These ideas are too inconsistent with their way of thinking; and they chose rather to believe, that the Europeans possess an art, which they call *the art of writing well*, by means of which every one of us has the power of attracting treasures to the surface of the earth, however deep they may be buried. In their opinions I passed for an *adept* in this supernatural *art of writing well*; and finding that it was impossible to undeceive them, I ceased to give myself any further anxiety on the subject; resolving to alter neither the plan of my journey nor the course of my researches, whatever dangers might occur.

My guide, however, Sheick Hussein, on whose mind these rumours had made more impression, started some difficulties to me, respecting the continuation of my journey. I discovered, that, notwithstanding the written contract, the witnesses, and all the ceremony at Aboukir, he was no longer inclined to fulfil the conditions of his agreement. Unwilling to let him suppose that

he was necessary to me, I dismissed him ; but it was not long before he returned, and solicited me in the most pressing manner, still to employ him in my service. When, after some few objections, I consented to renew the conditions of our agreement, he expressed great joy ; and I must confess, that I had never the least reason to complain of his conduct afterwards.

The city of Damanhour is large, but ill built ; almost all the houses having walls only of mud, or bad bricks. It is the residence of the bey, or governor, of Bahire, and of a *Kiaschef*, or separate commander. The former was with the army : the latter had gone out, the day before I arrived, in pursuit of some Bedouins, who were pillaging in the neighbourhood. Damanhour receives its greatest importance, however, from being the centre of a traffic in cotton, which is collected in the fine and spacious plains around it. This cotton is gathered by hand, beaten, carded, and spun ; and in these different labours the greater part of the inhabitants find employment.

These important occupations of agriculture and trade appear not to stop the current of depravity of manners. The city was infested by a great number of courtesans, who, having laid aside all regard to decency, made public profession of impudence,

puudence, by appearing with their faces unveiled among a people, with whom this is considered as the extreme of immodesty. They took their stands near the principal coffee-house, by the side of which they had little tents, and to these they led their captives. Among these girls there were some very pretty ones; and all of them knew how to employ the same means of seduction as are practised in our great cities: as if Nature, when she implanted in the minds of all human beings her inclinations and precepts, pointed out to them at the same time similar means of offending them.

A little idol in bronze, pierced with holes, probably that it might be worn as an amulet, was the only fragment of antiquity that fell into my hands at Damanhour. Its length was two inches and three lines. (See Pl. XIII. fig. 3.)

We left Damanhour on the 4th, at nine o'clock in the morning, to continue our journey toward the desert. I observed that the city was almost surrounded with water; and in a lake I saw some black and white kingfishers*. At a very little distance from Damanhour, to the south-east, there is a village, the name of which I have lost. Thence we directed our course to the southward

* See page 55 of this volume.

for a league and a half, till we reached the village of *Graguess*; in our way to which we passed through another, called *Saness*. Near *Graguess* there is a large pool of water, the banks of which were covered with a number of egrets, spur-winged plovers, green sand-pipers, and a species of lapwing or plover, for I could not get near enough to be certain in this point, the general colour of the plumage of which was white, wings gray, and legs red.

On one side of *Graguess*, about a quarter of a league west from it, is a village, opposite which, on the east of the road, appears the tomb of a Mus-sulman saint. From *Graguess* we proceeded south-south-east for half a league to the village of *Dentshell*, probably the *Donshal* on Danville's map. *Dentshell* signifies *departed jar*. The peasants relate, that their ancestors, having found in this spot a large jar filled with gold, deferred sharing it till the next day, when on their return they found neither gold nor *jar*. From this story, whether true or false, they say their village derives its name. By the side of the village of *Dentshell* is another, scarcely separated from it, which is called *Lavoishi*, in English *across*, on account of its transverse position with regard to *Dentshell*. Opposite to it, but on the other side of the road, may be seen the ruins of a large mud-walled vil-lage,

lage, which was built on an eminence. The notes of the quail were heard in the environs.

The road then led us south by east to *Saft*, a village surrounded by three or four others; and afterwards south-east, for a quarter of a league, to *Shambrenoum* and *Faress*, two contiguous places. Between *Saft* and *Shambrenoum* I discovered a *thaleb* lying squat in a corn-field. As soon as he perceived me approaching him, he rose, and stole away, stretching out his body, making long strides, and carrying 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, the moment they observed us. Their appearance foreboded no good, for it was probable that their only object was to gain intelligence of our route.

From *Shambrenoum* we travelled south by east about half a league, and arrived at *Nagresh*, where we passed the night. On our approach the inhabitants hid themselves, and fastened their doors, supposing us to be either some of the *Kiaschef's* people, or Bedouins come to plunder them. We found it extremely difficult to prevail upon them to give us admission: and when they had opened their

their doors, I could not conceive how it was possible that they should be afraid of being robbed, for they all appeared to me in a state of the utmost wretchedness, not excepting even the *Sheick el Belled* himself, with whom we took up our lodging; according to the custom that Hussein had adopted. The inhabitants were at war with those of a larger village in the neighbourhood, whom they suspected of an intention to attack them that night; so that they spent it in a state of anxiety and alarm, in which we were compelled to participate. Not an hour passed without the women coming for refuge to our door with loud cries, saying that the robbers were coming. No one, however, appeared, but we were not the less deprived of rest.

Nagresh was surrounded with water, on the borders of which we found the same aquatic birds as at Damanhour, beside ducks and snipes; and some trees in the neighbourhood were covered with turtle-doves.

At eight in the morning we left this place. On our departure I perceived three Bedouins, and galloped toward them: but Hussein sent after me, and requested me not to molest those three men, who were friends of his, though he owned they were robbers.

Having

Having travelled to the south-west for a quarter of a league, I met a Mameluc officer, who, taking me for a Turk, saluted me with *salam alicum*, a salutation bestowed on Mahometans only, and turned his horse aside, to make way for me. The road then running south for another quarter of a league turns to the south-east, in which direction it continues for half a league to *Ramses*, which is built on the border of a large canal. Before we reached this place we perceived at a distance about two hundred persons on foot and on horseback. Supposing them to be Bedouin robbers, we prepared for battle; but when they came nearer, we found that it was a funeral procession.

By the side of the road was a flock of lapwings, which suffered me to come near enough to kill one of them. It was of the common species*. The Arabs call it *goudguatt*.

Travelling south for a quarter of a league, we passed through *Kadouss* and *Abouamer*; and then proceeding south-west for half an hour, we reached *Biban*, a town in which a *Kiaschef* resides. Every Monday a considerable fair is held here for camels and other beasts. We happened to arrive on the fair-day. It is kept in the open fields, and we had

* Vanneau, première espèce. Buffon, Histoire naturelle des Oiseaux, et pl. enlum. No. 242.—*Tringa vanellus*. Lin.

some trouble to pass through it, from the great throng of men and cattle. A quarter of an hour after we came to *Herbetè*, which lies south-south-west from *Biban*; and in half an hour to two villages, south from *Herbetè*, which are about a hundred paces from each other, and both bear the name of *Honèze*. Our guide had intended that we should take up our night's lodging here: but the inhabitants were not of the same mind; they all fled, every door was shut, and we were obliged to have recourse to threats to obtain a little shelter. Exposed to continual pillage, they know not which are most to be dreaded; the depredations of those who make plunder a trade, or the extortions of those, in whose hands authority, far from being the instrument of protection, is but a more secure engine of violence and oppression, from which even penury and wretchedness do not always afford shelter. How ought these miserable inhabitants of the country to bless the generous and powerful hand that comes to free them from the iniquitous yoke which has so long lain heavy on their necks! With what transports ought they to welcome their French deliverers, and the certainty of at length partaking of the abundance of their fields, in which fertility reigned, astonished at finding herself where liberty was unknown! But slaves equally barbarous and brutalized, they have espoused the cause of their tyrants, and, strange
and

and detestable effect of abject superstition, they have added the partial efforts of base cruelty, of barbarous perfidy, to the impotent arms of the most odious of rulers. Thus slavery is the lowest degree of abasement to which man can sink, since it destroys and effaces the moral and intellectual faculties, so as to induce the regret of itself.

A league to the east of Honèze is a small town, called *Saffranè*, governed by a *Kiaschef*.

The districts through which our way led, cherished by nature, displayed the luxuriousness of an easy and slight cultivation: their fertility would render them an object of choice to the man desirous of abundance; and to him who possesses a mind sensible of nature's benefits, they afford the most interesting and magnificent spectacle. But we were on the borders of these favoured plains, and approaching the desert. The village of *Honèze* marked the line of separation between the most lively vegetation and parched sterility, between land fertilized by the overflowing of the Nile, and sands moistened in vain by copious dews.

In the morning of the 6th of January we entered one of those desolate portions of the globe, one of those vast divisions between habitable lands, which are the abode of perpetual barrenness and
burning

burning drought, and which, like the liquid plains of the ocean, are exposed to piracies and shipwrecks. The vast desert of Libya opened before us. There no road, no path, remains to guide the traveller's course; the impressions of his footsteps are effaced almost as soon as made, and billows of sand, raised by the impetuous winds, sometimes swallow him up. The Arab, to whom these solitudes are familiar, knows how to traverse them in all directions, without a compass as well as without a path, and, guided by the stars, never loses his way. Hussein was well experienced in journeys of this sort. Memory still paints him in my imagination, seldom on his camel, almost always on foot, with his hands behind him, walking with tranquillity over these bare plains, where no landmark appears to direct the steps, as devoid of care as if he were in the most nicely planted walk.

The Arabic name of these bare tracts, in which not a particle of vegetable mould exists, all being sand or stone, is *Dsjebel*, which signifies a mountain. In fact, the ground rises with a gentle slope, which forms, first eminences, then hills, and at length mountains.

We ascended impertceptibly for two or three leagues, on a thick bed of fine moveable sand, into which both men and beasts sink as they walk.

At

At length we found plains covered with pebbles. These spaces, at first rare, increased in surface; and the fine sand disappeared, in proportion as the land became more elevated. When we reached the summit of the hills, we found no more of this fine moveable sand; the sandy stratum being solid, and strewed with pebbles of various shapes and colours; with that species of jasper, which is known by the name of Egyptian pebble, takes a very fine polish, and is variegated interiorly with different colours and figures of animals and plants, in which, however, imagination has more share than nature; and with pieces of petrified wood, if this other sort of jasper be really produced by the conversion of wood into stone. We met likewise, but not so frequently, with other places of little extent, rugged with vitrifiable stones, of a reddish gray, and strongly fixed in the ground, above which their angular points appeared. These stones, the Egyptian pebbles, and the petrified wood, occur only on the hills; elsewhere there are nothing but common pebbles.

All these matters, the slow but inanimate productions of nature grown old, are the accompaniments of nothing but drought and horror. In these wild and rugged places not a plant refreshes with its verdure the weary eye, not a single tree

appears, under the shade of which the traveller can take breath. It is only in places of less elevation, in the narrow passes which separate the hills, where the finer sand is sufficiently attenuated to retain a portion of the freshness of the dews, and where the deep strata of it are not overwhelmed by a multitude of stones, that a few hard and meagre plants creep over the surface, or a few thin shrubs appear, most of which have as many thorns as leaves. These shrubs are almost always remote from each other; but sometimes they unite in places more favoured, and form pitiful brakes, in which hares find food and covert, and antelopes and other wild animals places of retreat and pasture.

Hares are tolerably numerous in the deserts. Exposed to the pursuit of carnivorous beasts, and birds of prey, they are secure from their most cruel enemy; for, if we except the plain of the pyramids, and that of Sakkara, whither the Europeans settled at Cairo sometimes go to hunt, though very seldom, there is no place where they have any thing to fear from man, who in our part of the world has declared eternal war against them. The inhabitants of Egypt never disturb them, their flesh being prohibited to the Mahometans, as it was to the Jews; and the Cophts, who have adopted many Jewish customs, equally refrain from it.

it. The difference of climate has occasioned a slight difference in the fur of the hares which live on the track of burning sand in Africa. These are nearly gray, the tint altering and growing darker, in proportion as the heat is less fervid*. Those that I have seen at Cape Verde were of a lighter gray than those of Egypt, which again want that fallow or reddish tinge, more or less deep, that gives the hares of Greece a greater resemblance to those of more northern countries. Aristotle had already observed, that they are smaller likewise to the south, than to the north. The hares of very hot countries, however, are far from being as palatable food as those of ours; and this tends to confirm the general remark I made, when speaking of the oxen of Egypt. In fact, like most animals of these southern climes, their flesh is less firm, and less savoury, than in the north of Eu-

* Naturalists have repeatedly observed, that the hue of animals appears to adapt itself to the objects by which they are surrounded, the final cause of which is presumed to be, that they may be less conspicuous to others, that would make them their prey. It cannot be the effect of climate: for the hare that lives amid the snows of the north, or of the Alps, is white; in the parts that approach the temperate regions he is white during the winter, and grows darker coloured, as the appearance of the earth on which he lives, changes from white to brown; while here we find heat instead of cold whitens his fur, as if to assimilate his appearance to that of the burning sands around him.—T.

rope : it is also paler, and, as well as all the rest of the game in the torrid zone, wants that gout which constitutes its principal merit. Perhaps it is this difference in the flesh of the hare, which has occasioned it to be deemed unwholesome, and led to its prohibition as an article of food in the East.

Some lizards, likewise, of the species described towards the latter end of the first volume, had their holes at the foot of the shrubs : and in the environs I saw some birds running about, of an ash-colour, of the same shape and genus as the ouzel, or blackbird. Solitary as the place of their abode, they do not congregate, but remain single, never perch on the bushes, trip along with great quickness, fly little, and, if you oblige them to take wing, soon alight on the ground again, to run along afresh.

Near one of these ouzels I observed another running bird, the plumage of which was ruddy, but the shape of which I could not possibly distinguish. Both these birds feed on little flies and insects ; and we may presume, that they never drink, or at least very seldom, since they pass their lives in plains where a drop of water is a rare phenomenon.

We

We travelled south-west all the day, halted about six in the afternoon, and spent the night with the sand for our bed. After midnight a copious dew began to fall, which wetted us as thoroughly as if we had been exposed to a heavy rain. We suffered greatly from the cold, but we would not kindle a fire, for fear of being discovered. At five in the morning we recommenced our march; and as soon as the mist was dispersed, we perceived herds of antelopes, and of wild oxen, in every direction. These groups of living beings exhibited moving scenes, the only ones that could be interesting to us in the midst of an immense void, and rendered the desert less naked, less frightful, in a word, less desert.

I have already had occasion to speak of these wild oxen, having found a few, which had been domesticated by the Bedouins encamped between Aboukir and Alexandria*. From what I then observed, from what I have since been able to remark in the desert, at the great distance at which I have frequently seen them, from the very name of *bakkar el ouesh*, or wild ox, which the Arabs have given to it, I am confirmed in the opinion, that this is a particular species of the ox, closely allied to the zebu, if it be not precisely the same. The *axis*, an animal of a different genus, allied both to

* See p. 92 of this volume.

the hart and the fallow deer *, bears equally this appellation of *bakkar el ouesh* in Barbary, according to Dr. Shaw †; but the wild ox of the Arabs of Egypt is very different in its genus from the axis, and, I repeat, is a species of that of the ox ‡.

I have commonly seen these oxen in herds of eight or ten. They almost always follow each other in a line, and sometimes stop to play, or fight with their horns. Whenever they espy a traveller, be the distance what it may, they make off. The Arabs hunt them on horseback, or hide themselves behind the thickets of shrubs, to shoot them by surprise. Their flesh is good, and their hide is much sought after for its strength and thickness.

That pretty species of animals, the eyes of which are considered in the East as the standard of perfection, the antelope, is seen marching in numerous herds, and traversing with speed the hills and plains. These are as shy as the wild oxen, and the approach of a strange object is sufficient to make

* Axis. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Quad.—*Cervus axis*. Lin.

† Travels, vol. i.

‡ Bakar uasch. *Bos silvestris*. Forskal, Fauna Egypt.-Arab. p. iv. It must be noted, that Forskal has classed this animal in a paragraph appropriated to those of the genus of which he was uncertain, *generis incerti*, and which he had not seen.

them

them disappear. Their lightness and celerity are unparalleled. Nature has bestowed on them long legs, slender and tendinous, which, while they protect their liberty, seem to be another obstacle to the desire men might form of subjugating them. In fact, their legs are so slender, and brittle at the same time, that they break in the attempt to convey the animal from place to place, or even when it is kept on a pavement, or a floor which is smooth enough to be slippery. The Arab, however, mounted on his courser, overtakes these swift-footed animals, and throws a stick at them, by which their legs are most commonly entangled and broken; so that it is very rare you can procure one alive, without its being so crippled, that it is impossible to keep it.

But a still more dangerous enemy, for a numerous race of light and elegantly shaped animals, is the tiger. Under this generic name I comprehend all the quadrupeds of Africa, that have mottled skins, as the panther, ounce, leopard, &c.; so that the tiger with a striped skin*, which, as is well known, is found only in the East Indies, is not included. This whole genus is known in Egypt by the Arabic name of *mémoura*, and I cannot say, whether there be any particular denominations in

* *Felis tigris*. Lin.—The tiger, properly so called.

use, to distinguish the several species of which it consists. The tigers, roaming with extreme ferociousness over a soil, the burning drought of which is analogous to their own dispositions, surprise the wild oxen, and, parched with the thirst of blood, dart on the timid and innocent antelopes.

I frequently observed recent traces of ostriches*. The hunting of these animals is one of the exercises in which the Arab displays most address, and his horse most speed. It requires considerable time to master one of these birds, which run with astonishing rapidity. Hussein, who was an old experienced hunter, told me, by way of giving me an idea of the length of the chase, that, if they set out at eight in the morning, they could not get to stop the ostrich, by throwing a stick between his legs, in the same manner as at the antelope, till near four o'clock in the afternoon. With greyhounds it may be accomplished sooner. Some, who have more patience, instead of hunting ostriches, keep on the watch behind bushes, waiting to fire at them, if any one chance to pass within shot. No person, however, eats their flesh. When they kill them, they content themselves with plucking out their fine feathers, to

* Autruche. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et pl. enlum. No. 457.—*Struthio camelus*. Lin.

make plumes, and taking their fat, which they use in their cookery. They likewise bring into the towns many ostrich's eggs, which are very good eating, and so large, that one is a sufficient meal for a man. These eggs, suspended under the vaulted roofs, are one of the most common ornaments of the Mahometan mosques, and of the Greek and Coptic churches.

CHAP. XXVII.

*Lakes of natron—Coptic convent in the Desert—
We meet with a band of Arab robbers—Singular
scenes that ensued—Difficulty of obtaining entrance
into the monastery—Wild boars.*

WE had travelled about thirteen or fourteen leagues from *Honèze* on a plain, which ascended with a constant gradual slope, and reached the summit of a hill, or rather chain of hills, stretching to the north-north-west. Opposite to this, at the distance of three or four leagues, is another chain, parallel to the first. These form between them a deep valley, furrowed by narrow passes still deeper. The sides of this valley are perpendicular precipices from the summits of the hills down more than half their height: below this they are gentle declivities of fine, loose sand. In the bottom of this valley, at the foot of the eastern hill, are the lakes of natron. These captivate the eye of the traveller, fatigued with the frightful monotony of the desert. A vast basin of water; the multitude of shrubs, that overshadow its borders; the reeds and other aquatic plants, that display their verdure on the surface; the herds of deer, that assemble there to quench their thirst; and the birds, among
which

which the flamingo* rises eminent for the splendour of its plumage; display a smiling picture of nature in this spot, while every thing around exhibits only symptoms of her death.

It is impossible to determine the extent of the lakes in which the natron is formed, as it varies according to the seasons. In that season when water is most abundant, the two lakes are united in one, of much greater length than breadth, and occupying a space of several leagues: at other periods they are nothing more than ponds of no great extent.

If Pliny, when he wrote, that the Nile acts on the brine-pools of Nitria as the sea does on those of salt, meant, that the inundation of the river extended as far as the lakes, he was palpably mistaken, as Pere Siccard has remarked †. But if it were merely his intention to give us to understand that there is a kind of conformity between the Nile and these lakes, he has only noted a singular yet certain fact, with which the missionary was unacquainted; a fact, which the people of the country have observed, and erroneously ascribed to a communication between the

* Flamant, ou phénicoptère. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et pl. enlum. No. 63.—*Phœnicopterus ruber*. Lin.

† Mémoires des Missions du Levant, vol. vii. p. 61.

Nile and the lakes, which must be impossible. The increase of these is in an inverse proportion to that of the Nile; and when the river begins to overflow, the lakes diminish, so as to appear only like little ponds, when the river has attained its greatest height: on the contrary, the water appears to return into them as the height of the Nile decreases, and they inundate a long tract of the valley, when the river is at its ebb.

Struck with this regular difference between the periods at which the waters of the Nile, and those of the lakes of natron, rise and fall, the Egyptians imagine, that the river acts on the body of water in the desert; as if this action, supposing it to exist, would not have produced an opposite effect to that which takes place; whereas in this case it is obvious, that the overflow of the Nile and the lakes, as well as their decrease, must have taken place nearly at the same time. But if we consider, that the augmentation of the Nile, occasioned by the rains in Abyssinia, commences at the summer solstice, the very time when the weather is hottest and driest; and just as the river decreases, or during the winter, the rains never fail to be copious in the northern part of this country; we shall be aware, that the season when the Nile increases must be that in which the water spread over the sand diminishes and dries up, and that local rains,

which

which can have no influence on the overflow of the Nile, are sufficient to render the springs that furnish this collection of water, more abundant.

When the two lakes separate, and their waters retire, the soil they had inundated, and which they have now left uncovered, is loaded with a sediment, crystallized and hardened by the sun. This is the *natron*. The thickness of this layer of salt varies according as the water has remained a longer or shorter period on the ground. In places where it has merely wetted it for a very short time the *natron* exhibits only a slight efflorescence, resembling flakes of snow. I have been told, that at certain periods this substance covers the surface of the water. Granger says, in his account of his travels in Egypt, that at the end of August the salt of the lake was concreted on the surface, and thick enough for camels to pass over it; but when I saw it, it was clear and limpid. It is perhaps the most diuretic of all waters; a property for which it is indebted to the saline particles it contains: and the physician, whose art ceases to be conjectural only when it is guided by natural philosophy, will perhaps find in its use simple and natural means of curing obstructions and infarctions of the viscera, as well as some other diseases that are pretty common in Egypt.

This

This natron is procured chiefly in the month of August. It is found also, though in less quantity, during all the rest of the year. It is separated from the ground with iron instruments, and carried on the backs of camels to *Terrana*, where it is shipped on the Nile, to be conveyed to Cairo, or to the warehouses at Rossetta. Here twelve hundred and fifty tons are collected annually, and much more might be obtained. Its common price, delivered either at Cairo or Rossetta, is fifteen or eighteen medins a hundred weight.

Before you reach the lakes, there is a small house on the declivity of the hill, in which the Cophts say a saint was born, to whom they pay particular honour. They call him *Maximous*; probably the Saint Maximus, or Saint Maximinus, of the Catholic legends.

I staid some time near the lakes, the borders of which I traversed: at length we resumed our journey, continuing our course to the south-west. The sand, over which we travelled, was completely covered with hardened natron, which rendered our progress toilsome and fatiguing both to us and our beasts. We arrived within a short distance of a large square edifice, in which a few Cophtic monks live shut up from the world. I do not think, that there is upon earth a more horrible or repulsive
situation

situation than this sort of convent. Built in the midst of the desert, its walls, though very lofty, are not distinguishable, at any considerable distance, from the sand, of which they have the reddish tinge and bare aspect. There is no apparent entrance: no tree, no plant of any height, is seen around it: no path leads to it: no trace of human footstep is observable in its vicinity; and if a few be imprinted, they are soon covered by the sand, or obliterated by the tread of wild and ferocious beasts, the proper inhabitants of these frightful solitudes. Such is the rude and painful appearance of this dungeon, occupied by men as useless as the place they inhabit.

We were about five or six hundred paces from it. Hussein had advanced before us, to obtain our admission into the convent, which is to be procured with difficulty. I was some way from him, and the rest of our company was at a considerable distance. A troop of Bedouins on horseback suddenly issued from behind the walls. At first I did not distinguish them amid the clouds of dust they raised: but as soon as they were discernible, I perceived both their number and what they were. Instantly I turned about my horse's head, and, being mounted on an excellent courser, which carried me with too much speed for them to overtake me, soon joined my companions,

panions, who had likewise perceived the troop from the backs of their camels. I found them on foot, drawn up in a close body; leaped off my horse; and exhorted them to defend themselves with vigour. We were six in all, but on three of the number little dependance was to be placed. From two of the natives of the country we could not expect much; and the draughtsman, young and inexperienced, scarcely knew how to fire a gun.

The firmness of a handful of men, alone in the midst of a sandy plain, and exposed on all sides, checked a squadron of Bedouins amounting to near a hundred. Hence we may judge how little such enemies are to be feared, whose courage carries them no farther than to associate in numerous bands for the purpose of robbery where little resistance is to be expected, and dastardly to carry on a war of pillage. Though they came toward us on full gallop, they stopped suddenly about a hundred paces off, and cried out to us not to fire. I answered with telling them not to advance.

For some moments they remained in a sort of hesitation, during which we observed them consulting together. At length they separated into four bands, three of which set off on full gallop, and stationed themselves on our flanks, and in our rear.

rear. This manœuvre, which it was impossible for us to prevent, disconcerted my two soldiers, and all that I could urge was incapable of prevailing on them to resolve to stand on their defence. We had good fusils, and a considerable quantity of cartridges. I knew that the Bedouins would take flight, as soon as they saw a few of their party drop; and I was certain, that our first fire must bring down several. It is true, I did not consider that we were in the midst of a vast solitude; and that, if our enemies had fled, it would only have been to return again speedily by thousands, overpower us by their numbers, and massacre us all, in revenge for the death of their comrades. I flung down my fusil with vexation at being forced to yield to such robbers. They were soon upon us; and, without taking time to alight, pillaged us in the twinkling of an eye. Money, arms, effects, garments, provisions, were all taken. They left me my long under vest, and my breeches: my companions were stripped of every thing but their shirts. My turban had been taken: my head, shaved and bare, was scorched by the fervency of the sun, and ached intolerably. I covered it as well as I could with both my hands, but this would not alleviate the pain. The spoil was spread out upon the sand; a score of Arabs on foot, whom we had not perceived, as they had concealed themselves behind a heap of stones,

joined the others; and they all fell to dividing the plunder, not without obstreperous disputes.

Our different situations would have formed a striking subject for a picture, under the hand of an able artist. In one place you might have seen, disputing over the booty, the band of robbers, covered with dust, some of black, others of tawny complexions, and their countenances dried up like the sands, which their robberies render still more dismal: in the midst of them my old servant, coolly endeavouring to recover from them some small portions of our spoil, and occasionally dealing a blow with his fist to attain his object: in the fore ground the grenadier, motionless, and disconcerted: the two Egyptians staring stupidly on each other: me at a distance, biting my fingers, with a look of indignation and chagrin: and in the last place the draughtsman, crying bitterly, and answering me with sobs, when I went up to him, to ask him if he had received any hurt, “No, Sir, but what shall we get to eat “now?”

Tired of being the spectator of a scene, in which it was useless for me to take a part, I proceeded toward the monastery, hoping to find Hussein, who had repaired thither, when I heard myself called, and presently felt myself seized by
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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. He led me back, without saying a word, into the midst of the troop. I imagined, that he was desirous of the garments they had left me, or that on deliberation he had resolved to take away my life. How great was my surprise, when I found this chief carefully inquiring what clothes and effects belonged to me, and, after having acted as my valet-de-chambre a little too roughly in undressing me, now taking upon himself the same office, but with more civility, in assisting me to put on the different parts of my dress, returning me my purse, and restoring my arms! Other Bedouins performed the same office to my companions, equally astonished at such a singular and unexpected adventure.

This was the fruit of Hussein's spirited conduct. While he was near the walls of the convent, to which he had repaired with his fusil slung over his shoulder, some of the Arabs set off to detain him. They had seized his arms; but Hussein, after a long dispute, succeeded in getting up behind one of the Bedouins, and being conveyed to the place where the whole troop was, "Arabs," said he, addressing himself to the chiefs, "you have stripped a man confided to my protection, and for whom I have pledged my own

“ head ; a man with whom I have eaten, who has
“ slept under my tent, and who has become my
“ brother. I can never again enter that tent : I
“ dare not shew my face again in the camp : I
“ must renounce the pleasure of ever more em-
“ bracing my wife and children. Arabs, take
“ away my life, or restore all that belongs to my
“ brother.” This speech, which was accompa-
nied with a look of firmness and a tone of resolu-
tion, made some impression on the minds of the
Bedouins. Hussein had snatched his fusil out of
the hands of him who held it, and, while waiting
till they had taken their resolution, presented it to
the chief commander of the robbers, determined
to shoot him in case of a refusal, and thus expose
himself to be massacred, rather than consent to
our suffering the least injury.

Our conductor was well known : they were
aware, that his resolute character would lead him
to carry his threats into execution : thus partly
through fear, partly through deference, the black
chief consented to restore all that was taken from
me, and this was done with truly admirable fide-
lity. It is true, every thing that appeared valuable
in the eyes of him who had taken it, required to
be particularly claimed ; but when the chief in-
sisted upon it, it was produced ; and this discipline,
among people and in a place where we could not
have

have expected to find an instance of it, appeared to me highly astonishing. The chief came to ask me what was missing still : on my naming an article, he mounted on a little eminence, and cried, "Arabs, such a thing is not restored : let it be brought." If the person who had it was not prompt in his obedience, he added, "Come, Arabs, no delay : " and it was delivered to me immediately. The chief then mentioned another article that had been stolen, and it was restored to me in the same manner.

Two hours were thus spent before the inventory of my effects was gone through. Every thing was restored to me, except my money, of which I received only a small part. This, however, was not the fault of the two sheicks. Hussein, in particular, insisted on my counting in his presence the sequins that had been returned. The Arabs, to whom my purse appeared a good prize, and who had shared the chief part of its contents, waited till I had finished counting them with some uneasiness, which was quickly removed, on my declaring that I had all my money. Thinking myself happy to come off so well, I had voluntarily sacrificed two thirds of what I possessed, that I might not incur the hatred of the honest robbers that surrounded me, and expose myself to their vengeance. I did not forget that I was still

in the desert, and had every thing to fear, if I should fall into their hands a second time, or into those of any of their fellows, to whom they might give information, and who would display less civility.

These banditti thought it not sufficient to appear just, they would also be polite. The chief brought me his horse, and insisted on my mounting it, to ride the little distance from the place where we were to the monastery, while he attended me on foot. Some others of the Arabs paid the same respect to my companions, each of them walking in like manner by the side of his horse. When we came near the walls, we saw some baskets of bread, and wooden dishes of lentils, let down by ropes. Seating ourselves on the ground in a circle, we ate up this provision with people who just before were our enemies. After our repast was finished, some of them came up to me with frankness, and even with a sort of cordiality, thanking Heaven that no injury had befallen me, and blaming me, with a tone of concern, for my temerity in travelling through a desert, which by their own confession was the resort only of thieves and robbers. Above all, they did not forget to say their prayers with great devotion, after they had rubbed their arms and legs with sand, for want of water to perform the ablutions prescribed
by

by their law. Mahomet, an Arab himself, was aware of the circumstances in which his followers would frequently find themselves in the desert, and accordingly directed them to make use of sand instead of water.

The sheick of the robbers asked me for some remuneration, observing, that he had retained none of my money, and that he had likewise exerted himself much, to procure the restoration of my property. I was preparing to bestow on him the sequins I had left, when Hussein perceived it. On this he flew into a passion, and protested that he would not suffer me to part with a single *medin*. In fact, notwithstanding all my endeavours, he was so vigilant, that I could find no opportunity of making a present to the other sheick.

This obstinacy of Hussein, which was unquestionably very generous, offended our friends for a moment, and was near making them resume their hostile designs. They contented themselves, however, with giving me warning to be on my guard, as another time the business would terminate in a different manner, and they would begin with killing Hussein. But Hussein laughed at their threats, and did not the less persist in his refusal. Had he known that these very people were in possession of great part of my money, he would

have made a fine stir, and had no rest till the whole was restored to me.

At length, to complete the series of these extraordinary scenes, the Sheick Abdallah, so the chief of the Bedouins was called, demanded of me a written attestation, that I had met with him in the desert, that he had taken nothing from me, and that, on the contrary, I was satisfied with his conduct. He caused one of the monks to be let down by the same rope, by which our baskets and dishes had descended. The certificate of satisfaction was written in Arabic, and delivered me to sign. Having certainly no desire of giving a testimonial of good conduct to such robbers, I assumed a name which had some analogy to our adventure, and subscribed it *la Déroute*. Abdallah carefully put up this *good bill*, and left us, after wishing us a good journey, and repeating his exhortation to us, to be on our guard. His advice, however, was perfectly unnecessary; for I was well resolved to take every precaution in my power, that I might not be surprised anew.

I learnt that these Arabs had been informed of our journey, and that they had watched our steps from its commencement. They had been under the walls of the monastery ever since three o'clock
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in the morning; and had acquainted the monks that they would have a visit from some Franks in the course of the day. To the very moment when they perceived us, they had been concerting the manner in which they might attack us with least risk; for they were not without apprehensions, as they knew that we were well armed. For some time it was determined that they should not make their appearance, but let us approach, till they could shoot us at their ease: but at the entreaty of the Cophts, they consented to give up this project of assassination.

After being freed from these dangerous companions, I was obliged to enter into a long contest with the monks. Having been spectators of what had passed during the course of the morning in the plain, they could not doubt our being Europeans: they pretended, however, not to believe it, and insisted that one of us should convince a father, sent for the purpose, of his not having submitted to any religious mutilation. This obstacle being removed, a fresh difficulty arose. They offered to draw us up by the rope, as the only way in use among them; the lofty wall that surrounds their habitation, being every where closed, except a little portal with an iron wicket. I wanted to be admitted in this customary mode of entering a place: but the Cophts assured me, that

that this gate was opened only for the admission of their provision, which was very rarely, and never when the Arabs were roaming about the environs. Accordingly they desired me to fasten myself to the rope. The monk who was with us, to shew us how commodiously we might travel through the air in this manner, suspended himself by it, and was drawn up by means of a pulley, like the bucket of a well. Two or three of my people, fancying they saw the Bedouins still at their side, followed his example. But this did not tempt me; and as there was a gate, I insisted on its being opened. I was seconded by Husscin, who swore, that, if the monks did not allow him to shelter his camels, he would return in a few days, and exterminate every creature belonging to the convent. His threats were more effectual than my solicitations, and the wicket was given up to us, but not without extraordinary precautions. This entrance, however, was much too low for the camels to walk through. In consequence, Hussein made them crouch down upon a mat, fastening one of their legs by a rope passing over their back, so that they could not rise. By the exertions of several men the mat was then dragged through, with the camel upon it, his head being held down the while; and thus they were all gotten within the walls one after another. For my part, I knew not which to admire most, the industry

industry of the Arab, who had accomplished the introduction of a large animal through a small aperture, or the patience of the camel, who had suffered himself to be thus fastened and dragged for a long time by jerks*.

Night was come on before we and our beasts had all gotten within the enclosure. The monks conducted us, Hussein excepted, into their chapel, where we remained during the service, which was of great length. This was followed by a supper, consisting of nothing but rice boiled in water, which we thought too short.

The moon shed her silver and melancholy rays over the desert that surrounded us, the ruggedness of which was diminished by her soft light. The most profound silence prevailed about us, while our eyes wandered over the immense solitude, that extended to the horizon on every side. Hussein perceived a large animal, and shot at it as it passed the foot of the wall, but it did not stop. It was a wild boar, called by the Arabs *hanzire*, a name which they give equally to the tame pig. We had before seen two during the course of our journey in the desert, but at a distance.

* Perhaps this passage may serve to elucidate a simile employed by our Saviour, with which some commentators have been much puzzled.—T.

It does not appear to me probable, that the wild boars of Egypt and of Europe should be the same. The great difference of climate, and the still greater of situation, must necessarily have occasioned some variety at least in the species. More prolific in temperate or in cold countries, which appear more suitable to their nature, they inhabit the depth of the forests, which afford them food in abundance. From these they never issue, except to proceed from one wood to another, or to spoil the harvest; and these journeys or excursions for depredation are scarcely ever undertaken but by night. At the rising of the sun they commonly retire to the thickest and darkest places, as if they dreaded the light and heat of his beams. In Egypt, on the contrary, the wild boar has no shelter. Continually exposed to the fervour of a burning sun, he traverses sands equally heated, where he scarcely meets with a few scattered shrubs, which afford him little subsistence, and still less shade. He is seen pretty frequently, however, in the desert of Nitria, where animals are more numerous than in any other part of the desert, on account of the collections of water it contains, and the plants that grow on their borders.

These boars are solitary; and it is only from their common necessities that they sometimes assemble

semble in herds in the environs of the lakes of nation. The two that I saw were separate: they carried their head low, and their pace was a sort of trot.

The Mahometans and Cophts refrain from the flesh of the wild boar, as they do from that of the hog; and holding both these animals in abhorrence, it was impossible for me to procure a wild boar in Egypt, unless I had gone to the desert for it myself. As this escaped Hussein's ball, I lost the only opportunity I had of verifying my conjectures respecting the breed of these boars, which I cannot conceive to be the same with those of Europe. It is in this sense, perhaps, that we must understand those passages of Aristotle* and Pliny †, where they have written, that there are no wild boars in Africa.

The travellers that have gone before me, have not been more fortunate than myself: or if some of them have had an opportunity of examining a *hanzire*, they have done it only in a very superficial way. What information, for instance, can we acquire from the words of Maillet? “ If a few
 “ wild boars may be met with in Egypt, they are
 “ more gentle than our tame pigs; and it would

* Hist. Nat. lib. 8. cap. 24.

† Hist. Nat. lib. 8. cap. 33.

“ even be difficult to discover any difference between them *.” “ In Africa and in Asia,” says Buffon, “ wild boars are as plentiful as in Europe.” This passage left us equally uncertain respecting the race of these animals in Africa: but the uncertainty has since been removed with great appearance of probability, Buffon having given an account and figure of an *African wild boar* †, which is distinguishable by several peculiar characteristics, so that we have reason to presume the *hanzire* of Egypt and the *African wild boar* to be the same animal.

* Description de l’Égypte, page 31.

† Hist. Nat. du Cochon. Suppl. à l’Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Departure of Hussein—Coptic monks—Their convent, chapel, church services, rites, food, dress, and garden—Fulful béladi—Gypsum—Sal gem—Other convents in the desert—River without water—Bedouins—Ill behaviour of the monks—Fogs and rain.

THE day after our arrival at the monastery, Hussein reminded me of what had passed the preceding day, and the trouble he had found in extricating me from the hands into which I had fallen. He observed to me that he could not possibly expect the same success another time; and finished with declaring frankly, that it was no longer in his power to be answerable for what might happen, as the Arabs of the desert would not fail to kill him, if they met with us together again. He added, that for his own safety he should depart immediately, and offered to conduct me back the same way by which we had come, but I must determine upon it instantly. My determination was as prompt as he could wish. I had not undertaken this journey to finish it so abruptly: the dangers of which I was aware before I set

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out, did not appear to me to be circumstances that ought to stop me now ; and since I had reached the midst of these deserts, I was resolved at least to have time for making some observations in them. Hussein, chagrined at my resolve, immediately departed, after having embraced me in a very kind and affecting manner, and left me enclosed within four walls, without either of us knowing how I should get out.

Formerly this retreat was inhabited by Greek monks. These have been succeeded by Cophts, or natives of Egypt, who having embraced Christianity, have seen arise among them some of those congregations, to which men have agreed to give the epithet of religious, though most of them are nothing but sinks of idleness and vice. Here barbarism and stupid ignorance likewise took up their abode, perpetuating the memory of ancient anchorites, who, imagining themselves born to be useless, retired in the prime of life, to bury themselves from society in these remote solitudes. One Saint Macarius rendered himself particularly famous, so that his name was given to the desert, which the ancients had distinguished by that of Nitria ; a name which it will unquestionably retain, as *natron*, the nitre of the ancients, will always be found in it, and marks of distinction furnished by nature, have a grandeur and immutability

lity of character, not to be found in those that spring from the fancy of man.

The present residence of the Coptick cenobites is called *Zaïdi el Baramous*, and by the Arabs *Kafr Zaïdi*. It is an enclosure of lofty walls, without any aperture : for we cannot reckon a little gate, which is opened only two or three times a year. People going in or coming out are hoisted up or lowered down by means of a large rope and a pulley. The whole of the edifice is constructed of soft calcareous stones, several of which contain fossile shells. Within the walls there is a kind of small fortress, surrounded with ditches, over which is a drawbridge. To this the monks retire, if the Arabs force the outer wall. Ten years before they had been obliged to entrench themselves in it against Hussein, who, having broken through the great wall, had pillaged and laid waste the convent. The Cophts, who told me this anecdote, added, that this very Hussein, my faithful companion, my brave and trusty friend, was at that time the most formidable of Bedouins, the most resolute of robbers : though for several years he had led a peaceable and honest life. He must certainly have been a dangerous man, for to great courage he added singular dexterity. I have frequently seen him shoot small birds at a considerable distance with a single ball.

Within the little fort there is a chapel, a reservoir for rain water, provision, and everything necessary for enabling the monks to sustain a long blockade. Here too they keep their books, written in the Coptic language, which is compounded from a mixture of the Greek with the remains of the ancient Egyptian. Though they never read them, though they let them lie in heaps upon the ground, gnawed by insects, and mouldering in dust, they are not to be prevailed upon to part with any of them.

Zäidi el Baramous was a place too remarkable in the history of my travels, for me to neglect having a drawing of it made. (See Pl. XI.) The view was taken from the north-east. The grand entrance, the appearance of which is to be seen in front, is entirely walled up, except the little wicket left at the bottom. It is necessary I should observe too, 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 in front of the monastery, and much farther from it.

The cells of the monks, which are vaulted and very low, are level with the ground round the court; suitable dens for the rude idleness that inhabits them.

The chapel is simple, and without any ornament except ostrich's eggs, and a few bad pictures



Trinité et Barranquilla.

Published by I. Stockdale.

of saints. In countries where pictures of men are prohibited, these are considered as masterly performances; and the monks who pointed them out to me with great complacency, were astonished at the look of disdain with which I viewed them. Service is performed in Arabic and in modern Cophtic, that is to say, in Greek Cophtic, for the real Cophtic, or the language of the Pharaohs, is no longer known to the present Cophts*. The gospel is read in Arabic, that all may understand it; and though their prayers are still repeated in modern Cophtic, which is intelligible to most of the monks, none of these can speak it, all of them conversing in Arabic only. It is impossible, however, to give an idea of the confusion that prevails in their services. Frequently they do not know what they ought to sing; one would have this anthem or psalm, another would have that, on which a dispute arises that comes to blows, while a third chaunts a prayer, is followed by the choir, and thus terminates the contest. Their singing consists of Arabic and Turkish airs, and is accompanied by cymbals, the noise of which mingled with their screams and discordant notes, makes the chapel ring with piercing and confused sounds.

* Wansleb, in his account of Egypt, relates, that he had the satisfaction of seeing at *Siout*, in 1673, the last Copht who understood his own language, and with whom it must die. This man was fourscore years old, and deaf, so that Wansleb could not get much from him.

The want of something to do had rendered us devout, and we scarcely ever failed of attending the service. The monks had conceived, that we should receive much pleasure from being present at it in the night also; and the superior himself took the trouble to awake us in the middle of the first we spent there. This, however, was at least an unnecessary attention, of which I requested him to save himself the trouble in future. To witness their extravagances by day was quite sufficient for us. We observed the same ceremonies on the occasion as the Cophts, and conformed to the numerous practices of their ritual. I noticed what my neighbour did, and followed his example; and all my people did the same. This sometimes gave rise to ridiculous situations and comic scenes, at which my companions could not help bursting out into loud laughs, to the great offence of the community.

During the time of service, the congregation neither sit, kneel, nor stand upright. They are on their feet, it is true, but with their loins resting against the wall, and their body inclining forward, supporting themselves by a sort of crutch, or staff, which has the figure of the letter *tau*, or T. The sanctuary is separate, and shut, as in the Greek churches. The priest celebrates the mass with water. Their sacred vessels are no-
thing

thing but a sort of glass plates, resembling those that are employed in setting out a dessert upon our tables. They consecrate common bread. This the priest cuts into little bits, and mixes with water, likewise consecrated, which forms a mess resembling soup. Having eaten a few spoonfuls of it, he administers the communion in the same manner with the spoon, to all who offer themselves to partake of it. After the communion, the priest that administered it washes his hands, places himself at the door of the sanctuary, with his wet hands stretched out, and every one going in procession, holds up to him his face, which he strokes with them, so that the faces of the congregation are the only towel on which his hands are wiped. During the mass the priest blesses likewise some little round loaves, very slightly baked. These are distributed when the mass is finished, but the distribution never takes place without quarrels. In celebrating mass the priest is clothed in a sort of white shirt, which has a cowl, and is spotted with little crosses. During the other prayers, the officiating priest is distinguished only by a large band of white linen, spotted with crosses in a similar manner, which he wears half wrapped round his head like a turban, and the ends hanging down, one before, the other behind.

These Cophits are very fond of the bustle of rites and ceremonies that succeed each other with rapidity. They are always in motion during the time of service: the priest that officiates, particularly, is in continual action, incensing the saints, pictures, books, &c. every moment. After each particular act of incensing, he kisses his left hand; and when he has been exercising his censer some time, he comes, always running, and applies his hand on the face of every one present; which done, he instantly resumes his censer. When he has finished all his rounds, he gives his benediction with a little cross, on the top of which he previously sticks a short end from a roll of wax candle. After all the service is gone through, they kiss a little cushion covered with a dirty cloth, then a cross, and afterwards the shrine of the saints, on which they rub and roll their heads.

If we may believe the Arabs, true reprobates, who deem religious knavery common to all countries, this shrine, which is very large, contains only the bones of camels and asses that have died in the desert, collected from various quarters by the monks. These, on the contrary, assert, that it is the repository of the bodies of seven saints, among whom they more particularly revere two, Saint Maximous and Saint Domadius, who only are represented

represented on their pictures. They have also pictures of the Virgin, and of Saint George, for whom they have great veneration.

There were only three priests in this convent, and a few friars : but some of the Cophtic farmers come occasionally to do penance, and bring with their devotion, the means of subsistence for the monks. When I was at the convent it had twenty-three inhabitants in the whole. They all eat together in the refectory, one reading during the time of the meal, which is as bad as possible. The whole of their fare consists in bread, or rather biscuit, made with the flower of lentils, lentils and rice, boiled in salt and water, without any sauce, vile cheese, and sometimes a little honey. But the most disgusting to me was the brackish and ill-tasted water, which constitutes their sole beverage. Their provision is the produce of the collections they make, and chiefly the alms of the wealthy Cophts at Cairo. Caravans of camels bring them some two or three times a year ; and the Arabs suffer it to pass freely, because they consider it as their own. In fact, they who roam the desert are certain of finding in these Cophtic monasteries every thing necessary for themselves and their horses. They have only to ring a little bell, the string of which hangs without, and, as soon as they are reconnoitred from the top of the wall,

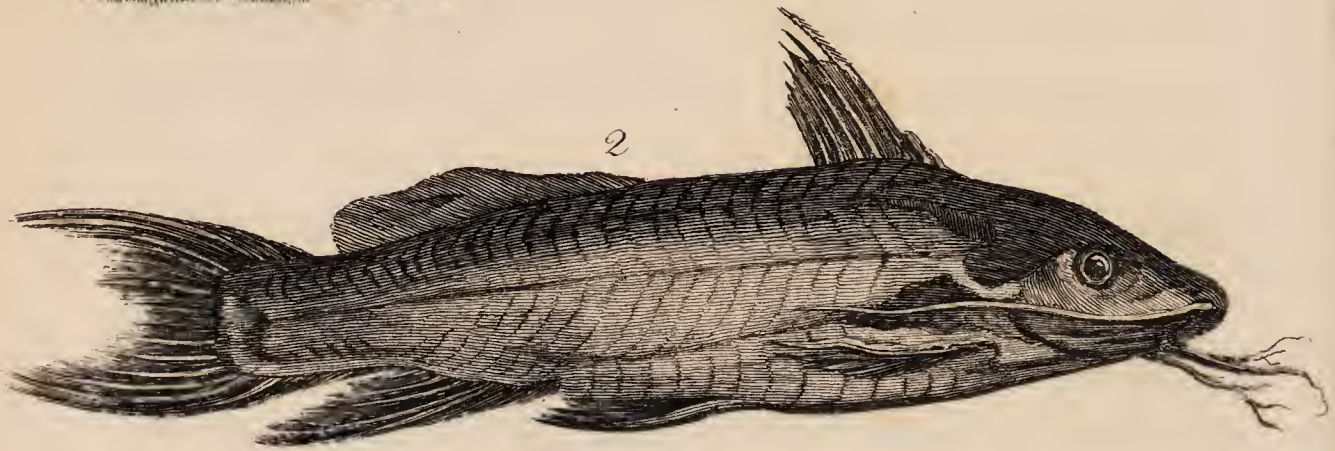
they receive whatever they want. It was not sufficient for the monks of the deserts to form useless societies, they must likewise become dangerous and hurtful. Without the succours which they find in these, the Bedouins could not have subsisted long in the environs, and infested the country bordering on this desert with their continual devastations. Under a government that has any idea of a good police, such retreats, the allurements and rendezvous of robbers, would not long exist.

The dress of these men, who are called religious, but little deserve the name, perfectly accords with the caverns in which they dwell, and their coarse simple food. A sort of robe, a long black shirt, constitutes the whole of their clothing; and the dark colour of this single garment, differing only a shade from the brown hue of their faces, their short stature, their broad and mean countenances, characters inherited by the Cophts from the ancient Egyptians, render them the ugliest of men, as they are the filthiest and most disgusting.

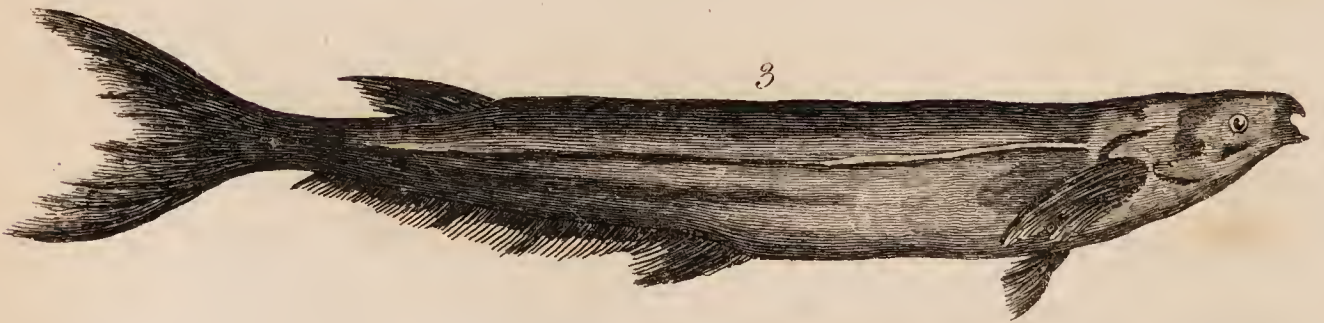
In the middle of the enclosure they have hollowed out a small space, on which they have scattered a little earth, and this they call a garden. They have planted in it a few *atlès*, which thrive tolerably well; and a few plants, that are rather objects of curiosity in these arid plains, than of use-
ful



Fulful beladi.



Schal.



Kachouei?

ful cultivation. Among these plants I was struck with one, which I have never seen since in any part of Egypt. It appears to have been brought from some country farther to the south; and is called *fulful béladi*, that is, *native pepper*. It is in fact spicy, and its stalks, eaten raw, or boiled with their victuals, serve as seasoning. When I saw it there were neither flowers nor fruit upon it, so that I cannot determine to what genus it belongs; though certainly it has no affinity to that of the peppers. No botanist has mentioned it; and by those to whom I have shewn the drawing, it was not known. We may consider it therefore as a plant new to us. (See a representation of it, Pl. XXII. fig. 1.) Its numerous stalks, which rise only about two feet in height, are green, and the summits are yellow.

On one side of the monastery were some ruins, which I was told were the remains of the ancient edifice. There is still to be seen among them a very deep well, with steps to descend into it. The water in it is as brackish as that of the well which supplies the present convent. Before the gate were some stones, which the monks had collected for the construction of some new cells, and I observed, that almost all of them were nothing but natron grown very hard. In the environs much

common gypsum is found, in Arabic *guips* *, and also foliated gypsum, or lapis specularis †.

In the environs of the lakes of natron there are thick and solid strata of rock-salt, or sal gem ‡, which they break into large pieces. This salt is of a dazzling whiteness without, and a rosy hue within. In some places, but much more rarely, another sort of sal gem is found, crystallized in little, hard, solid, whitish, transparent crystals, nearly of a pyramidal figure. This is called *melhe maktoum*, or *marked salt*, because these little pyramids have on their base a mark, which appears to be artificial, and is probably given to them by the Cophtic monks, by way of increasing the marvelousness which they have contrived to affix to the origin of these natural productions. They appeared much astonished at the doubts I expressed on this subject, and had not too much effrontery in maintaining their imposition. They alone take upon themselves the office of collecting the marked salt, which they separate from its bed with little iron hooks: and if we possessed the stupid credulity of those to whom the lies of monks are so many oracles, we might believe that this saline crystallization takes place only on that night when

* *Gypsum vulgare.*

† *Gypsum lamellosum.*

‡ *Sal gemmæ.*

the *drop* falls in Egypt, another reverie, the pretended harbinger of the commencement of the rise of the Nile, and that the next day there are no traces of it to be seen. This monkish imposture, like all others, turned to the profit of those by whom it was propagated: for, if the monks of *Zaïdi el Baramous* were the only persons who collected this sal gem, they were likewise the only ones who sold it; and this gloss of the marvellous, which they contrived to throw over it, occasioned it to be much in request. Its properties, too, are said to be almost miraculous: but that which will not admit of the least doubt, because it is attested by the monks, is its virtue of rendering women fruitful, and infallibly removing sterility. I have been told also, that the goldsmiths of the country make use of it in their work.

Beside these different species of salt, the lakes of the deserts of Nitria produce likewise a large quantity of reeds, which form a considerable article of trade. The Egyptians gather them to make mats with their leaves, and pipe-stems with their stalks.

The monastery which I was now visiting, was not the only one 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

of a number of hermits, encroaching upon the rights of death by leading a savage and useless life, making it their sole study to counteract the laws of nature, and endeavouring, after having abjured the qualities of man, to form a barren colony for Heaven. From Zaïdi el Baramous I took the bearings by the compass of the buildings that were discernible from the top of the walls. The little uninhabited house of Saint Maximous lay to the east-south-east: about two leagues distant was another monastery, called *Zaïdi Sourian*, to the south-south-east: very near this was a second, south by east: and lastly, on the other side of the lakes of natron, was a little deserted building, bearing north-east by east, which had been constructed by a *Kiaschef*, who was commissioned to drive away the Bedouins and keep them at a distance. It still served as a shelter to those who come to collect the natron.

A day's journey to the westward is the River without Water, *Bahr Bela Ma*, the ancient bed of a communication between the lakes Mœris and Mareotis. Rocks of different figures, scattered throughout the dry channel, have led people to suppose that they were petrified fragments of boats; and some go so far as to say, that they discover men and animals there petrified in the same manner. Eagle-stones, or ætites, are very common

in the neighbourhood. If you continue to proceed in the same direction, that is, to the west, beyond the River without Water, in the desert of Libya, you will meet with fertile districts, covered with date-trees and various other plants, but without a single inhabitant. So at least I was assured by the monks and the Arabs of the desert.

A Coptic peasant, arriving from Terrana, brought us some news of our Bedouin robbers. Not supposing that I should remain several days in such a bare and wretched place, they had waited for me behind the Syrian Monastery, *Zaidi Sourian*, till they were tired, and supposed, by my not arriving, that I had gone some other way. However, that they might not have to regret the loss of so much time from their predatory occupation, they had proceeded to the environs of Terrana, where they had carried off the camels, and pillaged the provision, of a company of peasants who were coming for natron. The man who told us this story, had met with them leading away the camels they had taken.

The day after this man arrived, I discovered in the morning the recent footsteps of a horse round the walls, and had no doubt but we should soon see some Arabs. In fact, a few hours after the-bell at the gate was rung violently. It was by a troop
of

of seven Bedouins, who shewed much anxiety and distrust, and were afraid of approaching the walls, because, they said, there were strangers within. The monks endeavoured to remove their apprehensions, and lowered down some provision for them. While they were eating, I put on the robe and head-dress of a friar, and went up to the gallery, to examine them at my ease, as they conversed with the Cophts, in the midst of whom I placed myself. They had been informed, that Sheick Hussein had come thither with camels, and wanted to know the reason: one of them had rode round the walls the evening before, and seen upon them a person with a red shawl wrapped about his head: and they talked of *Franks* in quest of treasures, with whom they much wished to meet. The Cophts endeavoured to mislead them, by telling them a thousand stories, to which they gave no credit. I had put off the monk's dirty robe; joined my two companions on whom I could most depend; and desired the Cophts to open the wicket for me. The opportunity was extremely favourable; as the banditti were sitting round the provision that had been given them; their fusils thrown on the ground, were lying at some distance from them; and their horses, standing under the shade of the wall, were still farther off. Surprised at our sallying out, not one of the robbers would have escaped; and the horses would have enabled us to
get

get out of a place, from which it was not easy for us to see how we should retreat. But all my solicitations, and even threats, were useless. The Cophts opposed my scheme, for fear, if a single Bedouin should escape, he would collect numerous bodies of his fellows, and return to sack the monastery. Thus I was unable to accomplish my design; and the Arabs, who knew not what was passing within, departed as soon as they had finished their meal, bending their course to *Zaidi Sourian*, no doubt to fall in with us on our way.

I had sent off one of the peasants that were in the convent, for Terrana, where I had been informed there was a camp of Bedouins, to engage them to come and fetch us, and bring with them beasts for us to ride. On the 13th of January, being the fifth of our residence among these Cophts, ten of these Bedouins arrived well armed, with a camel and some asses. One of them had shot a flamingo on the banks of the natron lakes, and presented it to me. Though, considered as game, the bird is bad enough, it was a treat for persons who had lived some days in a state of rigorous abstinence. My companions were in haste to roast it; but just as we were preparing to make an excellent meal upon it, the monks seized it with a voraciousness comparable to that of so many jackals,
filthy

filthy carnivorous animals, that cowardly tear to pieces the disgusting and easily acquired prey which they want the courage to kill. Thus our bird disappeared in the twinkling of an eye, under the teeth and nails of these hooded jackals.

Preparing to quit these vile hosts, I proposed to make them a present, in return for the unpleasant abode we had found among them; and soon perceived, that I had to deal with men more dangerous than the Bedouins, who, frank and generous in their friendship, display a sort of honour even in their robberies. The superior told me, that he was willing I should bestow something in the first place on the monastery, secondly on the embellishment of the chapel, thirdly on the poor, and lastly on himself. Having listened patiently to this long catalogue of wants, I had some curiosity to know at what they were estimated, and asked how large a sum would be sufficient for these several purposes. After a few moments calculation, the monk answered, that, as the convent wanted white-washing all over, he supposed the whole would require five or six hundred sequins. This was a trifle, to be sure, for five days lodging and board on lentil bread and lentils and water. However, I made him an offer in my turn. The contents of my purse, in passing through the hands of the Arabs, had been considerably

considerably diminished; and the payment of what I had agreed to give Hussein, reduced the remainder to six sequins, which I offered to the superior. His calculation and mine were tolerably wide of each other; and in consequence the monk fell into a passion, which it would not be easy to describe. He loaded me with invectives, protested he would accept nothing, and swore by the saints of his church, that I should soon repent 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 him some Arabs, to whom he would give intelligence of my route, and whom he would commission to be his avengers. At this I could no longer keep my temper, and I should have beaten out the rascal's brains on the spot, if the Bedouins, who were come for me, had not conveyed him out of my reach.

At length I had quitted this infernal abode, and was going to mount the ass designed for my riding, when the old monk sent to entreat me to give him the six sequins I had offered him. The Arab sheick having undertaken to deliver the message, on his account I gave them to the monk: and immediately we saw the wretch putting up his prayers to that Heaven, the vengeance of which

he had invoked upon our heads but a few minutes before, to send us a prosperous journey.

This old man, whose name was *Michaël*, is probably no more. He was then advanced in age and emaciated, and his vile countenance was perfectly in unison with the deformity of his mind. But if it can no longer be of use to point him out, it is of great consequence to our fellow-citizens now in Egypt, to give them a knowledge of the treacherous dispositions of these hypocritical monks, for they all resemble each other, except a few trifling shades of difference. Whatever outward appearances they may put on, we may be assured, that their hatred against Europeans is more atrocious and profound than that of the Mahometans, and their houses in the desert will be the grand support of the excursions of the Bedouins, their magazines of provision, and the places in which they will assemble to deliberate on the measures necessary to ensure the success of their expeditions.

These bad qualities appear to be hereditary in the superiors of the convents of Saint Macarius; for Wansleb, who travelled this desert in 1672, complains bitterly of him whom he found here, and whom he calls a bad man. He had great reason to be dissatisfied with the **Cophtic monks**

in another of these convents ; since they extorted from him thirty Venetian sequins, and the vicar filched some money from him besides*.

During the five days we spent at *Zaïdi el Baramous*, every morning there was a very thick fog, and one evening a little rain fell.

* *Nouvelle Relation d'Egypte*, p. 220.

CHAP. XXIX.

Departure from Zaïdi el Baramous—Zaïdi Sourian—Lablab—Tamarinds—Mr. Bruce—Amba Bishoi—Amba Monguar—Generosity of a Bedouin—Wardan—Route towards Cairo—Western 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*, the 13th of January 1778, we travelled south-south-east for two leagues, through deep passes, parallel to the great hills. Their sides were steep, and they were evidently the effects of torrents. The whole of this space consisted entirely of fine sand, except in a few instances, where thin strata of limestone appeared uncovered. On the surface of these strata was a considerable number of Egyptian pebbles, which the floods had rolled thither from the summits of the hills.

As we drew near the monastery of *Zaïdi Sourian*, the chief of the Arabs who were our conductors apprised me, that, according to all reports, those Bedouins, by whom we had been attacked, were
concealed

concealed behind the walls, with design to surprise us; that I ought to be prepared to give them a vigorous reception; and that he would support me with all his people. My companions too were well disposed to perform their parts, and this time we should certainly not have been stripped. Having made the necessary dispositions, we approached the building, but could discover no person near.

Entering into the convent, we found it was constructed on the same plan as that which we had left, but the buildings were more commodious, and arranged in a much better manner. From its name it appears to have been formerly the residence of Syrian monks, who have relinquished it to the Cophts. The ancient Syrian chapel still remains. It is tolerably handsome, and adorned with sculptures, and paintings in fresco. On one of the pillars the names of several Europeans are cut, but those of the French travellers, Baron and Granger, were the only ones I knew. The Cophts do not make use of this chapel; but have built another after their own fashion, that is, in the form of a cross. In it is a shrine filled with saints, among whom Saint *Marmarotous* is most revered. The redoubt, or little fort, was likewise better constructed than that of *Zaidi el Baramous*; and the monks appeared to me less filthy, and less stupidly ferocious. Their superior was a man turned of

N 3

thirty,

thirty, absolutely beardless, and without a single hair on any part of his body. In a country where a man is respected in proportion to the growth of his beard, it was natural for him to be greatly chagrined at the total want of an article of so much consequence, and he entreated me very pressingly, to instruct him in the means of acquiring such an embellishment to his chin.

These monks too have a little garden, though not quite so small, and in better condition than that of the former convent. In it were *atlès*, some date-trees, little olive-trees, and one almond-tree. Among the culinary vegetables I distinguished the *lablab**, a sort of large French-bean, which is perennial, and, rising to a considerable height, well calculated, like the vine, to form arbours. Its leaves are of a cheerful green; and its long and broad pods are of the same colour, edged with deep purple. These contain oval beans, variegated with yellow, reddish brown, and sometimes black. This kind of pulse is cultivated throughout all Egypt, and the beans are in common use as an article of food.

In one of the courts is a monstrous tamarind-tree †, which the Cophts consider as the effect of a

* *Dolichos lablab*. Lin.

† *Tamarindus indica*. Lin.—In Arabic, *tamar-hindi*, Indian date-tree.

miraculous vegetation. A certain Saint Ephrem leaving his staff at the door of another hermit, to whom he was paying a visit, the staff instantly took root, put forth branches, and quickly shot up into an enormous tamarind-tree. To heighten the miracle, they say it is the only tree of the kind existing in Egypt: but this is an imposition; for though tamarinds are not common in that country, a few may be seen in the gardens of Rossetta. The pods, stones, and pulp of tamarinds, boiled, and beaten together with sugar, are sold in the markets of all the cities in Egypt. This coarse sort of confectionary is brought by the caravans from the interior parts of Africa. It is an indispensable article of provision for those who are preparing to traverse the deserts, which they eat as a refreshment, and to allay the burning thirst excited by these torrid regions.

The few trees that shadow part of the enclosure of *Zaïdi Sourian*, attract thither some small birds, which diffuse a gleam of cheerfulness; while the rugged aspect of nature at *Zaïdi el Baramous* frightens away every creature that has breath.

The well-water is good, compared with that which we had been obliged to drink for some days, as it has but a slight degree of brackishness. It is probably furnished by the lake of natron, which

is only three quarters of a league distant from the monastery.

In this convent was a monk, who had visited Abyssinia. He informed me, that an European was then there in the greatest favour with the Emperor, and considered as a man of the highest consequence by the people. I had seen Mr. Bruce at the house of Buffon, at Montbard, and had heard from him several particulars respecting his residence in Abyssinia. These very particulars, repeated by a man perfectly disinterested, and the precise agreement of dates, formed to me the completest demonstration, that Mr. Bruce was the European, whom he mentioned as the person acting so conspicuous a part at Gondar. This is not the only proof I have had in my power to collect respecting the reality of a journey, which is an honour to the present century, though doubts have been raised on the subject of it*. In France, as well as in England, there were persons who gave it no credit. The following is an extract from a letter I received at Cairo: " We wish you all the health necessary for

* Travels to discover the Source of the Nile, by Mr. Bruce, translated into French by Citizen Castéra, to whose talents and industry we are indebted for an acquaintance with several other interesting travels.

“ a man about to undertake a journey of such
“ difficulty, as that which will carry you into
“ Abyssinia *. Perhaps you will find something
“ to remark respecting what Mr. Bruce, the fa-
“ mous English traveller, has said of it since his
“ return. He is not altogether credited in his
“ own country, and you will render great service
“ to his reputation, if, after having been there,
“ you speak of it in the same manner as he has
“ done.”

To be attacked by calumny is the fate of those who engage in extraordinary undertakings. There is a numerous body of men, who are incapable of doing any good themselves, and envious of every thing interesting or useful done by others ; jealous of talents they do not possess ; eager to stifle merit, in the hope that their foolish and vain insufficiency may take its place ; the declared enemies of all who spurn the beaten track ; vile, lying, hireling calumniators, endeavouring by means of perfidious insinuations, of imposture combined with the sole art they possess, to tarnish and destroy every great reputation, the splendour of which is as offensive to their eyes as the beams of the sun to those of owls.

* I shall hereafter mention the reasons which prevented me from performing this journey.

From

From *Zaidi Sourian* I departed on the 14th, at three o'clock in the morning, after having bestowed on the monks the few pieces of silver I had left, firmly resolved not to set my foot within another convent. There were two more; but I had now nothing to satisfy the cupidity of the monks, and I knew likewise that they were not worth visiting.

On passing by one of these monasteries, called *Amba Bishoi*, which was only a few paces distant from that which we left, the monks were waiting for me at the gate. They were very pressing in their solicitations, that I would step in for a moment; and as an inducement told me, that they possessed the body of a saint, as fresh and rosy as if alive. They appeared to be greatly offended at my disregarding such an attraction; but the real cause of the dissatisfaction they expressed was their being disappointed of the money they expected to derive from my visit.

My Arab sheick would have led me by a fourth monastery; but I declared to him positively, that I would not go near another of these buildings, so badly inhabited, and under shelter of which some band of robbers might be concealed; choosing rather to remain in the open plain, than run the hazard of being surprised a second time. Accordingly

cordingly we directed our course to the eastward, and passed the southern extremity of the last lake of natron, which was covered with a prodigious quantity of ducks of every species.

The fourth of these convents of the desert, the friendly retreats of robbery, we left on our right a full league. This is particularly dedicated to Saint Macarius. It is also called *Amba Monguar*: the Arabs say simply *Monguar*. Like the others, it is inhabited by Coptic monks. In the environs are several ruins, which the Cophts shew as those of the ancient monastery of Saint 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*.

We kept on our way all day, and all the night, till five o'clock in the morning, when we arrived at the village of *Etris*, on the western bank of the Nile. The camp of those Bedouins who were my present travelling companions, was pitched close by this village. The sheick conducted me to his tent; and immediately the women set before us the repast of hospitality.

* Probably they are the ruins of a nunnery, whence the Arabic name, which would be sufficiently appropriate.—T.

I had informed the sheick, at our first interview in the desert, that I could not possibly pay him for the escort and beasts with which he furnished me, before I returned from Cairo, whither I intended to proceed, to obtain a fresh supply for my purse, which had been emptied by his countrymen. His answer was, that he was perfectly easy about his pay, and not only so, but had money at my service. I had paid little attention to the latter part of this answer; forgetting that I was no longer in a country where the heart and lips are at variance, and where an abundance of words apparently kind are often nothing more than the expressions of indifference, and sometimes proceed from the mouth of one in whose heart is concealed hatred; where such offers, such attentions, are considered as unmeaning compliments, as words of course, which the person who makes them has no intention to perform, and in which the person who declines them puts no trust.

The repast was no sooner over, than my host went to a little coffer, that stood in a corner of the tent, took out a little bag of money, and presenting it to me, said: “ I know every thing that
“ has happened to you. With indignation I wit-
“ nessed the rascally behaviour of the monk at
“ *Zāidi el Baramous*. I am well aware, that, in
“ consequence of the letters of recommendation
“ you

“ you have, you will receive all the assistance you
 “ want from the *Kiaschef* of *Wardan* : but you will
 “ give me great pain if you apply to a *dog* of a
 “ Turk, to a Mameluc. I cannot bear that one,
 “ with whom I have eaten the repast of friendship,
 “ whom I have protected at the hazard of my life,
 “ and who is become my brother, should have re-
 “ course to another for assistance. Take this mo-
 “ ney : it is yours. If you refuse it, I shall think
 “ that you disdain a friend, because he is one of the
 “ people of the desert *.” What generosity of sen-
 timent ! what greatness of mind ! Yet this very
 man would have stripped me, if he had casually
 met with me in the wilderness. In return for this
 frank and sincere cordiality, and that I might not
 offend my host, I took a few *patacas*, which he
 would not see me count, any more than he would
 listen to me, when I promised to repay them on my
 return from Cairo, which would be very shortly.

We learned, that the troop of *Abdallah*, the
 black robber chief, who had so unwillingly restored
 to me the booty of which he had gotten possession,
 being reinforced by fresh detachments, had waited
 in ambush for me behind the walls of the monastery
 of Saint Macarius, or *Amba Monguar*, by which
 I had refused to pass. The sheick thanked me

* *Bédaoui*, from which we have formed *Bedouin*, signifies an
 inhabitant of the desert.

warmly,

warmly, for having chosen to leave this convent unvisited, and obliged him to continue his journey the whole night. All the Bedouins of the desert were on the watch to surprise me, supposing that I was loaded with treasure; and I was indebted for my safety to nothing but the indirect way, and forced march, which I compelled my conductors to take. This notion of my having a quantity of gold about me had entered into the stupid heads of the *fellahs*, or peasants, likewise: and it might have brought upon me still more fatal consequences from these imbruted and ferocious beings, who, equally robbers with the Bedouins, possess none of their virtues. These circumstances determined me to repair to the commander of the district, and I set off for *Wardan*, the place of his residence, half a league south-south-east of *Etris*. The Mameluc officer received me with great civility, and would make me lodge in his own house.

Wardan is a large village, built at a little distance from the western bank of the Nile, on the site of *Latopolis*, a city anciently dedicated to Latona, which gave its name to one of the divisions or *nomes* of Egypt. In more recent times this place had acquired another kind of celebrity, that of pillage. It was a formidable nest of pirates, who plundered all the vessels that navigated this part of the Nile. The merchants had no other resource, but to put
their

their goods on board vessels belonging to Wardan itself, the masters of which, being in league with the pirates, would answer for the lading intrusted to them. This company of pirates was destroyed by the bey, since which Wardan has been a place of security.

Here I hired a boat, to convey me to Cairo, and return with me to Rossetta. On the 16th of January, at five o'clock in the afternoon, we set sail. The wind falling, however, we found it necessary to anchor. At one in the morning we sailed again. As we were passing a village, in the forenoon, we saw the inhabitants quitting their dwellings, and crossing over to the eastern bank of the Nile, with their goods and cattle, in consequence of having seen about a hundred Bedouins the evening before, who, they feared, were come to pillage them. No doubt it was Abdallah's troop in pursuit of us. This village, though on the bank of the river, is almost in the desert. In proportion as you approach nearer Cairo, the space of fertile ground on the west of the Nile, which stretches out into immense plains in Bahire, gradually decreases, so that near this capital of Egypt, the western bank of the Nile is little more than arid sand.

The master of the boat not daring to venture so high as *Boulac*, the port of Cairo, lest it should be
seized

seized for the service of the army which Ismael Bey had assembled against his competitors Mourat and Ibrahim, we stopped half a league below *Bou-lac*, near a village called *Schoubra*. I sent one of my people to Cairo by land; and as soon as he returned, we set off down the river again, at nine o'clock in the evening.

After having kept watch till midnight with half my people, we were relieved by the other half: a measure of prudence, adopted and regularly pursued in all my voyages. I had but just lain down in the cabin, when I was awakened, and informed that three small boats, without sails or masts, were rowing towards us, and refused to answer the questions put to them. The master directed me to be told that they were pirates, and not a moment should be lost in firing upon them, before they began their attack upon us. On this they presently received a few discharges of our musketry, which they answered only by rowing off as fast as they could.

On the 18th, we passed between *Wardan* and the little village of *Guéréiss*, a quarter of a league below which is another called *Géziret Wardan*. From this place the Nile runs north-west by north to *Etris*. We saw several flights of ducks, gulls of the large and small species, and a flamingo, which

the Arabs call *bésarouss*. There were also several spur-winged plovers on both banks of the river, and we often heard their cry in the night. At Rossetta, where, as I have before observed, they are pretty numerous, they pass the night along the shore of the Nile, before the houses, never failing to accompany with their sharp screaming voice, the long barkings, with which the dogs in the streets interrupt the sleeper's repose at the least noise.

As we were sailing by *Géziret Wardan* we saw a funeral: two flags, one white, the other red, were carried at the head of the procession, a custom not observed in cities. A little lower, near the village of *Menshie*, a less melancholy scene offered itself to our eyes; that of a wedding: the bride was perched upon a tall camel, and surrounded by a crowd of peasants, engaging in mock combats with long sticks. A band of music, consisting of drums and hautboys, led the way. The pace of the camel was very slow; yet he was stopped every moment for the company to dance, shout, and fight around the bride, who was paraded thus for half a day about the village and its environs.

A quarter of a league below *Menshie* is the little village of *Monsi*. Opposite the space between them is *Etris*, where we arrived at ten o'clock in the morning.

I hastened to the camp of my generous Bedouin sheick, who appeared astonished at seeing me again so soon, and paid him what I owed him, to which I added a few yards of cloth. While I was taking with him the frugal repast which he obliged me to accept, he sent to the boat, without my knowledge, a sheep and some other provision. From this worthy man I parted full of admiration and gratitude. Let him, who is indignant at the corruption of our cities, the vices that prevail in them, poorly disguised by hypocrisy, the false virtues which are cried up, that division of petty interests, which makes a society of men an assembly of enemies, cease to calumniate human nature. Still, for its honour, there are men, who, not concealing great faults, unite with the open practice of them the exercise of the most commendable qualities. Under the rude tent of the Bedouin, on the parched sand, which serves him as a floor, we must look for simple manners, generous habits, and the virtues of hospitality.

I had an opportunity of seeing a singular remedy, which the *fellahs*, or Egyptian peasants, employ for sore eyes. They suspend a little ball of coral to their head-dress by a thread, so that it hangs directly opposite to the diseased eye, which is stedfastly fixed upon it, and struck by it continually. If a person wished to render himself
blind,

blind, he could not choose a better method than this whimsical specific.

Leaving *Etris* at four o'clock in the afternoon, two leagues lower down we saw *Abouneschabè*; and opposite to it, on the eastern bank, *Tahonè*. Between these two villages the Nile is very broad, but shallow. My boat, though without any lading, ran aground, and remained fast a considerable time. At nine o'clock we reached *Iagnouss*, a pretty large village on the eastern bank, half a league from *Tahonè*.

At *Iagnouss* I tasted for the first time a small fruit called *nebka*. The tree that bears it, is a large species of rhamnus *, growing higher than a

* The *nebka* being yet little known, and the work of Forskal not being in the hands of every one, I presume it will not be unacceptable to the botanical reader, if I copy what has been said of it by this gentleman, who examined it on the spot where it grows.

RHAMNUS NABECA. Variat. (a) Rh. divaricatus; foliis semipollicar. Caulibus ad singula folia divaricatis; 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, distichia, 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. 2, tab. 42.

plum-tree, the bark of which is gray, and not unlike that of willows. Its leaves are alternate, obtuse, trinervated, and of a deep green colour. The fruit resembles a small round apple* in appearance, and has more of the flavour of an apple than of a plum. When it is not thoroughly ripe, it has an acerb taste, like that of the crab; and when over-ripe it is tasteless; but if it be eaten in a proper state of maturity, it is pleasant enough. The stone is round and covered with asperities.

Opposite *Iagnouss* the Nile was almost covered with ducks; and I was much astonished to see in the midst of them flights of common pigeons, a incredible number of which are bred in Egypt, pitching on the water every moment, even in the strongest part of the current, and remaining upon its surface often more than a minute. This habit, which I never observed in any other place, and which is probably owing to the great heat of the climate, is common in this hot country to all pigeons of this species.

* Savary, who appears never to have seen this fruit, says it is a *small pear*, of a sourish taste. *Lettres sur l'Egypte*, tom. ii. page 43.

CHAP. XXX.

Voyage on the Nile continued—Terrana—Dovecots—Wagtails—Ducks—Crows—A funeral—New species of plover—Ruins—Antique figures—Foua—Banks of the Nile—Return to Rossetta.

ON the 20th in the morning we resumed our voyage toward Rossetta, as soon as a very thick fog, during which it was impossible to distinguish objects at the smallest distance, was dispersed. When it cleared up a strong gale came on from the north, which raised a swell in the river, and prevented our boat from driving down with the stream. Below *Iagnouss* the Nile runs north by west. Half a league from *Iagnouss* is a place called *Ikmas*, and half a league further is *Terrana*, where I stopped.

Terrana, or *Terane*, as it is called on Danville's map, is a well-enclosed town, consisting entirely of mud-walled houses, like all the villages in these parts, and the residence of a *Kiaschef*. In the environs, the vestiges of the ancient city of *Terenuthis* appear in some ruins, known in the country at present by the name of *Aboubellou*.

The inhabitants of *Terrana* are ferocious and malignant. The absence of the *Kiaschef*, who was with the army, rendered them still more dangerous. We were both threatened and insulted there. They had heard of my journey in the desert, and had been told, according to custom, that I had discovered treasures in it. With these my boat was supposed to be laden, and the inhabitants of *Terrana* formed the design of carrying her off in the night. We kept upon our guard; a few people roved along the shore, but no one ventured to approach us.

There was a Turk here who manufactured very fine gunpowder. This poor fellow, though young, had a feeble voice, and the hair of his beard was white. These were the consequences of a fright, into which he was thrown by Ali Bey, who, suspecting him of furnishing supplies of powder to the Bedouins, whom he wished to destroy, ordered his head to be cut off. The tyrant revoked his order the same instant, yet such were the strong impressions it left behind.

I saw some herons, gulls, and flights of ducks. The ducks did not stop near *Terrana*, for, as the Nile is broad there, and its course straight, there is commonly a great deal of wind, which raises a swell, to which they are averse. The direction of
the

the river still continues north by west. On the eastern bank, and a little below *Terrana*, are the two contiguous villages, *Zéié* and *Sansaft*, the *fellahs* of which have a similar reputation with those of *Terrana*.

I was in haste to quit this inhospitable country, and on the 22d, at three o'clock in the morning, we committed ourselves once more to the current. By six o'clock we had reached *Bur-Edgiat*, where some remains of antiquity are to be seen. Here the Nile takes a north-easterly direction. Half a league from *Bur-Edgiat* is *Dimitschi*; and opposite to it on the eastern bank of the river, is *Tamalè*. Near this last-mentioned village a canal conducts the fertilizing waters of the river toward the south.

A short half league below *Tamalè*, on the same side, is *Shebshir*; at an equal distance from this place is *Kafr Nadir*; and a quarter of a league farther on is *Nadir*. Here is another canal, larger than that of *Tamalè*, the direction of which is north-east. I saw a flock of gray sandpipers*, some gulls, and several ducks. The same gale from the north, which had retarded our voyage the day before, rendered our passage still rough,

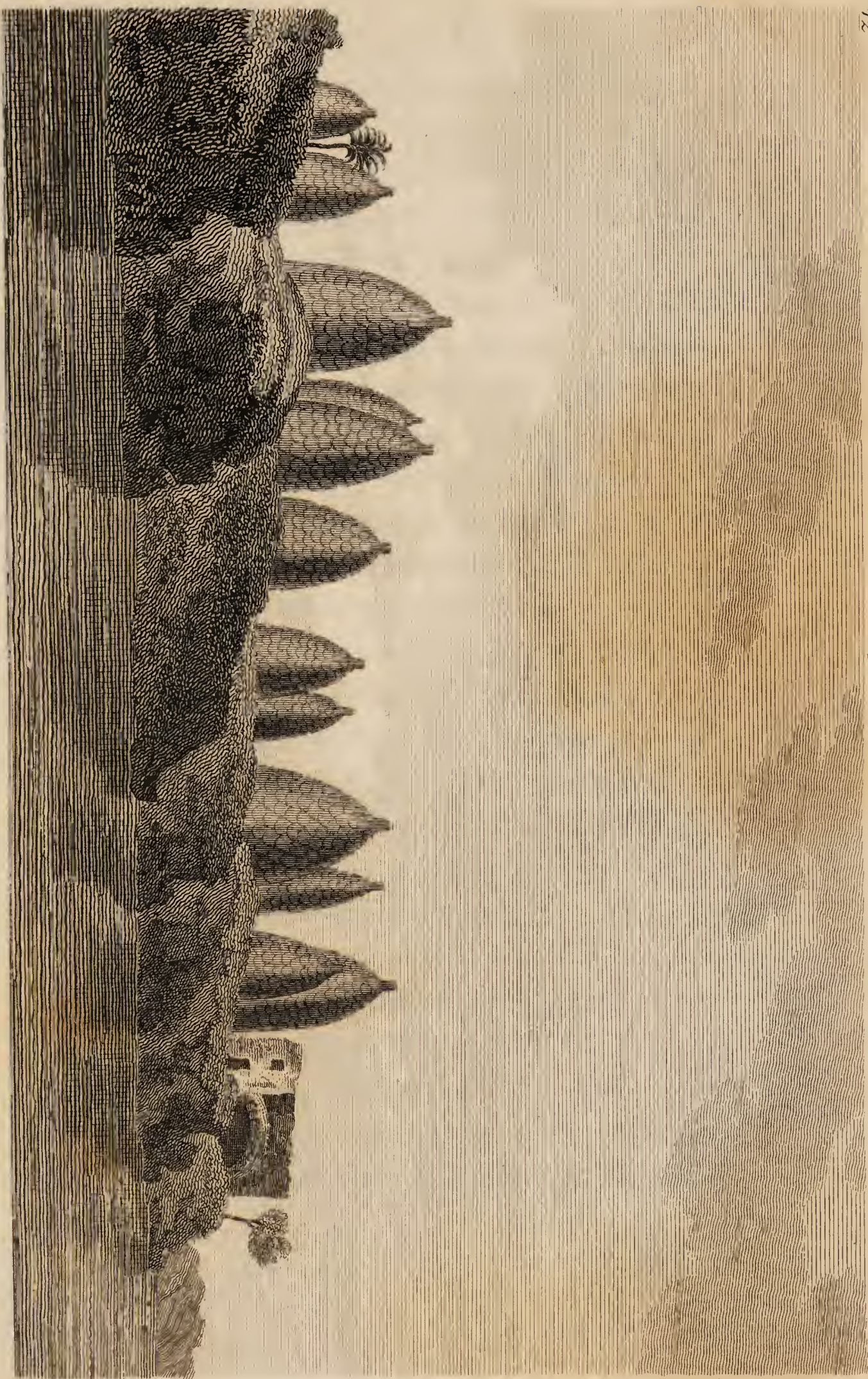
* Vanneau pluvier. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Oiseaux, et pl. enlum. No. 854.—*Tringa squatarola*. Lin.

and our progress very slow. On the same bank as *Nadir* we find *Geziret el Adjar* (the Island of Stones), a village, at a little distance from which are some ancient ruins, perhaps those of *Nicii*.

From *Nadir* the river runs north-west* as far as *Alguan*, a small village, three quarters of a league from *Nadir*. This place has a very wretched appearance. It is not enclosed, which almost all the villages are that are of any size. The people here have nothing but sorry mud hovels; though the pigeons have a number of houses. I never saw so many dovecots together in one place in my life. Their shape is singular, being somewhat analogous to that of our bee-hives. (*See their figure and situation*, pl. XII.) This construction is peculiar to the dovecots of some parts of Lower Egypt, where there is a prodigious number of them. They are constructed of earth, square below, and conical above. The inside is furnished with earthen pots, in which the pigeons make their nests.

The commandant of this place was a Negro Mameluc. He told me that, two or three years before, the *fellahs* had found a large vase filled with medals, among some ruins at no great distance;

* In the original *south-west*, but this is evidently an error of the press.—T.



Dove-cots of Naguan.

and that this discovery had excited a bloody conflict among them, which continued three days.

Following the course of the Nile from *Alguan*, we sailed first east-north-east for a quarter of a league, then north, and lastly north by west, till we reached *Kafr Demschi*, a village on the eastern shore, a league from *Alguan*. Between these is *Kafr Géziè*. Half a league lower, during which the river runs north-north-west, is *Tenesur*, a village much better built than those I have just mentioned, and at a little distance from the Nile. Opposite to this village is *Aboul-kaûi*. A bending of half a league, running north-west by north, carried us to *Etrie*, a deserted village on the western bank; opposite which, on the other side of the river, is *Zaûed el Bégli*, built a little way inland. A quarter of a league below *Etrie* is *Kafr Etrie*; and between these two places is a large canal, which waters part of *Bahire*, and has a communication with that of Alexandria.

The Nile then runs north-east by north. We stopped at a large village below *Kafr Etrie*, built a quarter of a league from the river, and called *Mischlami*. We then went over to the western side, and made our boat fast for the night at *Komscherick*.

Beside

Beside the ducks, numerous flights of which were to be seen every moment, I saw this day six pelicans flying in company, and a considerable flock of wild geese.

I observed that the wagtails, dispersed about during the day, assembled together as night came on. These assemblies, which cannot arise from any scheme of defence, since these birds, innocent and feeble, are incapable of intimidating an enemy, ever so little dangerous, even by their number, must be the consequence of a social instinct. All those of a district, thus assembled, fly for some time over the surface of the water, and then settle together on one of the shores of the river to pass the night. The flock that I saw in the evening at *Komscherick* was so numerous, as to be several minutes in passing by the stern of our vessel.

There is no kind of birds more plentiful in Egypt. I have met with them in all the cultivated parts, near all the villages, and more particularly in the neighbourhood of those which lie near the banks of the Nile. At the same time there are no birds more tame : some of them came into the vessel's cabin, during our voyage upon the Nile, and would feed close by our sides with engaging security.

At *Komscherick* I found a few medals, which, though of little importance, prove that there was a settlement here in ancient times. During the day I spent at this place, I had great reason to be pleased with the behaviour of the Mameluc officer who had the command here.

If my professing physic removed some difficulties in the course of my journey, and if the exercise of it sometimes amused us with tolerably diverting scenes, on the other hand it exposed me to severe trials. I had been prevailed upon to remain a day at *Komscherick*, in order to wait for an Arab sheick, a man of great consideration in this district, who was ill. When he came he exhibited the most frightful and disgusting spectacle. This miserable creature had nothing left but the upper part of his head: the other part, from the mouth, including the whole of the lower jaw, was gone, having been consumed by a dreadful cancer. The tongue having lost its support, hung dry and immoveable: its root was exposed, and the inside of the fauces, the flesh and integuments of which were eroded so as to leave them almost bare, announced by its black and inflamed appearance a speedy termination to the sufferings of the man, to whose horrible state of existence an impossibility of swallowing, or even breathing, would soon put an end. Terrified at the view of
a head,

a head half living, and half delivered to the corruption of death, I hastened to get rid of such a patient, and ran to my vessel, which I instantly ordered to be cast loose; my imagination so struck with the sight of such a hideous object, that it was tormented with it several days.

It was ten o'clock in the morning of the 25th when we left *Komscherick* to continue our voyage down the Nile. The direction of the river here is north-east by north. At the distance of half a league we found *Amrous* on the eastern bank; a little farther, *Magnin*, on the western; and half a league below *Amrous*, on the same side, *Tonnoub*. The river then runs north-north-west to a quarter of a league below *Zaïra*, a village built on a high point of land, on the right, a little distance from *Tonnoub*. Between this place and *Zaïra*, on the left is *Zavoua*, standing a little way from the shore. A little below *Zaïra*, on an eminence, which appears to be composed of the ruins of an ancient town, stands a chapel, the burial-place of a Mahometan saint. Half a league below *Zavoua* is *Zaüed el Bahri*.

Beyond *Zaïra* the Nile takes its course east-north-east, and in somewhat less than a quarter of a league we reach *Négilé*, a tolerably well built town on the west bank. At the place where

the river alters its direction from north-north-west to east-north-east, it supplies a canal running to the westward, and forms a little island. Half a league from *Négilé* stands *Alet-Achmet*, and nearly opposite to it is *Kafr Michelei*. *Mitmei* is half a league lower down than *Alet-Achmet*, and a quarter of a league farther is *Acroub*. *Kafr Bagi*, and *Kafr Agou*, opposite which is *Kafr Garim*, are at a quarter of a league distance from each other and from *Acroub*. From this last-mentioned village, the Nile resumes its west-north-west direction, and leaves an island exposed to view before *Kafr Bagi*. At this place there was such a number of ducks upon the water, that they covered a space of half a quarter of a league long, and more than two yards broad.

During my voyage upon the Nile, all the way from Cairo to Rossetta, I observed, that the ducks preferred those parts of the river where the water is agitated neither by the wind nor by the rapidity of the stream; and as still water commonly occurs before the villages, so situate as not to be exposed to the current, and to afford smooth anchorage for vessels, the ducks rarely quit the waters that wash the walls of these habitations, opposite which large flocks seldom fail to be seen. They suffer themselves to float gently down the stream, which is
very

very slow in these parts of the river, till they are thus carried beyond the extremities of the villages, or into those parts where the surface of the water begins to be ruffled, when they take wing, return and settle again upon the water higher up, and are drifted anew down the same space of almost still water. Thus they spend the day in these alternate movements.

It was likewise a place of assembling for different species of water-fowl, 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 the western bank we find *Salamoum*, a village almost entirely deserted. Another has been built a little more within the land, called *Kafr Salamoum*. *Salamoum* is distinguished by having one of the walls of an ancient edifice remaining, in which there is a door. This, with a few pieces of granite, is the only vestige of antiquity to be seen here. The distance from it to *Shábour* is half a league. According to Danville*, these two places mark the situation of *Andropolis* (the men's city), and *Gynæcopolis* (the women's city), which appear to have been formerly contiguous.

* Géographie Ancienne, tome i. p. 12.

From *Salamoum* to *Shábour* the river runs north-east by east. Before we reached the latter place, we saw the tomb of a saint on the western bank. I stopped at *Shábour*, a pretty large village, but entirely mud-walled, and very badly built. The house of the commandant, however, which is erected on a platform of earth, though the walls are of mud, like those of the rest, is pretty well constructed. The minaret of the mosque, too, was tolerably handsome.

In the evening all the crows in the vicinity repaired in succession to a small sandy island in the middle of the river. There was a very large number of them: and after they had remained thus crowded together in a body for a quarter of an hour, they dispersed, flying away one after another, in all directions. A spectator might suppose that they had assembled to concert their measures together. The same evening several flocks of wild geese passed over our heads.

Fronting *Shábour* is a village, which bears the indecent name of *Kafr Sapari*. The navigation of the Nile in these parts during the night was very dangerous, on account of the pirates with whom these villages abound, and who attack vessels unawares. The disturbances in Egypt, and the departure of almost all the commanders
for

for the army with their troops, still increased the risk of the voyage.

We left *Shábour* on the 26th, at four o'clock in the morning. The cold had been perceptible on the preceding days, but we had never felt it so sharply before. The wind blew hard from the north-north-west, occasioning short breaking waves by its opposition to the current, and greatly impeding our progress. We did not reach *Eschlimé* till four o'clock in the afternoon. This is a wretched hamlet, consisting of a few mud-walled huts, yet it is a port of some trade. A great deal of corn, sugar-canes, and other commodities, are shipped here. We had left the village of *Bahrim* on the opposite bank, that is on the east, and a little above it the entrance of a canal, which runs to the south-south-west. Near *Bahrim* are three large eminences, which indicate the site of some ancient city, for they are not natural elevations. On the left, or western bank, we had passed the village of *Istack*.

On the 27th, at three in the morning, we departed from *Eschlimé*, and by eight we reached *Mehallet-Abou-Ali* in the Delta. For a long time we had seen nothing but clusters of mud-walled houses, or rather huts: here we found, once more, dwellings built with brick, forming a town, and defended from inundations by a dike constructed
of

of brick likewise. In one of the streets I met a funeral. By the side of the bier was carried a large black flag, diversified with spots and figures of yellow. The female mourners, who followed it, held in one hand a corner of their garment, the only one they wear, whether you call it a gown or shift, which they were continually shaking, as if driving something before them.

Here I saw, for the first time, a new species of plover. I say new, because it is not mentioned by any ornithologist. The mean length of this bird is a little more than eight inches. The head is of a deep green, with a changeable lustre; a sort of white diadem, passing above the eyes, surrounds the head; the back and less wing coverts are of a pretty, bright ash colour; the greater wing coverts, white; the quill feathers white, tipped with black, and having each a black spot about the middle, forming a black stripe across the middle of the wing. The throat is white; the under part of the neck and body white with a reddish tinge. On the upper part of the breast is a narrow band of deep shining green, passing half way round. The tail, the feathers of which are short and of unequal lengths, 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 band, and the remainder is white. The eyes are brown; the legs and feet, blueish; the bill and claws, black.

If the shape of the bill only were considered, this bird would appear to be distinct from the plover genus. In reality, the bill, instead of being perfectly strait and gibbous, like that of the plover, is slightly curved at the point of the upper mandible, and the gibbosity is less distinct; differences which bring it nearer to the *pluvian** of Buffon, and still more to that bird, which, for the same reason, this naturalist has separated from the plovers under the name of *coure-vite*†. But if we reflect, that these Egyptian birds have all the other distinguishing characters of the plover genus: that they have only three toes, all forward, without the least vestige of a toe behind: that part of the leg above the knee is naked: and, above all, that their habits are the same with those of the plovers: it will be impossible not to consider them as birds of the same genus, notwithstanding the slight difference in the form of the bill; a difference, which is one of the innumerable means employed by Nature, to emancipate herself from the narrow conceptions of man, and the divisions within which he pretends to circumscribe the effects of her omnipotence.

* *Pluvian*. Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Pl. enlum. No. 918. [The black-headed plover. Lath. Syn. v. 217.—T.]

† Hist. Nat. des Ois. et Planches enluminées, No. 795 et 892. [The cream-coloured plover, and Coromandel plover. Lath. Syn. ib. The former the European courser of Lewin.--T.]

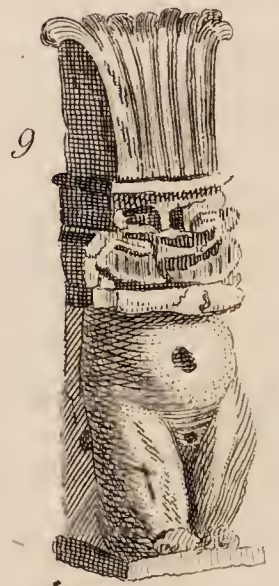
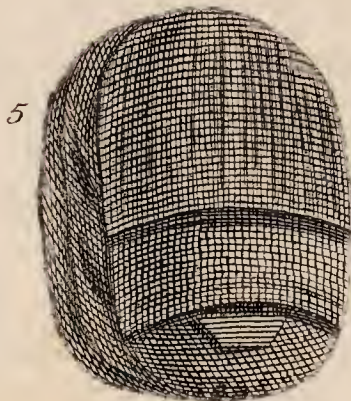
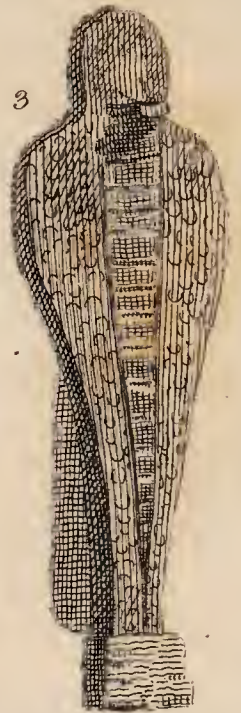
In preparing the bird, from which the above description was taken, and which was a male, I thought at first I had discovered a peculiarity in the conformation of the thigh bone, which I found flattened and curved in form of a sabre: but this was no more than an accidental deformity, for the bone of the other thigh had no such appearance.

I have since seen several plovers of this species in different parts of Egypt; but they never appear there, at least on the banks of the Nile, where I have always met with them, except when its waters have retired to their bounds, and run within their proper channel. They are almost always seen in pairs, seldom in troops; and these, when they occur, are but small, not exceeding in number seven or eight. They keep on the shore of the river, and feed on aquatic insects. I have observed, that they never alight on the mud, with which the shores of the Nile are for the most part covered, but frequent the sandy parts alone. When they take wing, they utter a little sharp cry, which they repeat several times following. They are runners, rather than birds of flight, seldom quitting the ground; and are by no means shy, so that you may approach them whenever you please.

Half a league from *Mehallet-Abou-Ali* farther within the land to the east, is *Sennehour-Medini*, a
P 2 village

village near which are some considerable remains of antiquity. The surface of the ground is covered with ruins. Nothing remains entire, except some vaults built with bricks, and pillars with their capitals of marble and granite, but these are thrown down. By the side of these ruins two villages strike the eye, on account of their handsome construction, which is of brick, more ancient apparently than that of the other towns and villages of Lower Egypt.

I was informed, that there were some ruins to be found on the opposite shore likewise, half a league below *Eschlimé*; and in passing by, I saw, though at a distance, considerable vestiges of an ancient city; but night coming on, I could not visit them. It was impossible to remain the whole night in this district, the most to be dreaded throughout Lower Egypt, for the great numbers of robbers, to whose attacks you are exposed both by land and water. The village near which we anchored was called *Salhe el Adsjar*; a place, than which no one more abounds with robbers; and it was with difficulty that the master of the vessel was prevailed on to stop there. Thus I was obliged to relinquish the examination of the fine remains of antiquity which I had before me, but at some distance from the Nile. At *Salhe el Adsjar* however I found a tolerable harvest of antique fragments,







Tragic Mask.

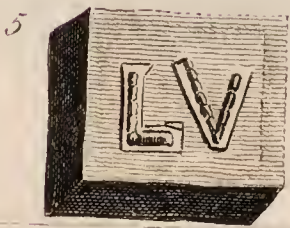
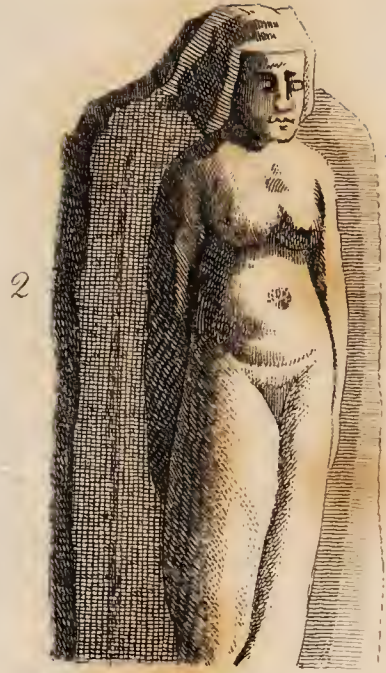


Tragic Mask.



Bust of Isis.

Published by I. Stockdale.



Egyptian Idols.

Published by I. Stockdale.

fragments, which the inhabitants sold me, and which I shall enumerate here.

A small figure in bronze, three inches high. (*See Plate XIII. fig. 1.*)

An Isis in plaster. Height three inches nine lines. (*Fig. 2.*)

A hawk in bronze. Height ten lines. (*Fig. 4.*)

A head of Isis in terra-cotta. Height two inches; breadth at the base an inch and half. (*Fig. 6.*)

A fine bust of Isis, with the cressent, and the *modius*, in white stone, two feet high. (*See Plate XIV.*)

Two figures, which appear to be tragic masks, similar to those that are seen at the angles of sarcophagi. (*See Plate XV. fig. 1 and 2.*) The first is of basalt, and eleven inches high. The second is of mortar, and nine inches in height.

A figure, two inches nine lines in height, made of porcelain, and coated with an enamel, of the colour of the aqua marina. (*See Plate XVI. fig. 1.*)

Another in plaster, two inches eleven lines high. (*Fig. 2.*)

Another in bronze, probably an Isis, three inches in height. (*Fig. 3.*)

A head in bronze, representing an Isis. This is not of Egyptian workmanship, but of the times when the Greeks were masters of Egypt. (*Fig. 4.*)

The same may be said of another head of Isis in alabaster, very flat, and wearing the crescent. (*See fig. 6.*) Its length is twenty-one lines.

Figure 5, 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, coated with apple-green enamel. It is two inches high, and perforated, to be worn as an amulet. (*See fig. 7.*) I met with another at *Terrana*, perfectly resembling it, only not so large.

An Osiris holding the whip, in gilt bronze, two inches high. (*See fig. 8.*)

* *Scarabæus sacer*. Lin.

Lastly, a grotesque idol in porcelain, covered with a purplish red enamel. It is two inches four lines high. (*Fig. 9.*) There are similar ones in porcelain, and in hematites, which have been engraved in Caylus's Collection of Antiquities, but it has not been explained.

Having made these little acquisitions, we returned to spend the night off *Mehalet-Abou-Ali*, and sailed again at five o'clock in the morning of the 28th. We soon after came in sight of *Rahmanie*, built on the western bank, at the entrance of the canal of *Demenhour*, which is navigable only when the Nile is at its height.

I stopped a few hours at *Fouah*. When the Nile was at liberty to fill the canals with its waters assisting trade and diffusing plenty, when boats laden with the commodities of Europe and Asia could navigate the canal of Alexandria in quiet, without having to dread the fury of the sea and of the *Boghass*, *Fouah*, standing opposite to this canal, was a considerable and flourishing city, and the Europeans had settlements there for the purposes of trade. But the savage carelessness of the tyrants of Egypt having dried up an abundant source of prosperity, by suffering the mud to collect in the beds of the canals, so as to obstruct navigation,

commerce has been obliged to quit the shore of *Fouah*, and carry its implements and its wealth to *Rossetta*, where numerous dangers render its steps very uncertain. Hence *Fouah* has greatly declined from its ancient splendour. Its circumference is contracted, most of its ancient edifices are falling into ruins, and those that are still standing, undermined by poverty, proclaim the near approach of a general decay. Nature, more potent, and at the same time more generous, still however scatters her favours there. The fields that surround *Fouah*, are rich and strikingly fertile, and the delicious gardens produce fruits, greatly in request for their excellence.

Many imagine that this place is the ancient *Metelis*, which I have placed near *Rossetta*, conceiving *Fouah* to be *Naucratis*, built by the Milesians, the country of Athenæus, a celebrated grammarian, who observes, that in his time earthen vases were fabricated there, the covers of which resembled silver. If my opinion be wrong, I share the error with the learned Pocock.

Before *Fouah* the Nile leaves in the middle of its course an island, called *Geziret el Dahab*, or Golden island. We left this place at noon, and reached *Rossetta* at midnight.

I had

I had now followed the Nile in its course, through an extent, which its numerous windings render upwards of sixty leagues. The river at this time was confined within its channel to which it had retired. Its banks were low, where they were sandy; but high and steep, where they were of clayey earth. The latter occupied the greater part of this space. They are composed of a blackish clay, firm, solid, and separating in perpendicular flakes, like calcareous stones. Its colour is the same as that of the Egyptian pebbles externally.

A report had been spread at Rossetta, that we were massacred by the Arabs. My return removed the anxiety which this news had given my friends; and they were the more inclined to credit the report, because Hussein had assured them that every thing was to be apprehended for my safety, as he had left me in a very dangerous situation. This worthy Bedouin had been several days at Rossetta, and was every instant repairing to the house inhabited by the French, to inquire whether there were any news of me. Being quickly informed of my arrival, he hastened to me, to fold me in his arms, and mingle his frank and hearty joy with the congratulations of my countrymen.

CHAP. XXXI.

*Political reflections on the Bedouins—Agriculture—
Corn—Bread—Fennel-flour—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 ended had made me acquainted with the best parts of the soil of Egypt, and with the worst: plains covered with plenty, and deserts parched with perpetual drought. It had introduced me likewise to those wandering tribes, equally remarkable for habits diametrically opposite, those of the chief social virtues, and those of depredation.

Is the existence of the Bedouins, patterns for man, and scourges of society, more beneficial, or injurious? This is a question naturally suggested, but not so easy to resolve. Speedy as the wind, they disappear in a moment from spots which they have hastily ravaged, and bury themselves in vast solitudes, to which they alone are accustomed, and with the topography of which they only are acquainted. Hence they are difficult to check, and
still

still more difficult to be restrained within bounds. On the other hand, their destruction, beside that it could be effected but slowly, nay, may be almost said to be impracticable, would be disadvantageous to Egypt. A governor of these countries, Ali Bey, of whom so many fabulous stories have been told, and who wanted nothing but a good education, and sound principles, to guide him in some beneficial designs, resolved to purge his country of every sort of robbery. In this respect his government was mentioned with praise and gratitude. This bey said, what Sixtus Quintus said before him, though he little suspected a pope of having taken the lead of him in his resolve: "I would have every man
" able to carry his purse in his hand, and leave his
" door open all night, without running any risk." Already several nests of robbers had disappeared: villages inhabited by the pirates of the Nile were rased: the communication between different places remained open: the roads were no longer rendered impassable by robbers: and navigation had not to dread that pillaging, which, since the death of Ali Bey, has resumed its fatal activity.

In this plan of establishing public tranquillity, the extermination of the Bedouins was one of the principal schemes. Every precaution had been devised, and every measure taken, for the accomplishment of this object. Already several hordes had
perished;

perished; victims to the policy of their governor. Whole tribes had retired to a distance in the desert; and the people of Egypt, far from applauding these measures for the protection of 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 frequently they carried them off again, after they had sold them.

Thus it seems, that the prosperity of Egypt is connected with the preservation of the Bedouins. In fact, they alone can traverse with facility immense sandy and uninhabited districts, keep up prompt and habitual communications through them, even take up their abode in them, and repair to the cultivated parts, to exchange the numerous flocks they feed for commodities, which are become necessary to them from habit. To enlarge the number of these wants, would be a policy, in my opinion, far preferable to that which enjoins a detestable annihilation: for it is extremely doubtful whether a continual state of warfare be a very efficacious mean of correcting mens' morals, and rendering them more virtuous. They whose habits are most simple easily become the dupes of the allurements presented to them. Were the tastes of the Bedouins flattered, were new ones excited in them, the ancient and venerable simplicity of their manners,

manners, unfortunately for them, would be obliterated, and replaced by a multitude of factitious wants. It would then become their interest to live on good terms with neighbours, from whom they would be certain of obtaining what was necessary for the gratification of their new desires. Frankness and friendship would prevail in their mutual intercourse: the daily business of traffic would bring together nations of opposite dispositions, soften down the differences between them, and produce a happy intimacy. And if some Bedouins, forgetting for a moment their own interests, should return to the exercise of pillage, and again allow themselves, by attacking the property of others, to violate a sort of treaty, cemented by a reciprocation of wants and services, the refusal of articles, with which they had learned not to be able to dispense, would be a punishment, perhaps sufficiently severe, but certainly preferable to extermination, a deed at which humanity shudders, and of which the execrable habit seems to have been caught by man, not to be natural to him.

If we turn our eyes from the vicious impressions that man has received, to an art capable of softening them down, we shall be convinced, that no part of the globe displays so many resources for promoting the prosperity and splendour of agriculture, as the land of Egypt. The incomparable
fertility

fertility of its soil invites every species of husbandry. Those plants that cover the fields of our northern climates, those that moderate with their verdure the fervid heat of the interior parts of Africa, those which are the boast of India, and those which constitute the wealth of our American colonies, almost all grow there, or could find every requisite for their vegetation.

This theatre of agriculture, too, is capable of great enlargement. Fruitfulness would easily resume its sway over the space it formerly occupied. Canals badly kept in order, lakes dried up, the waters of the Nile no longer diffusing themselves over lands they once watered, and several other causes, the fruits of carelessness and tyranny equally barbarous, have suffered the sands to encroach on parts once covered with vegetable mould. But these sandy strata, spread over a soil which they have recently usurped, are but of little depth, and would yield to cultivation as soon as the waters could reach them. These new domains of sterility are easily distinguishable. The sand on them has not the reddish and fiery appearance of the plains eternally devoted to drought: it has not the same depth; it is not fluctuating, and the foot that treads it feels the solid earth beneath. These places, which plenty reclaims, are so abundant, that we may estimate their quantity, without
fear

fear of being deceived, as equal to near a fourth of that part of Egypt, which is already in cultivation. There are other tracts, on which the vegetation is so feeble, that they can be considered as little better than deserted. To these more active industry would restore their ancient abundance. From all these resources, which the soil of Egypt offers, its husbandry, even now so interesting, would soon attain its ancient splendour ; and fresh acquisitions, adding to it new lustre, would soon render it the most flourishing in the world.

I have already mentioned some of the productions of Egyptian agriculture, and to complete as far as I can a picture, which Nature has enlivened with her most vivid colours, I will enumerate some more plants, which it has either adopted, or might adopt with advantage.

Of all the plants which have rendered Egypt celebrated for abundance, wheat stands foremost. Rome considered this country as her nurse, as her most certain and inexhaustible granary. It was the granary of Constantinople likewise, and the resource of the neighbouring nations. Even now Arabia derives from it the means of subsistence. The numerous caravans which set out from Upper Egypt for Cosseir, a port on the Red Sea, carry nothing but corn, which is transported to Jidda, whence it
is

is distributed over part of Arabia, that could not subsist without Egypt.

The wheat is sown as soon as the waters of the Nile have retired from the land designed for it. In consequence the seed-time varies with the latitude, and, as well as the harvest, is earlier in the upper parts of Egypt than in the lower. Commonly the farmer takes no farther trouble than that of scattering the seed over the moistened earth: but sometimes he turns up slight furrows with a clumsy plough, which has neither wheels nor coulter, and is drawn by oxen, one man only being employed in driving them. The corn soon germinates in the mud heated by a fervid sun; its vegetation is rapid; and in four months after it is sown it is fit to be reaped. The sickle is not used for this purpose; but the wheat is pulled up by the root, and immediately carried to large floors, similar to those used for rice. Here being heaped up, oxen are made to walk about upon it, and the little waggon, that cuts the straw and separates it from the grain, is drawn over it, in the same manner as I have already said rice is treated. These heaps of corn a man turns over with a large rake, so as to expose different parts successively to the action of the cutting wheels of the machine. This method is far from being so advantageous as threshing with a flail; but it is more expeditious, and particularly less

less laborious, which are sufficient inducements for its being followed by husbandmen naturally indolent, and rendered careless by abundance.

The ears of the wheat, cut before they are ripe, dried and slightly baked in an oven, and then bruised and boiled with meat, make a common dish in Lower Egypt, known by the name of *férik*. I have since eaten it in France, and it is an excellent soup.

The useful arts of the miller and baker, which are carried to such perfection in Europe, are still in a state of rude infancy in Egypt. There are neither windmills nor watermills. The bread, which has the form of a little flat cake, is unleavened: the crust is soft, and it is very slightly baked, whence it is heavy, and difficult of digestion. In the cities they make a sort of loaves or cakes, which are finer than the common bread, and covered with fennel-flower seeds*, which are procured from Upper Egypt, and called in Arabic *habé sodé*, black seed, or *habé baraké*, blessed seed. They give the bread a slight aromatic flavour, which is not disagreeable: and they are reputed to be wholesome and stimulating to the appetite. Another sort of little loaves or cakes, which are soft, and have holes through them, are sprinkled

* *Nigella sativa*. Linn.

with sesasum, or oily grain*. The flavour resembling a hazel-nut, which they acquire from this grain, renders them preferable to those of which the crust is covered with fennel-flower seed.

These two sorts of cakes are considered as delicacies. The common people content themselves with the heavy and slightly baked bread; and when they wish to slake their thirst with a beverage less simple than water, they find in the streets of the cities, as in those of Paris, sellers of ptisans, which are cheap liquors, consisting of decoctions of liquorice, of raisins, or of the fruit of the carob-tree †. The decoction of liquorice is the dearest, because this root is less common than raisins, or the Saint John's bread.

Barley is another sort of corn, the culture of which, like that of wheat, occupies a considerable portion of land, throughout the whole extent of Egypt. It is ripe near a month before the wheat, and its produce is equally abundant. Barley is the common food of horses in Egypt, as it is in all parts of the East, where rye and oats are unknown. Our husbandry would gain not a little, by adopting this method of the Oriental nations.

* *Sesasum indicum*. Lin.

† *Ceratonia siliqua*. Lin.

Barley is much more productive than oats. Its roots being much less strong and numerous, do not exhaust the land so much. And however prejudiced our farmers may be against barley, as food for horses, they cannot avoid being convinced of its excellence in this respect, when they consider, that, in the countries where these animals are most eminent for their goodness and beauty, they eat no other kind of corn.

Flax* has been common in Egypt from the remotest periods. It was formerly, as it is at present, a considerable article of cultivation and trade; and its threads were equally employed for fabricating the garments of a numerous people. A pretty large quantity of cloth is manufactured from it; and the plant from which indigo† is extracted to dye it grows in the country likewise. This is called *nile*.

If from these plants indispensably necessary to man, or of primary utility to him, we pass to others, the produce of which is esteemed more valuable, because subservient to the demands of opulence, we shall see plains covered with that reed, the expressed juice of which affords the

* *Linum usitatissimum*. Lin.

† *Indigofera spinosa*. Lin.—*Indigofera houer*. Forskal, Flora Egypt.-Arab. p. 137.

sweet and pleasing salt, that has been adopted into the ordinary diet of almost all nations. The sugar-cane * is among the valuable productions of Egypt. Its culture might be improved and extended there; and if the refineries, where it is prepared, were better managed, it might be rendered the basis of a very flourishing trade, from the conveniences there are for its production and conveyance. Not that there is no good sugar made at Cairo; nay, that which is manufactured for the Sultan, and sent to Constantinople for his use, is of a very fine quality; but its fabrication is slow, and conducted with difficulty, because the art has yet made little progress there. 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 cities. The women in particular are very fond of them; and the consumption of them in this way, to the total loss of the sugar, is prodigious. They begin to ripen in October, but they are not generally ripe till November and December. The Arabic name of the sugar-cane is *kassab*.

Though Maillet was assured, that the cultivation of the coffee-tree had been attempted in Egypt in vain †, I am convinced, that attempts better

* *Saccharum officinarum*. Lin.

† Description de l'Egypte, partie 2, p. 15.

conducted would succeed. The vicinity of Arabia, where this shrub produces such fragrant berries, and the resemblance between the soil and climate of the two countries, will not permit me to doubt, that many parts of Egypt are well suited to the growth of the coffee-tree, and that its berries, superior to those of either India, would here dispute the preference with the famed coffee of Yemen. There is likewise every reason to presume, that those aromatic plants, different parts of which are known under the appellation of spices, would here find a suitable soil and propitious situations, so that, multiplying with facility, they would crown the catalogue of agricultural and commercial wealth.

Indeed with what splendour will Egypt shine, when it is become a colony of France! Joined on one side to Africa, on the other to the opulent country of Asia, the seas of the north and west appear to terminate on its shores; and the Indian ocean, after having washed the happy confines of Arabia, comes to lose itself on its sands, which are separated from those confines only by a short passage. It will be the centre and storehouse of the trade of the universe. The ancient cradle of arts and sciences will become the theatre of their strength; and the place of their infancy will be that of their astonishing growth. To this luxuri-

ousness of trade and genius the most precious treasures of vegetation, the immutable boon of nature, will give permanent lustre. Uniting the various productions dispersed through our ancient colonies, Egypt will become the first of them, and the summary of all, while its proximity to Europe will give it incalculable advantages. Humanity will not have tears to shed over the presents of prolific nature, as in other colonies. Nature here does almost every thing, and it requires but slight efforts on the part of man to enjoy her liberality.

At the moment when our possessions in the West Indies were a prey to discord, ravaged, and laid waste; at the moment when the enemies of France redoubled their efforts to deprive her of them; 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 own neighbourhood, and to remove their trade to a country, which no long voyage is necessary to reach, and which affords resources beyond the reach of calculation.

It is said, that the acquisition of such interesting countries is no new idea. It had entered into
the

the views of the ancient government. I remember, that, when I was at Cairo, a French officer who passed through it in his way to India, was employed to collect information respecting the means that would tend to facilitate the conquest of Egypt. To obtain this information he applied to the Consul, who had never seen any thing but the road from Alexandria to Cairo, and who, like the French merchants, had never stepped beyond the limits of the quarter to which they were confined. A memoir, however, was drawn up and transmitted to Versailles, where, according to custom, it was buried with so many others in the offices.

It was reserved for the Government of the French Republic to execute in an instant what others deemed a prodigy to have conceived, and suffered to ripen slowly. Immortal glory and gratitude to him, whose genius formed a design so daring and sublime, whose heroism carried it into execution, and whose valour guarantees the permanent possession of the richest and most extensive trade in the universe.

Various kinds of fruit-trees shadow this land of delight *. To these many more may be added

* The ancients entertained the same idea of Egypt.

Delicias videam, Nile jocose, tuas.

Ovid. Trist. lib. 1. eleg. 2.

with success; others nearly abandoned by that careless apathy with which slavery is accompanied, will be cultivated with more ardour, and to greater extent. Such is the olive-tree*, which was always very scarce in Egypt, but might be propagated there in greater abundance. Formerly this tree grew only in the Heracleotic Nome, that is to say, near the lake Mœris, and in the gardens about Alexandria †: and at present it is scarcely to be seen except in the same district, and a few other parts of Lower Egypt, in all which places, however, it is rare. It grows bigger here than in Europe, and its fruit is larger and more fleshy. Were it rendered more plentiful, it would be a fresh addition to the trade of Egypt, already immense. The oil made in this country formerly was of good quality, when due precautions were employed in the process; but if these were neglected, the same oil acquired a strong smell ‡. From being badly managed the olive oil of the Levant in general is far from good, and fit only to be used in manufactories.

The fig-trees § afford abundance of their sweet pulpy fruits, most of which are exquisitely fla-

* *Olea Europæa*. Lin.

† Strabo, Geogr. lib. 22.

‡ See the excellent translation of Herodotus into French, by Citizen Larcher, book 2, § 57, note 201 of the translator.

§ *Ficus carica*. Lin.

voured: they differ, however, in quality; but this is owing to the situation of the places where they grow, rather than to any difference in the species.

Among the trees of Egypt there is no one more general than the date-tree*. This is found every where, in the Thebais and in the Delta, on the sands as well as in the cultivated districts. Though it requires scarcely any attention, it is very profitable, because there is a very great demand for its fruit. This is not all equal in quality; that which is produced by the palms in the neighbourhood of Rossetta is delicious, and boats are laden with it, to be sent to Cairo. The branch is cut off with the dates upon it, before they are thoroughly ripe, and thrust into baskets made for the purpose, which have no other aperture than a hole, through which the spreading extremity of the branch projects. The dates, thus packed up, ripen in succession. Dates pounded and kneaded together are likewise formed into large masses, or solid black cakes, which are used by the caravans travelling through the desert. Pieces of these diluted in water afford a refreshing beverage, which is nutritious at the same time. These cakes are so hard that they must be cut with a hatchet.

* *Phœnix dactilifera*. Lin.

In order to climb these trees, which have no branches except at the summit, and the straight and slender stem of which is unable to sustain a ladder; the Egyptians use a girth, which they tie to a rope that passes round the tree. They sit upon this girth, so as to strain it tight, then keeping their feet fixed against the tree, and holding the rope in both hands, they force the noose upwards, till it reaches one of the notches which are ranged symmetrically round the stem, being formed at the origin of the leafy branches that are cut every year. It is by means of these successive jerks, that the Egyptians reach the summit of the date-trees, where, still sitting, they work at their ease, either in cutting off the leaves, or gathering the branches of fruit; and then they descend in the same manner.

The dates are not the only useful production of this species of palm-tree. From its bark, its leafy branches, and the bark of the branches of fruit, by hard beating filaments are obtained, from which are fabricated both ropes and sails for boats. The leaves are employed likewise for manufacturing baskets and other articles. The very long rib of the branches is called in Arabic *dsgerid*. Light, and at the same time solid, it is used by the Mamelucs and Arabs, in their military exercises,

cises, as a javelin, which they dart at each other while galloping at full speed.

During this visit to Rossetta I met with a considerable quantity of fruit pretty much resembling the American earth-nut*, but of a more agreeable flavour. The plant that produces it is a species of cyperus †. It is pulled up in the beginning of November, and the fleshy tubercles, of the size of a hazel-nut, are separated from its slender roots. The Arabic name of these tubercles, or fruits, is *hableziss*, which signifies seed pleasing to the palate. In fact they have a sweet taste, which renders them agreeable eating. This cyperus is cultivated in the environs of Rossetta, and the little tubercles are sent to Constantinople, and other places in the Levant, where they are much esteemed. The Egyptians express a milk from them, which they deem pectoral and edulcorant; and they give them to nurses to eat, to increase the quantity of their milk.

Two Turkish vessels from Constantinople, arriving in the harbour of Alexandria, occasioned

* *Arachis hypogæa*. Lin.

† *Cyperus esculentus*. Lin.—Forskal, *Flora Egypt.-Arab.* p. XL. "The singular plants," says Granger (*Voyage en Egypte*, p. 240), "are: The abelasis, which resembles "the *sisyrinchium*, and has the flavour of a chesnut."

great uneasiness to the Europeans, who knew that the plague, which had not ravaged Egypt for more than twelve years, raged violently in the capital of the Ottoman empire. The French at Rossetta were preparing to shut themselves up, which would have laid me under great restraint; but some news of a different kind arrived from Cairo, to extricate me from this difficulty: we were informed that Mourat Bey and Ibrahim, aided by an Arabic prince, had re-entered Cairo, after having defeated their enemy Ismael Bey, and compelled him to flee into Syria. Upper Egypt being no longer covered with ferocious and undisciplined troops, the roads became less dangerous, and I hastened to avail myself of a period of tranquillity, which is a very rare occurrence in these countries.

CHAP. XXXII.

*Grebe—Ravens—Ruins and fragments of antiquity
—Terrana—Various fishes of the Nile—Arrival
at Cairo.*

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*. In Egypt it is called *farha* † *reheit* (water hen). Its length is ten inches and a half: that of the bill thirteen lines; that of the wings, four inches nine lines; and that of the leg, from the foot to the knee, eighteen lines.

In figure it resembled the grebes. The head small in proportion to the body; the bill pointed, almost straight, with only a very slight curve downward; the upper mandible a little longer than the lower; the nostrils a long oval, and placed in the bottom of a large groove, occupying half the length of the bill; the wings short; no tail; the legs flattened on the sides, and covered with scales,

* Castagneux. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. & pl. enlum. No. 905.—*Colymbus minor*. Lin.

† The *h* must be pronounced as a strong aspiration.

forming

forming a double serrated line on the hinder part ; the three toes forward furnished with a web, divided half way, and scalloped ; the web of the hind toe rounded on each side : the claws broad, flat, and much resembling a man's nails, that of the middle toe almost as broad as long, the others much narrower : the tongue thick at the root, as broad, and almost as long as the bill.

It is nearly of the same colour as the didapper, the difference observable being the effect of climate. The little grebe, being a winter bird in our northern climates, must have undergone some alteration in the colour of its plumage, when becoming the inhabitant of a very hot country.

In this Egyptian bird the upper part of the head and the whole of the neck are of a blackish brown. The feathers covering the upper part of the body were of the same colour, only terminated by a reddish border. The throat and inferior part of the neck underneath are of a bright fallow, growing lighter as it came to the breast, which, as well as the belly, is of a silvery white. The lower part of the belly is gray. The sides are variegated, blackish, reddish, and white. The upper wing coverts, and first and last quill feathers, are blackish ; the rest of the quill feathers, white. The bill is blackish, except at the base
of

the lower mandible, where it is reddish. The legs, toes, webs, and claws, are of a blackish green; the webs edged with a deeper colour.

At this season, in the month of February, a few small flocks of ravens* appear in the neighbourhood of Rossetta, which are not seen there at any other time. They mix freely with the flocks of crows, remaining on the ground with them round inhabited places.

As I was ascending the hill, in my way to Cairo, I stopped at *Iagnouss*, where I was told there were the remains of an ancient city; and a little below this village, at some distance from the bank of the Nile, I saw a considerable space covered with ruins. Pillars of granite lie on the ground, and superb vaults of brick-work still remain entire. The people of the neighbourhood are continually loading their camels with the large and fine bricks, which they procure by demolishing these vaults. In these

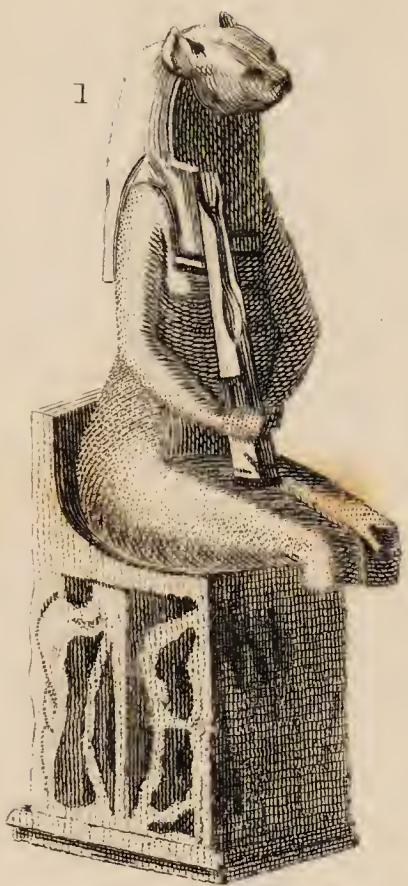
* Corbeau. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et pl. enlum. No. 459.—*Corvus corax*. Lin.—*Note*. I know not what bird Haselquitz means to describe (Voyage au Levant, traduit de l'Allemand par M. * *, Paris, 1769, partie 2, page 20), by the name of the Egyptian raven, spotted with green, and blue on the middle of the back (*corvus ægyptius viridi maculatus, dorso medio cæruleo*), 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.

barbarous spoliations they are daily finding medals, statues, and other fragments of antiquity; but, slaves to an absurd fanaticism, they break the statues to pieces, because they say they were the workmanship of the *dogs*, meaning Europeans, and their law prohibits all kinds of images and representations of things. I was unable to stay long amid these ruins: the ferocious beings, who profane them by their presence, and the effects of their destructive rage, began to assemble together, and I was obliged to return to the river, that I might be safe from their fury.

When I had reached my boat, some of these vile *fellahs* came to offer me a few fragments of antiquity, which had escaped their propensity of destroying every thing. Accordingly I purchased from them:

1st, An idol of porcelain, coated with greenish enamel, representing a cat sitting, three inches and two lines in height. (*See Pl. XVII. fig. 1.*) This idol was mutilated, the two hind legs of the animal being broken off.

2dly, The bust of a woman unknown, the head-dress of which is perforated, that it might be worn as an amulet. It is in terra cotta of a reddish colour, without enamel. Its height is four inches and three lines. (*Fig. 2.*)

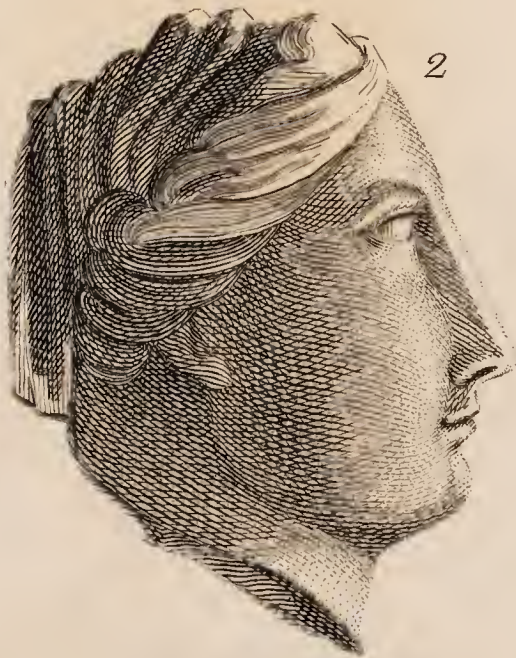


Egyptian Idols & Figures.

Published by L. Stockdale.



Vespasian



Arsinoë



1. Osiris. 2. Antique Head.

3dly, A head of a woman, likewise unknown, of the same reddish earth as the preceding. (*Fig. 3.*)

4thly, Two little figures of children, muffled up in a singular manner, and resting on a dolphin. This piece of sculpture I imagine to have been placed on a fountain, or perhaps an urn. It is of white marble. Its length at the base is nine inches three lines, and its height is five inches. (*Fig. 4.*)

5thly, Osiris holding the whip, and the crooked staff, or Egyptian sceptre. This idol is two inches and a half high, of porcelain, coated with a greenish gray enamel. (*See Pl. XVIII. fig. 1.*)

6thly, The head of a woman unknown, in white stone, nine inches high. (*Fig. 2.*)

7thly, A head in black marble, five inches and a half high. It is a Vespasian, and perhaps was sculptured at the time when he was proclaimed emperor by the army in Egypt. The crown is interspersed with flowers of the *lotus*. Possibly it represents Vespasian fulfilling some sacred function: though, when this emperor sacrificed at Memphis to the bull Apis, according to the rites of the Egyptians, his brow, as ancient historians relate, was encircled with a diadem. (*See Pl. XIX. fig. 1.*)

8thly, The head of a woman, the character of which is not very determinate. Probably it represents *Arsinoë*, the wife of Ptolemy Philadelphus. This head is in white marble, four inches high. (*Fig. 2.*)

The ruins near *Iagnouss* in all probability mark the site of the ancient city of *Taua*. No traveller has mentioned them, to my knowledge. Their situation is easily distinguishable by the tomb of a Turkish saint, which is built in a line with them, on the same bank of the Nile; and the village of *Ikmas*, on the western bank, faces them.

For want of wind we were obliged to stop again at *Terrana*, a place which I have already mentioned. Of this opportunity I availed myself, to take a view of it, which will give an idea of the manner in which the villages of this country are built. (*See Pl. XX.*)

We met with several little fishing-vessels, the cargoes of which consisted of *schalls*, *kaschoüés*, *hersés*, *karmouths*, *keschérés*, *schilbis*, *bouris*, and *sprats*.

The *schall* is a species of sheat-fish*, never yet described. (*See Pl. XXI. fig. 2.*) Its body is

* *Silurus*. Lin.



View of Port-au-Prince

naked and slippery, its head is large and broad. The poll is covered with a bone, which reaches to the first fin of the back, on each side of which it terminates in a blunt point, as if cut square. This bone has a reddish skin, which extends as far as the eye; the rest of it is naked, and full of little points like those of shagreen. The sides of the head are covered with a soft thick skin, forming a border round the aperture of the gills. The nose is rounded. The upper jaw projects a little beyond the lower, and both are furnished with teeth; those in the upper jaw being hooked, those in the lower straight and very close. The lips are very fleshy: the upper has two appendages, or cirrhi, not much longer than the head: the lower has four, much shorter, slender, and unequal. The nostrils are round, bordered by a little prominent membrane, and placed near the end of the nose. The eyes are sunk.

The back is furnished with two fins. Of these the first has seven rays, the anterior one broad at its base, thick, bony, and serrated interiorly a third part of its length. This ray has a few little teeth likewise toward the extremity of the exterior side. The second dorsal fin is fleshy, long, low, and terminates near the tail. The tail is extremely forked, and its rays have very fine transverse grooves throughout their whole length.

The anal fin consists of ten rays, united by a membrane. The ventral has only seven. The first ray of the pectoral fins is thick, bony, serrated on the upper side almost to the end, and on the inferior from the middle to the extremity. The indentations on the upper side are large; on the lower, small. This ray is also longer than the rest.

The lateral line is straight, and marked with little points, distributed throughout the whole of its length.

A brownish gray hue is diffused all over this fish. The sides of the head are blueish. The end of the nose, the under part of the head, the pectoral fins, and the cirrhi, are tinged with red. A semicircle of the same colour skirts the commencement of the caudal fin, and a very slight tint of red is perceptible also near the tail.

The fish, from which the preceding description was taken, was fourteen inches and eight lines in length, measuring from the point of the nose to the extremity of the tail. Its greatest breadth was four inches, and its least thirteen lines. The cirrhi of the upper lip were three inches seven lines long; the exterior cirrhi of the lower lip, sixteen lines; the interior, nine lines. The first dorsal
fin

fin was nineteen lines long at the base, and two inches seven lines and a half high. The second began twenty-one lines from the end of the first, rose with an imperceptible curvature to the height of seven lines, and terminated three lines from the caudal fin.

On opening this fish, I observed, that the air-bladder was formed of a thick yellow membrane, and had but one lobe. The stomach was distended with seeds of the species of holcus called *dourra*, some other seeds, and a mucilage, in which nothing could possibly be discriminated, and which emitted a fetid smell, approaching to that of human excrement.

A fish destitute of scales, with soft flesh, and living at the bottom of a muddy river, must have been inadmissible into the dietetic regimen of the ancient Egyptians, whose priests were so scrupulously nice in proscribing every kind of food that was in the least unwholesome. Accordingly different species of the silurus found in the Nile were prohibited. Mr. Pauw presumes, that he has discovered the reason of this prohibition. Fishes without scales, he said, used as food, exasperate all the diseases that have any affinity to the elephantiasis or hypochondria, because they render the blood thick, and diminish perspiration.

tion*. The ancients, however, kept sheat-fish at Bubastus: but the same Mr. Pauw asserts, with great appearance of probability, that, being rejected by men, they were used as food only for the sacred cats, which were numerous in this city, and which, according to the reports of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, the Egyptians fed with fish †. Be this as it may, the *schall* at present is left to the lowest class of the people, and is scarcely fit to be eaten by any thing but cats.

The *kaschoüé* is very different, its flesh being delicate and firm. (See *Pl. XXI. fig. 3.*) It is also furnished with scales, and at first view much resembles the pike, with which it has been confounded. Its jaws, however, are not equally elongated with those of the pike; and its nose is short and blunt, while that of the pike is slender and pointed. There is still another difference between them, which makes a decisive distinction: the *kaschoüé* has a fin extending from the anus almost to that of the tail, while the pike has a fin in the same part that is very short at its base.

* Recherches philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. p. 154.

† Ibid. tome i. p. 130.

It seems indisputable, that this fish is the same as the *oxyrinchus* of the ancient Egyptians; a remark made by Bellon, who likewise mistook it for the pike*. This *oxyrinchus* was venerated in one part of Egypt, while in other parts it was held in abomination. At present it is universally relished. Like the pike, it is a voracious fish, and feeds on other fishes. It has been generally remarked, though no reason for it has ever been assigned, that, while those quadrupeds which prey upon others are unfit food for man, because their flesh acquires a disgusting smell and flavour from their habits of carnage, it is precisely the reverse with fishes of prey, the flavour of which is more exquisite than that of any others †.

The engraving of the *kaschoüé* will exhibit the particulars of its figure better than a long description. I shall 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

* “The river Nile affords many other fishes, much celebrated, but which I shall not here particularize; only I shall remark, that the pike is very common; and though it has been found difficult to assign its ancient name, I shall demonstrate that it was called by the ancients *oxyrinchus*.” Bellon, Observations, liv. 2, chap. 32, p. 103.

† The shark is eatable, it is true, but I believe was never reckoned a food of exquisite flavour, except, when half putrid, by some of the negroes.—T.

fin. This fish is chiefly of a blueish gray : the blue tint, which is pretty strong along the back, growing lighter on the sides, and vanishing in a whitish gray on the belly. The nose is red ; and the head is besprinkled with little blueish dots.

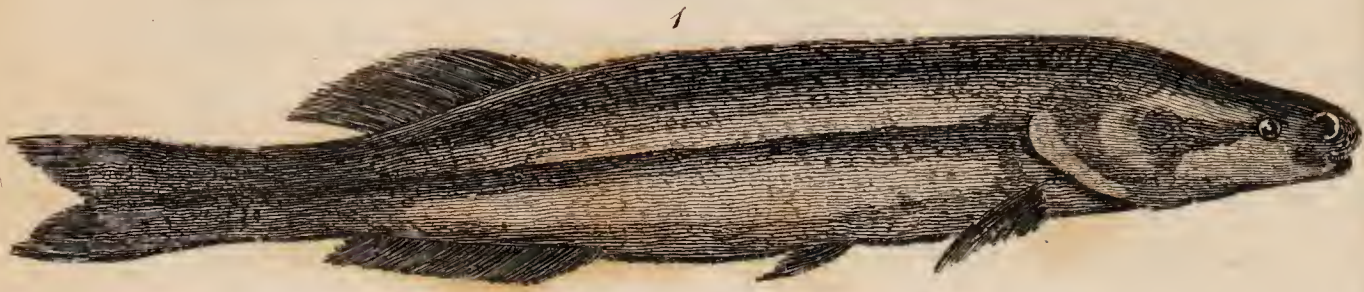
The *kaschoüé* is pretty common in the Nile ; but is most frequently caught some way up the river, and is one of the most plentiful sorts of fish brought to the markets of Cairo.

At first view it appears to be of the number of those fishes of the Nile, of which Linnæus has made a separate genus, under the name of *mormyrus*. We might be tempted to consider it particularly the same species as the *caschive* *, which this naturalist has described from Hasselquitz †. If, however, the reader compare the figure of the *kaschoüé* with the description of the *caschive* of Hasselquitz, he will be convinced, that they are not merely different species, but belong to different genera, and that the former has characters distinguishing it from all the *mormyri*.

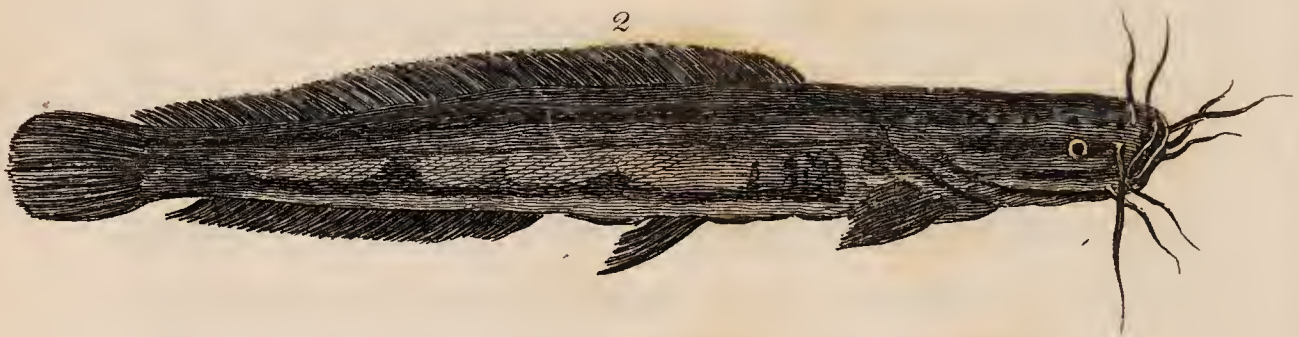
* *Mormyrus anguilloïdes*, operculis nullis ; pinnâ caudali bifidâ obtusâ.—*Mormyrus caschive*, rostro tubuloso, pinnâ dorsali longitudinali, caudâ bifurcâ. Arted. Gen. Piscium, page 632.—Paul Lucas has given a very bad figure of a *kaschoüé* (Voyages, tome iii. page 197). He justly adds, that it is one of the best fishes in the Nile.

† Voyage au Levant.

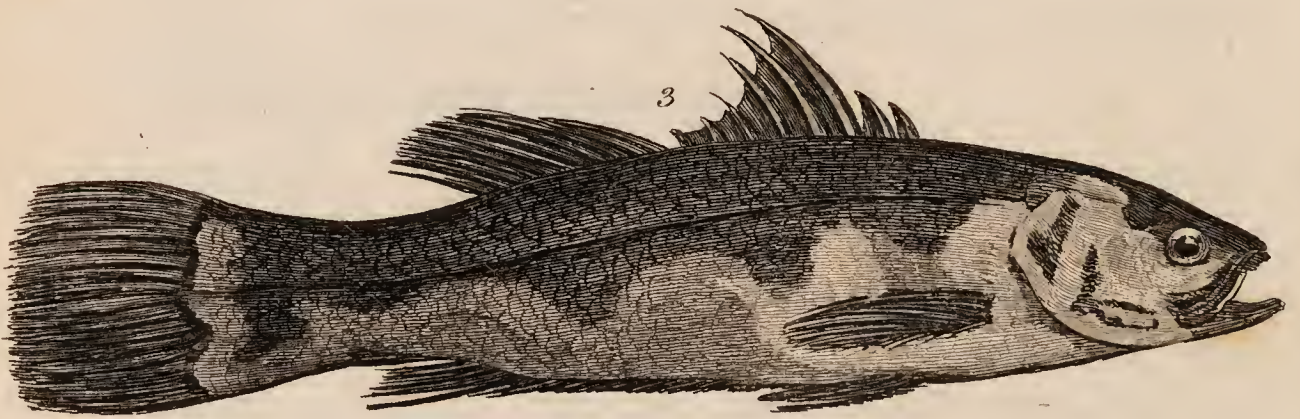
The



Hersé.



Karmouths.



Keschere.

The *kaschoïé* is not the only fish approaching to this new genus. The *first figure in Plate XXII.* represents another inhabitant of the Nile, which has a still greater resemblance to the *mormyri*, particularly to that species which Linnæus has named *cyprinoïdes**. But there are differences between these also, which will not allow us to confound them, as will readily appear from comparing Linnæus's description of the *cyprinoïdes* with the figure of the *hersé*, and the particulars that I shall give.

Its name of *hersé*, an Arabic word signifying a *weasel*, is derived from the shape of its head and nose, which are long, and not unlike the sharp nose of the weasel. The lips are thick and round, and the mouth is small. Each of the jaws is furnished with teeth, which are straight, oblong, and not very close together; and 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 end of the nose. The skin of the head is naked and smooth; the rest of the body is covered 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 being the smaller of the two.

* *Mormyrus cyprinoïdes operculis nullis; pinnâ caudali bifidâ, acutâ.*—*Mormyrus cyprinoïdes, caudâ bifidâ, acutâ.* Arted. Gen. Piscium, p. 632.

The pectoral fins have ten rays; the dorsal fin has twenty-four; the anal, thirty-eight; and the ventral, six. The other particulars of its figure are so well expressed in the plate, that it is unnecessary to mention them.

The top and upper half of the sides of the head are of a shining blackish colour, with little gray spots not very conspicuous: the rest of the head is blue, tinged with red, and speckled with black. The eyes are of a blueish gray. The back is blackish. This sort of dubious colour grows lighter on the sides of the body, and becomes gray toward the belly, with duskiertints in some places. The pectoral fins are gray: the ventral are the same at the base, and blackish at the extremity. All the other fins are of the latter obscure colour.

The *hersé* never grows very large. The whole length of that from which my figure and description were taken did not exceed six inches and a half; and though several individuals of the species attain greater dimensions, none are much larger. It has a triangular heart, a gall-bladder, the intestinal tube but little convoluted, with a long appendicule a little below the stomach, and a very large air-bladder of a silvery hue.

If

If the reader cast his eye on the second figure in the same plate (XXII.), he will perceive a fish of the same genus as the *schall* described above, a *silurus*. The Egyptians give it the Arabic name of *karmouth*. It is one of the most common fish of the Nile, and at the same time of the worst for eating. Like the *schall*, it possesses neither firmness nor flavour, and is used for food only by the poor. Its greatest length scarcely exceeds two feet. The muscles of its tail have great strength; and perhaps there is no fish more tenacious of life. I have seen one, which had been a whole day out of water, and had received several blows with a hammer upon the head, yet was full of life and vigour. When cut in two, both parts of its body, though separate, retained the power of motion, and its œsophagus contracted, after having been separated half an hour from all the surrounding parts.

Hasselquitz is the first person who has noticed and described this species of *silurus* *. I shall

* Voyages au Levant, trad. part. ii. page 50. *Silurus carmuth, niloticus*.—*Silurus anguillaris pinnâ dorsali unicâ, radiis 70, cirrhi 8*. Lin.—Arted. Gen. Pisc. Append. page 565. *Note*. It appears to me, that this fish has been erroneously confounded in the synonymes with another *silurus* of the Ganges and Orontes, described by Gronovius (Zooph. No. 322, tab. 8, fig. 3, 4) under the appellation of *clarias*. These two fishes have such obvious differences, that it would be difficult to bring them together into one species.

satisfy

satisfy myself with mentioning those characters which are not pointed out by the engraving, namely, the shape of some parts that are less conspicuous, and the colours with which it is rather obscured than embellished.

The *karmouth*, destitute of scales, 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 appears the commencement of a transverse aperture, resembling the mouth of a shark, but not penetrating to the inside. Its tongue is thick and fleshy; and its jaws are furnished interiorly with a double row of little teeth, with sharp points and edges, resembling the teeth of a rasp. The upper jaw has a third row of teeth, similar to the others, arranged in the form of an inverted crescent on the palate. The aperture of the gills is placed rather below the head than on its sides: the bone that closes it is bordered by a thick skin, which covers it exactly. The pectoral fins have ten rays, the first of which is thick and bony. I found sixty-four rays in the dorsal fin, twenty-two in the caudal, six in each of the ventral, and fifty-four in the anal fin. Between the anal fin and the anus there is a pretty long appendicule, broad at the base, and terminating in a point. The lateral line divides the body into two parts,
the

the upper of which is a little larger than the lower. It is accompanied by a line of little white dots, and parallel lines of similar dots descend from the summit of the back to the lateral line, from space to space. Others much less distinct, and less regular, appear toward the head and beneath the lateral line.

The stomach is large. The liver is divided into two lobes, red and flat, between which lies the gall-bladder, lengthened 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 reddish.

The upper part of the head is of a deep greenish colour. The part of the body that is above the lateral line is variegated or marbled with blackish and gray; the former tint predominating, and both growing lighter on the lower part of the body. The belly and lower jaw are of a reddish gray. The cirrhi are blackish, except at the base, which is red. The iris of the eye is yellow, and the pupil black. The pectoral fins are blackish above, and divided transversely by a broad red band: below they are of a reddish gray at the base, red in the middle, and blackish at the extremity. Both the dorsal and caudal fins are gray tinged with black; and the latter have a little red about the middle.

The

The anal and ventral fins are reddish near the place of their insertion, and gray tinted with black in the remaining part. The appendicule near the anal fin is reddish, and of a bright red at the extremity.

The Swedish naturalist Hasselquitz is the first likewise, who has described a sort of perch of the Nile, called in Egypt *keschéré**. It is another of the fish, too, that may be found very badly figured in Paul Lucas's Travels † under the name of *variole*, which is given it by Europeans ‡. Gmelin also has given a delineation of it §; but there is no one extant equal in accuracy to that of *Plate XXII. fig. 3.*

There is every reason to presume that this fish is the same with that called by the ancient Greeks *latos*, held sacred in the Egyptian nome of *Latopolis*, the people of which scrupulously abstained from eating it. Mr. Pauw seems to make a distinction between the *keschéré* and the *variole* of the Euro-

* *Perca Nilotica*, *Arabis keschr*, *Gallis variole*. *Voyages au Levant*, trad. part. ii. page 50.—*Perca Nilotica*, Lin.—*Perca Nilotica*, *maxillâ inferiore longiore; lamina superiore operculi anteriorius aculeata*. *Artedi Gen. Pisc.* page 333.

† *Voyages*, tome iii. page 197.

‡ *Ibidem*.

§ *Itin.* 3, page 344, tab. 25, fig. 3.

peans* : they are the same fish, however, under two different names, arising from the diversity of language. From this mistake the author is led to suppose, that the *keschéré* is the fish called by the Greeks *oxyrinchus*, which was equally sacred in a part of ancient Egypt : but it has been seen above, that the *kaschoïé* has much greater affinity to this *sharp-nosed* fish, as the *keschéré* comes much nearer to the *latos*.

The Arabic word *keschéré* signifies a *scale of a fish*, and this name has been given to it, because it is covered with a great number of scales, extending almost to the extremity of the caudal fin. It is one of the best fishes in the Nile, as well as one of the largest. It grows as large as the tunny; and, according to Paul Lucas, it was sometimes to be found of the weight of three hundred pounds. All that I ever saw were far from having attained these dimensions; and they were certainly more delicate eating than the large ones, necessarily more hard and indigestible, and perhaps unwholesome : and as the fishes of this enormous size are found high up the Nile, it is possible that this was the reason why eating them was prohibited at Latopolis, which was above Thebes, and near the twenty-fifth degree of latitude.

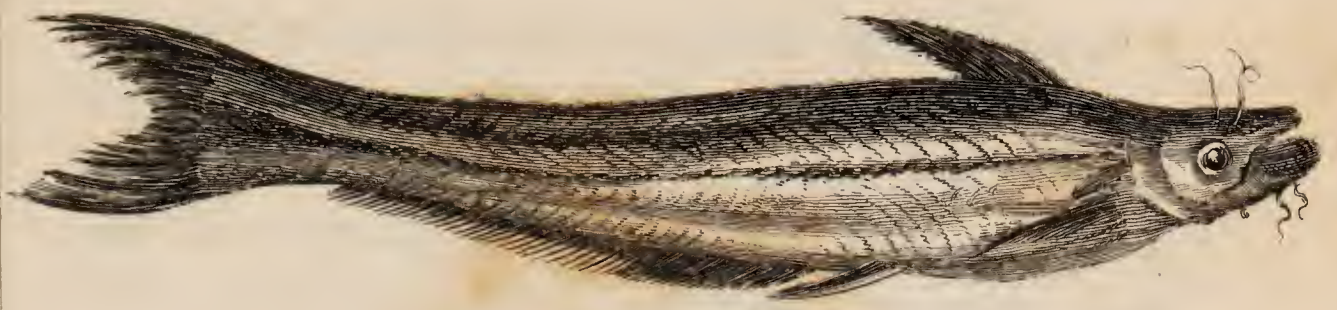
* Recherches philosophiques sur les Egyptiens & les Chinois, tome i. page 128.

This fish too is extremely voracious, devouring many other species, of which it thus thins the Nile, and is one of the principal causes of the small number of fishes found in this river in proportion to its size, and the extent of its course.

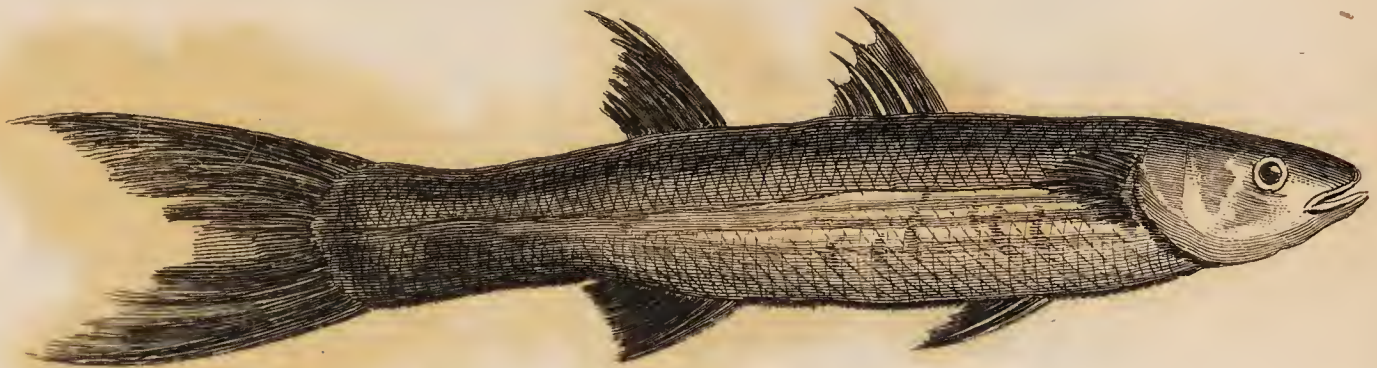
The *keschéré*, when of small size, which is most common in the northern part of the Nile, is distinguished by a peculiar name, that of *hemmor*. This, for I never had an opportunity of seeing any of the very large ones, has the interior part of the jaws furnished with very fine teeth, so close and small, that they make no other impression on the finger than that of a fine file.

A third species of fish, among the number of those for the knowledge of which we are indebted to Hasselquitz, is the *schilby*, which is pretty common in the Nile, destitute of scales, and of the genus *silurus**. It is not such bad eating, however, as those which I have already mentioned. (See Plate XXIII. fig. 1.) I having nothing to add to Linnaeus's description, taken from Hasselquitz, and the figure which I have given, except that the upper jaw of the *schilby* has two rows of little, sharp, hooked teeth; that the lower jaw has but one row

* *Silurus schilbe Niloticus*. Hasselquitz, Voyages, part ii. page 50.—*Silurus mystus*, Lin.—*Silurus mystus*, *pinnâ dorsali unicâ, radiis sex, cirrhis octo*. Arted. Gen. Pisc. Append. page 563.



Schilby.



Bouri.



Sprat.

of these recurved teeth; that it is all over of a pretty uniform blackish gray colour, deeper above the lateral line than below, with a few tinges of red on the nose, and at the bases of the pectoral, anal, and caudal fins; and lastly, that the iris of the eye is of a golden colour.

The *bouri*, though caught in the river Nile, is notwithstanding a salt-water fish. From the coasts of the Mediterranean it ascends a considerable way up the Nile, for it is found even higher than Cairo. This fish is the mullet*, from the female roe of which *botargo* is made; and is too well known to require any particular description here. I have given a representation of a fish of this species, however, in *Plate XXIII. fig. 2.* Though this fish is not firm, it is pretty good eating. Those that I have seen in Egypt were not above ten inches long.

Another salt-water fish, as generally known as the mullet, quits, in like manner, the Mediterra-

* *Mugil cephalus*. Lin.—*Mugil cephalus*, *pinnâ dorsali anteriore quinque radiatâ*. Arted. Gen. Pisc. page 225. On this I shall observe, that the number of five rays, which Artedi, as well as Linnæus and Hasselquitz, has given to the first dorsal fin of the mullet, is not the same as I found on all the species that I saw. Like Gronovius and Brunnich I found only four rays in this fin.

nean to ascend the Nile. The sprat *, which has the same name in Egypt as it has in France †, is caught all the way from the mouth of the Nile as far up as Cairo. The fishermen we met with had greater plenty of sprats, than of any other kind of fish. Almost all that I bought were ten inches long, and three inches round. These dimensions, so much beyond those of the sprats caught on the French coast, which scarcely exceed four inches in length, no doubt induced Hasselquitz ‡ to consider the sprat of the coasts of Egypt and the Nile rather as a shad. However, 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 are perfectly applicable to the fish of the Nile, as may be judged from *fig. 3 of Pl. XXIII.* of this work.

Be this as it may, the *sardine* of the Egyptians is covered with pretty large scales, of a fine azure blue, on the upper part of the body, and shining with a silvery lustre on the lower parts. The head

* *Clupea sprattus*. Lin.—*Clupea quadriuncialis*, *maxillâ inferiore longiore*, *ventre acutissimo*. Arted. Gen. Pisc. page 39.—*Clupea alosa*. Hasselq. Voyages au Levant, trad. part. ii. page 53.

† *Sardine*. The Arabs of Yemen also give the name of *sardinn* to a fish of the same genus, which frequents the Red Sea in shoals, and which Forskal has described by the name of *clupea bælama*. Descript. Animal. Egypt.-Arab. page 72.

‡ In the plate quoted above.

is variegated with different colours, and the belly is white. The jaws are without teeth. The fish is not very firm, and the prodigious number of little bones, with which it abounds, renders it unpleasant to eat. Hasselquitz says, that the Egyptians stuff it with marjoram, and fry it when it is nearly putrid: but during the whole of my journey I never saw it dressed in this manner.

While I was busy in examining these different species of the fishes of Egypt, a favourable wind filled the sails of my vessel, so that it divided the stream of the river with rapidity. Presently a forest of masts with high yards gave me notice that I was approaching the harbour of Cairo, which is always full of vessels. I went ashore at *Boulac*, a pleasant town, built on the eastern side of the harbour, and hired some asses, to carry me and my companions to Cairo, which is but half a league distant. The road that leads to this place appears to be itself a street of it; the crowd and the bustle we meet with in it indicate the approach to a populous and trading city. I arrived at the retired quarter which is occupied by the French, and I resumed my lodging in the house that had been left by the French consul.

CHAP. XXXIII.

City of Cairo—Its inhabitants—Europeans settled there—Its situation—Its government—Summary view of the revolutions of Egypt since the time of Augustus—Mamelucs—Pacha of Cairo—Approaching downfall of the Ottoman empire—Ali Bey—Mourat Bey.

To suppose Cairo, in Arabic *Masr*, resembling one of our large cities in Europe, would be to entertain a very erroneous idea. The houses have neither the form nor elegance of ours. The streets are very narrow, unpaved, and the houses that form them not ranged in a line. The squares, vast irregular places, without any buildings that adorn them, without any work of art to point out and embellish the centre, are most of them immense 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 pass through the streets, jostle one another, dispute the way with the horse of the Mameluc, the mule of the man of the law, the numerous camels which supply the place of coaches, and the asses, which are the most common beasts of the saddle.

This

This city, much longer than broad, covers a space of about three leagues. Turks, Mamelucs, Greeks, Syrians, Arabs, Cophts, Moors, Jews, and Europeans, inhabit it; and its population may be estimated at four hundred thousand souls. Inhabitants of another kind had likewise taken up their abode in the midst of this confused multitude of various nations. The terraces of the houses were covered with kites and crows, who lived there in perfect security, and whose sharp screams and hoarse croakings mingled with the tumult of a restless and noisy populace. The disgusting vulture, the *vultur percnopterus* of naturalists, the *ak bobas* (white father) of the Turks, the *Pharaoh's hen* of the Europeans, added to this singular and melancholy society. Living only on reptiles and the produce of laystalls, this filthy bird happily wants courage to attack more interesting objects. The plaintive and amorous turtle has no more to fear from its talons than from the guns of the inhabitants, into whose dwellings she enters, giving them practical but useless lessons of love and tenderness, in the caresses and attention of domestic happiness.

The splendour and prodigality of luxury were here contrasted with the rags and nakedness of want; the excessive opulence of those who bear rule, with the frightful poverty of the most nume-

rous class. The riches that trade conferred on the intermediate class were buried, or carefully concealed. Men who had acquired wealth dared not make use of it, except clandestinely, lest they should tempt the unbridled covetousness of power, and expose themselves to extortions, which a barbarous government sanctions under the name of *avaries*, and which, in spite of all their secrecy and caution, they cannot always escape.

With whatever external splendour these men in power were clothed, they were not in reality less ignorant and savage. Though the garb was that of luxury, it was not the less the vesture of the most complete barbarousness; and if this appeared still more hideous and ferocious in a populace exceedingly vile, it was only because here it was naked, and the eyes were not deceived by the gloss of magnificence. At Cairo a few arts were exercised by foreigners, mechanical occupations were far from a state of perfection, and the sciences were absolutely unknown. The two extremes approached each other in more points than one. The beys were equally ignorant, equally fanatic, equally superstitious, with the rude dregs of the people. Not one of either could read or write; the knowledge of letters and of writing was reckoned a very great art, and, with that of arithmetic, was confined to the merchants and people of business. On
the

the other hand, the Mahometan priests, bewildered in the gloomy labyrinth of school-divinity, busied themselves in attempts to understand and comment upon the reveries of the Koran. The sciences cultivated in the capital of Egypt went no farther; and to endeavour to extend their limits would have been a dangerous and useless enterprise. Any thing beyond this would have been deemed a crime; and knowledge would have been stifled for ever, had not the French undertaken to emancipate it from its shackles, and favour its display; for, according to the philosophical reflection of Volney, where knowledge leads to nothing, nothing is done to acquire it, and the mind remains in a state of barbarism*.

In fact, the mass of the people in no place could be more barbarous than at Cairo. Foreigners, persecuted, and even ill-treated under the most frivolous pretexts, lived there in perpetual fear. The French had several mercantile houses there; and occupied a small district, shut up by a large gate, which was guarded by janisaries. I shall observe, by the way, that the city was divided into separate quarters in this manner. The Europeans called these divisions, these enclosures, *countries*; and that to which the French were confined, and where they were more than once besieged, was called *the*

* Voyages en Egypte et en Syrie. Etat politique de l'Egypte.

country of the Franks. Here our countrymen, remote from all means of protection and assistance, spent days embittered by perpetual anxiety. If the success of their commercial enterprises diffused a temporary satisfaction among them, the prospect of an *avanie* perpetually before them soon checked it; and the sums of money or presents, with which they were forced to purchase an insecure tranquillity, from the almost daily changes among the members of the government, greatly diminished the profit, which, far from immense on some occasions, was in the end reduced to very little, in consequence of being diminished by a number of expensive concomitants. Confined in their *country*, these merchants, a continual prey to anxiety, and too often not without cause, were a striking example of what the desire of gain can effect, being obliged to forego their own habits, and assume the oriental garb. Woe to the European, who should venture to shew himself in the street in the dress of his own country; he would infallibly have been knocked on the head, or torn to pieces.

But to wear the long garments used in the East was not sufficient. It was necessary that some part of the dress should be a distinguishing mark, or, to speak more properly, a signal of contempt and proscription. The head of the European was to be
covered

covered with the *talpack*, a sort of high, hairy cap, peculiarly assigned to the *Franks*. For some time the more enterprising English had introduced among them the *seste*, or head-dress of the Druses, which consists of a large piece of striped silk of various colours, and decorated with fringe, which is rolled round the head in the manner of a turban. The French, however, had not ventured to follow this innovation, which, by giving them a greater resemblance to the people of the East, would have softened the mark of infamy, with which the most ferocious tyranny abased them, and which exposed them to inevitable insults. Another indispensable care was to refrain from wearing garments of green, or any thing green about the dress. To have infringed this rule would have been to be guilty of profanation, and the punishment of the crime would have been as prompt as terrible. Green was the favourite colour of Mahomet; and is still reserved exclusively for his descendants, and for those who have merited a place among the number of the Prophet's choicest disciples by the performance of several pilgrimages to his tomb.

In the few excursions which our merchants ventured to make out of their *country*, mounted upon asses, fear was their close companion. They were obliged to be attentive to the persons before and
behind

behind them. If a Mameluc, a priest, or a man in office, appeared, they made way for him, alighted, placed their right hand on the breast as a token of respect, and durst not pursue their way, till the rigorous and haughty Mussulman was gone by; and then only to repeat the same ceremony a few minutes afterwards. If their attention were otherwise employed, so as to make them neglect these degrading duties of slavery, they were reminded of them in a cruel way. A set of domestics, called *cavouass*, armed with stout sticks six feet long, and clothed in a black robe, the sleeves of which are tucked up under the arm-pits by means of a cord crossing on the back, attended men in power on foot, and gave the Franks notice of their inattention by smart blows. One French merchant whom I knew at Cairo, had his leg broken in this manner, and another, whom I knew likewise, his neck.

It is easy to conceive how disagreeable and dangerous a residence at Cairo, where fatal apprehensions and alarms were incessantly succeeding each other, must be to Europeans; and how culpable and disgusting its monstrous government was. To foreigners it was truly a place of desolation, dread, and danger; whence Hasselquitz as truly as wittily said, that, if a man were guilty
of

of any crime, he could not expiate it better than by going to reside a little while at Cairo*.

In reality, it was a strange government, with which Egypt was oppressed. With aristocratic and even republican forms, it was most arbitrary, most despotic, most cruel. It consisted of twenty-four beys, or *sangiacks*; though for several years this number had not been complete. One of these acquired the authority of governor-general, or *sheick-el-belled*, that is to say, a tyrant without control, without laws, without any rules but his own will. All of them had been Mamelucs (pages or slaves of honour). Strangers to Egypt, these Mamelucs had been brought very young from Georgia, Circassia, and other provinces of the Ottoman empire, where they were purchased by the slave-merchants, to be sold at Cairo. There were some also who were natives of Nubia, and consequently blacks; but these were very few. These slaves were bought by the beys, who educated them in their own houses. The first care of their masters was to have them instructed

* In his letter to Linnæus, dated Cairo, September the 7th, 1750, inserted in the French translation of his Travels in the Levant, part ii. p. 154.

[Mr. Bruce, after speaking handsomely of the French at Cairo, adds, that he considers them as men condemned to the galleys.]—T.

in the Mahometan religion, and to supersede by circumcision, the baptism, that most of them had received as Christians. They were taught likewise to manage a horse, and excel in all kinds of military exercises. The power of the beys was proportionate to the number of Mamelucs that composed their household. All the offices of state were destined for these Mamelucs; and their master's favour advanced them more or less rapidly to the most important posts, and the summit of greatness and power. To reach this it was necessary to be a Mameluc, that is, the native of a foreign country, for even the child of a Mameluc lost all claim to it.

This singular government had existed ever since the conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans; but it was no longer any thing more than the shadow of that of the ancient Mamelucs under their Sultans, whose reign finished with the unfortunate Toman Bey, as with Mourat Bey that of the modern Mamelucs has just terminated.

The history of the frequent revolutions that have taken place in Egypt, would fill volumes; but a brief abstract of the principal events by which they have been signalized, from the time of Augustus to the conquest of the Sultan Selim, will not appear out of place in the book of a traveller,

traveller, whose object it is to diffuse all the knowledge he can respecting countries which have been the subjects of his observation. This historical summary, the most concise that I have read, was published in the *Memoirs of the late Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres* *.

“ When the race of the Ptolemies became extinct with Cleopatra, the kingdom of Egypt was converted into a Roman province. The three sons of Constantine dividing his dominions at the death of their father, Egypt fell to the lot of Constantine, the second of these sons.

“ Theodore, having reunited the whole of the empire under his sway, divided it again between his two sons. Of these Arcadius had the eastern part, and consequently Egypt, which remained under the dominion of the Greek emperors till the year 641, the 19th of the Hegira.

“ In this year, Omar, the third caliph, sent Amrou-Ben-el-Has to subject Egypt to the rising sceptre of the Mussulmans, which he accomplished by the capture of Alexandria, after a siege of fourteen months.

* 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.

“ The dynasty of the Ommiades terminating
“ in the year 749, the Abassides possessed Egypt
“ till the revolt of Ahmed-Ben-Toulon, whose
“ successors, named Toulonides, reigned only
“ thirty-seven years, being driven from the throne
“ by the caliphs of Bagdad.

“ Saladin, a Curd by nation, availing himself of
“ the discord between the Fatimites and Abassides,
“ took Egypt from the latter, and gave rise to the
“ dynasty of the Aioubites. The family of the
“ Abassides, however, still subsisted in Egypt
“ under these usurpers; and the title of caliph
“ was still given to one of the family, whom the
“ sovereigns permitted to enjoy the empty name
“ without any authority.

“ Mussafer-Touran-Schah, the last of the Aiou-
“ bites, was absent at the time of the death of
“ his father, Salah-Nuginmeddin, by whom Saint
“ Louis had been made prisoner. His mother,
“ Schagereddar, an able woman, by nation a Turk,
“ governed Egypt for some time; the officers of
“ the army, gained by her liberality, putting the
“ sovereign authority into her hands, till her son’s
“ return. She afterwards married a Turcoman,
“ named Azzeddin. The Mamelucs, suspecting
“ Touran-Schah of some designs unfavourable to
“ them, assassinated him in the second month of
“ his

“ his reign, in the year 1250, and put Azzeddin
“ in his place. After having reigned seven years
“ and eleven months, Azzeddin perished in a
“ similar manner, being assassinated by one of
“ his wife’s eunuchs.

“ Salah-Nuginmeddin was the institutor of this
“ corps of Mamelucs, a term which signifies in
“ Arabic slaves. Composing it entirely of slaves,
“ whom the Tartars brought to Cairo and sold,
“ and almost all of whom were Circassians, they
“ were called indifferently either Circassians or
“ Mamelucs. These grew so powerful, that,
“ according to some Arabian authors, they raised
“ one of their own body to the throne in the
“ year 1381. This Mameluc was called Abousaid-
“ Berkouk, or Eddhaheer-Berkouk, a name which
“ had been given him by his master to denote his
“ courage. This dynasty was the last that reigned
“ in Egypt: the death of Toman Bey, the nine-
“ teenth of its sultans, and the submission of the
“ realm to the Ottomans, having put an end to
“ the reign of the Mamelucs.

“ Toman Bey, being betrayed, and perceiving
“ his troops dispersed by the enemy’s fire, fled in
“ disorder to Toura, where he was rejoined by
“ about seven thousand Mamelucs.

“ The

“ The march of the emperor had afforded Chir
 “ Bey an opportunity of surprising the citadel and
 “ city of Cairo, whence he sent a detachment in
 “ pursuit of Toman Bey. Ahmed does not give
 “ the date of the taking of Cairo. Maillet, in his
 “ Description of Egypt, says, that Toman Bey was
 “ found concealed in a marsh, where the Arabs
 “ thought him in safety, on a Tuesday, the 27th
 “ of January 1517, and hanged by order of Selim.
 “ This prince was at Chanaka in the month of Fe-
 “ bruary 1516 : which is a proof of the inaccuracy
 “ of the date given by Maillet, who is equally mis-
 “ taken with regard to Toman Bey’s death.”

The Mamelucs were stimulated by the ambition
 of attaining the supreme power. They neglected
 nothing to please their masters, and obtain from
 them posts, which were the first step in the ladder
 of preferment. They who had merited any favours,
 which most commonly depended on criminal
 caprice, thought themselves happy. The progress
 of their fortune was rapid, and they soon attained a
 place in the small circle of those who were the
 heads of the government. When they had reached
 this height, they exerted themselves to procure par-
 tisans, to acquire or rather extort wealth, increase
 their military household, and gain the summit of
 absolute power, the place of *Sheick-el-Belled*. On
 these occasions all the secret artifices of intrigue,
 perfidy,

perfidy and treachery were employed. Beys have been known, who, after having secured a powerful party by all the means of corruption, have gone to the house of the governor-general with every external appearance of friendship and respect, conversed with him coolly, and during their visit have stabbed him on his sofa, in the midst of his guards, who, without shewing the least desire of defending him, or avenging his murder, have kissed the hand of the assassin, and proclaimed him sovereign. The example of their predecessors did not check these beys in their ambitious steps; though a similar fate awaited them, and in a few months after their usurpation they were either expelled, or assassinated in their turn.

It is natural to suppose, that, in these frequent convulsions of the government, the people were always sufferers. The Mamelucs considered them only as instruments to second their covetousness and ambition, and raise them into power. In the eyes of these ferocious beings commerce was nothing but a mine of wealth, from which they drew at pleasure, without discretion and without judgment, the treasures that they employed for the acquisition of power and repute. The beys harassed with their demands the several governors dispersed throughout all parts of Egypt; and these in turn ravaged the country by their partial exac-

tions. Agriculture, tortured and lacerated by continual wounds, thus came to feed at Cairo passion and fury; and the earth, nearly abandoned, was frequently reduced to lament its own fertility.

But these same people of Egypt, debased and cruelly harassed by what pretended to be a government, remained neuter and indifferent amid the most terrible commotions; never taking part in the quarrels of the beys, and the wars that were continually breaking out among them. The streets of Cairo were frequently the theatre of bitter and bloody contests between rival beys and their partisans: yet the tradesman did not quit his shop, which he did not even shut; and the mechanic worked coolly at his door, without giving himself any concern about the combatants, or caring for which side victory declared. The inhabitants of Cairo, certain of experiencing the same vexations whoever might be the conqueror, considered it as a matter of indifference what name he bore, and testified neither joy at the victory, nor regret at the defeat of one of their rulers. These, certain on their part that the people would remain unconcerned and indifferent in the affair, never molested them when matters came to such a crisis, but reserved all their fury for their adversaries.

These

These dissensions incessantly renewed, were fomented by an envoy from the Ottoman Porte, by a pacha whom it kept at Cairo, as a shadow of its ancient authority, as an officer who consented to the degradation of his own dignity, and whose functions were confined to receiving and transmitting the Grand Seignor's tribute, when his vassals thought proper to pay it, and sowing discord and cherishing confusion among the beys, that an union among them might not entirely take from the Sultan this phantom of dominion over Egypt.

This dishonourable mission was likewise a sort of exile for the viziers and pachas on whom it was conferred. When the *Sheick-el-Belled* was displeased with the governor, he dispatched a messenger to him, clothed in a long black robe, who entered the pacha's apartment, and, without saying any thing, turned the carpet of his divan, or the place raised above the floor on which the cushions used for sitting upon in the oriental fashion are laid. This was a signal, or tacit order, informing the representative of the Sublime Porte, that he was dismissed, and must immediately quit the castle. It was useless for him to dispute an order he wanted strength to oppose. The number of Turks he had with him was too small; and the Ottoman troops, which are far from formidable in Egypt, have Mamelucs for
T 2 their

their commanders. Accordingly the pacha never made the least hesitation, but modestly left the castle at the slightest intimation of the will of those whom he was appointed to command. The bey governor then declared himself *caïmacan*, or lieutenant of the pacha; gave notice to the Porte of the change that had taken place; and the cabinet of Constantinople sent without any demur another officer destined to the same humiliation, while he who had been arbitrarily deposed remained neglected in his disgrace.

Sometimes the beys did not content themselves with dismissing the pacha, but stripped him of his wealth, and dragged him to prison. In this manner while I was in Egypt in 1778, Mourat Bey on his re-entering Cairo treated Mahomet Vizier, a mild and respectable man, but who had been so inconsiderate as to side with Ismael Bey against Mourat.

Though the authority which the Porte preserved the appearance of exercising over Egypt was chimerical, it was offensive to the real despots of this country. The semblance of dependancy displeased them, and they aimed at seating themselves in the throne of the sultans. This had been the favourite project of the weak and ambitious Ali Bey; and Mourat Bey, notwithstanding the

the vain expedition undertaken in the summer of 1786 by the famous captain pacha Hussan, had begun to carry it into execution, by depriving the government of Constantinople of every sort of influence.

Such however was the childish and degrading power which the Ottoman Porte pretended to preserve in Egypt, and which even now seems to excite its regret, so far as to have induced it to abandon its most ancient allies, and throw itself into the arms of its natural enemies. It will not perceive its error till it is too late. The destruction of its empire, a monstrous colossus of despotism and anarchy, is not far distant. Its approaching fall will rouse the Turks from their stupidity; and when they are plunged into the abyss, they will perceive the treachery employed by the enemies of France to precipitate them into it.

The first of the Mamelucs who conceived the design of freeing Egypt for ever from the authority of the court of Constantinople, an authority by no means troublesome, was Ali Bey. This was about the year 1770. He would have accomplished his aim had he not fallen under the strokes of the most horrible ingratitude, and particularly had his scheme been better conducted. He committed many great faults, though they

were rather those of the minister he selected than his own. His confidence was placed on a Venetian merchant named Rosetti, a man of a narrow mind and short views, whose understanding was too confined to embrace the whole of a plan that should change the political aspect of an important country, and establish in it a new system of affairs. The ineffectual attempts of the bey rendered his name celebrated in Europe, where he was the subject of fables of every kind. For example, he was reputed to have been born in Germany, a country in which he never set his foot. It was pretended that the name he bore there was Julius Leonard; that he had served as a common dragoon in the regiment of Platen, whence he deserted to enter into the Austrian service, which he quitted by a fresh desertion; and that at length his fickle disposition having carried him to Constantinople, where he embraced the Mahometan religion, this adventurer went over into Egypt, where he was placed at the head of the government*.

Ali Bey was born in Natolia, a province of the Turkish empire. He was brought young into

* This absurd fable is to be found in a work printed at Paris in 1775, entitled: *Anecdotes Africaines, depuis l'Origine ou la Découverte des differens Royaumes qui composent l'Afrique, jusqu' à nos Jours.*

Egypt, where he was purchased by a man in power, in the same manner as the other Mamelucs. Part of his history may be seen in Savary's Letters on Egypt †. If, however, it cannot be written with more elegance than by this author, it might at least with more truth. Still, were the extravagant praise which the traveller bestows on the genius and character of his hero suppressed, were the romantic and fabulous adventure of the young and beautiful Maria in particular passed over, the reader would find the principal circumstances of the Mameluc's political life interesting. Egypt, it must be confessed, was indebted to him for a few moments of security: he had declared war to the death, as I have before observed, against robbers of every kind; and he certainly deserves praise for the vigorous measures he took to establish a police in countries exposed to licentiousness and plunder. But this bey was nearly as ignorant as the rest of the Mamelucs: like them he had his fits of cruelty, and like them he possessed the tyrannical art so destructive to commerce and industry of every kind, of arbitrarily imposing *avaries*.

The second bey who with still less laudable dispositions than Ali attempted to render himself completely independent, and who succeeded in

† Tome ii. p. 209.

the attempt, as far as it was possible for a man to succeed, without having formed any connexions with other nations, or taken any of the political measures which new arrangements demand; was Mourat. A Mameluc of Ali, he had been promoted by him to the dignity of bey. Several times forced to flee from Cairo, and to give place to various competitors, he had always the good fortune to return to it in triumph. There was never a *Sheick-el-Belled* whose reign was of longer duration. From the year 1776, a few interruptions excepted, he retained possession of the supreme power; and him the French found reigning in Egypt. For this continuance in the exercise of the sovereignty in a country where authority seldom remains long in the same hands, he was indebted to his liberality and courage. The one of these qualities rendered him feared and respected, the other attached to him a number of partisans.

Mourat surpassed all his predecessors in magnificence. His Mamelucs were richly clothed: opulence reigned in his household: his horses were the finest, and most superbly caparisoned. His money flowed from him in full streams; but then he filled his coffers with the same facility by frequent and detestable extortion.

A few

A few days after he had compelled Ismael Bey to take flight, by whom he had before been obliged to retire into Saïd, he resolved to drive from the castle a bey who had sided with his enemy. He encamped in the plain, sent for one Robinson an Englishman, who served him in the office of engineer, and ordered him to burn down the castle. The engineer observed to him that he had neither mortars nor bombs. The barbarian knew neither the forms nor use of these implements of war, and inquired where they were to be procured. On being told that the nearest place at which they could be obtained was Venice, he dismissed Robinson, after having ordered him a purse of a thousand sequins. In a fit of ill-humour the same man would have cut off his head.

I have visited the camp of Mourat. Vast tents were erected for the accommodation of him and his principal officers. These were divided into several apartments, the insides of which were ornamented with the richest gold and silver stuffs that the manufactures of Lyons could furnish, while the bottom was covered with the most beautiful carpets. Nothing could equal the magnificence of his cavalry. Gold, silver, and rich embroidery on Morocco leather, glittered in the rays of a fervid sun with a dazzling lustre; and the housings of the saddles were made of those pretty
small

small figured velvets, the delicate and pleasing workmanship of the artists of Lyons, surrounded with a broad border of gold lace.

Sometimes, too, I have gone to the palace of Mourat Bey with a young Frenchman who enjoyed his confidence. The bey received me with a kind of civility, made me sit by him, and gave me his own pipe to smoke, taking it from his mouth to present it to me. This was an honour, according to the customs of the country, which I never received from any other person. He put a hundred questions to me, each exceeding in silliness that which preceded it, and all testimonies of his extreme ignorance. At length, in consequence of the account he had received from the friend who introduced me, and the satisfaction I gave him by my answers, he was resolved to have me enter into his service, in the double capacity of physician and engineer. He offered me a spacious house at Cairo; domestics of all sorts, as servants and guards; a daily allowance of provision far beyond my wants; and a considerable salary. His offer might have seduced any one ignorant of the capricious humours of these unprincipled men, who to-day will load a man with favours, and to-morrow order him suddenly into irons, or perhaps to lose his head.

Mourat,

Mourat, who has not been afraid to combat the French, is a very fine man. He has a martial appearance. His chin is covered with a thick black beard; and large eyebrows form arches of ebony over his eyes full of fire. A long scar, seaming one of his cheeks, heightens the fierceness of his countenance. With great bravery, he possesses extraordinary strength and address: he has been seen, passing an ox on horseback, to cut off his head with a single stroke of his scimitar. An intrepid warrior, capable of supporting the severest hardships, an excellent horseman, dexterous and powerful in handling the scimitar, courageous in adversity, bold in his enterprises, cool in action, and terrible in an onset, Mourat, with a little instruction, might have become a great general. His proud and generous mind gave him the appearance of sovereign dignity; but injustice, ignorance, and barbarity, rendered him a cruel tyrant.

(See the portrait of this Mameluc, *Pl. XXIII**.)

CHAP. XXXIV.

Generous actions of certain Mamelucs—Their wives, warlike qualities, and cavalry—Egyptian and Arabian horses—Audience of the Pacha—Castle of Cairo—Joseph's well—Moors.

It has been seen that two beys of the Mameluc race have exhibited gleams of bold conceptions, some qualities fitting them for able governors, good dispositions, and particularly greatness of mind. These virtues were not so rare as might be supposed among a number of strangers brought from all parts, and assembled in Cairo to reign there as masters. A warlike education, with the example of pomp and prodigality placed before their eyes, unfolded and enlarged the few good propensities with which they were endowed by nature: while the total absence of every other species of tuition, want of learning, profound ignorance of the fundamental principles of all society, gross fanaticism inspired by the new religion which they were forced to embrace, a life wholly military, and the examples of injustice, cruelty, and treachery, given them by their patrons, rendered them in reality a herd of barbarians. Hence the astonishment and even admiration excited by the noble

noble actions which to their honour these men performed oftener than might have been expected. The following instance which took place in the time of Ali Bey, some years before my journey, was related to me at Cairo.

Mehemet Bey, victorious over his father-in-law and benefactor, put to death all who had sided with Ali. In the atrocious exercise of his suspicious cruelty he ordered a bey, whose only crime was his refusal to share his egregious treason, and preserving his fidelity to the man to whom he owed his wealth and dignity, to lose his hand and his tongue. In this miserable condition, the wretched bey, whom one of his Mamelucs had the generosity still to attend, made this faithful follower sensible how burdensome his life was become, and of his extreme desire of being freed from it, conjuring him to throw him into the Nile, on which they were then sailing to a place of exile. "Yes, my master," said the Mameluc, "I am not insensible of the extent of your misfortune: I know that in this extreme of wretchedness life must be a burden which you cannot long support: you shall be freed from it, but you shall not die alone." At these words the Mameluc took his patron in his arms, enfolded him closely, and leaped into the river with him, where they were both drowned in each other's embrace.

More

More recently, when Mourat Bey, driven for a time from Cairo by Ismael, took refuge among the Arabs in Upper Egypt, one of his Mamelucs, a *Kiaschef* laden with years and covered with wounds, retired to an estate he possessed at a distance from the city. To this *Kiaschef* the conqueror dispatched one of his trusty servants, in order to prevail on him to join his standard. The messenger represented to him that at his age, and badly cured of his wounds, he was incapable of following his patron, with whom he could gain nothing but poverty and misfortune; while, if he would return to Cairo and embrace the victorious party, he should be rewarded with wealth and dignities. In reply, this worthy man informed the emissary of Ismael, that he thanked the bey sincerely for his offers, but could not accept them, because deriving all he possessed from Mourat his master, fidelity to him was his duty, and he was resolved to follow him to the grave. In fact, the generous old man abandoned all his property to the conqueror, only recommending to his humanity his wife and children, requesting him not to let them perish for want. He added, that if the bey, from thirst of revenge or any other motive, should deprive persons so dear to him, and whom he was obliged to leave, of the necessaries of life, he confidently committed them to the protection of Providence, the guardian of the grate-
ful

ful and honest, and the divine avenger of treachery and ingratitude.

But the practice of the most generous virtues shone no where more than in the *harams* of these Mamelucs. Examples of magnanimity and the most affectionate attachment were daily displayed in these assemblages of women equally strangers to Egypt, but into whose minds Nature had not admitted the slightest tint of the harsh and untractable dispositions of the men of the same countries, while she embellished them with sentiments the most ardent, yet most gentle, forming a delightful unison with their personal charms. These beautiful captives, exposed to various insults and acts of injustice, and having many a bitter draught to swallow, forgot all the moment their husbands or patrons fell into adversity. They not only sent them, in their flight or exile, all the money they possessed, but voluntarily parted with the ornaments they wore to the very last article, in order to procure supplies for them.

Women so generous toward a race of men incapable of returning such nobleness of sentiment, or of forming a happy union with the tender dispositions of their hearts, were respected amid the vicissitudes of continual intestine wars. The asylum which enclosed so many charms, and too

many vain desires, was held sacred. To violate this would have been the most heinous of crimes. The women shared not the disgrace of those to whom they were bound by the ties of nature, of wedlock, or of property, but remained quiet in their solitary abodes, which neither rancour nor revenge ever attempted to profane with their fury.

Exercised from an early age in military evolutions, the Mamelucs displayed in them great dexterity. The javelin darted with precision, was never launched from their hands but to hit its mark. The wavy Damascus blade of truly tempered steel, wielded with astonishing skill, was their most dreadful weapon. I have often seen these famous sabres tried. For this purpose, a large pillow stuffed with feathers, or any thing equally soft and flexible, was set on a support about the height of a man, without any thing to steady it, so that the slightest blow would throw it down; and this the sword, to be reputed of excellent quality, must cut in two at a single stroke.

The habit of engaging in mock combats, and too often in real ones, had rendered the Mamelucs a brave and warlike body. The ardour of their fiery and courageous youth would have made them a formidable corps of cavalry, if they had possessed any notion of European tactics, and
known

known how to engage in a line. They enjoyed another advantage, too, in the excellence of their horses, and their skill in riding and managing them. A spectator could not enough admire these Mamelucs, among whom there were some still children, muffled up to the armpits in pantaloons extravagantly large, so that they could not walk in them without difficulty, when, mounted on Arabian coursers, they would gallop backward and forward with astonishing celerity, and wheel in all directions. He would see them approach each other swift as lightning, cross each other, separate, and when the velocity of their course would seem to have carried them to a great distance, face each other again. No people knew better how to display their horsemanship to advantage. The reputation of the Turkish cavalry is well known; but it is not comparable to that of the Mamelucs. The Turks have less gracefulness and agility; and in the capital of Egypt they were afraid to appear on horseback before these young men, whose raillery they seldom escaped.

These coursers, however, which are made to perform their various evolutions with such docility, have not their heads loaded with a complicated bridle like ours, and their mouths filled with iron. A small simple bit, and a single rein of light Morocco leather, without any useless pieces, are sufficient

ficient to guide them at the riders' pleasure. The saddles have the same shape as those of Turkey, with which every body is acquainted : but the bows are still more elevated, so that the horseman is supported up to the middle before and behind. The stirrups, or those long boxes of metal that answer the purposes of stirrups, which receive the whole foot, and the sharp corners of which supply the place of spurs, are larger too than those used by the Turks. These stirrups, which are worn very short, are never employed for mounting on horseback, which is always done from a stone, or something else rising above the ground, and on the right side of the horse.

Arabian horses, Barbs, and even Turkish and Persian horses have been seen in France, but the Egyptian horses are not known there. None were imported into this country, where they were in bad repute. The equerries, sent by the French government in 1776 to the Levant, to select and purchase horses, had express instructions not to buy any of Egypt. It must be confessed, had a contrary order been given, it would have been to no purpose, for their exportation from that country is prohibited. The reports of some travellers, Maillet in particular, probably gave rise to the erroneous opinion entertained of this breed of horses : and, as it almost always happens with regard to

prejudices, this was generally adopted, without any pains being taken, to examine whether it had any foundation. The horses of Egypt have been represented as wanting vigour and devoid of spirit. “ Out of a hundred,” says Maillet, “ you will find “ upwards of ninety fired or lame. They could “ not stand the muddy roads and pavements of “ Europe *.”

But this consul was not well informed, when he wrote this part of his memoirs. In fact, the Egyptian horses, which, like the Barbs, are descended from the Arabians, but differ from them sufficiently to be considered as a distinct breed, are the most beautiful existing. Tallness of stature, a head well placed, eyes full of fire, wide nostrils, a neck finely turned, a rump round and fleshy, legs slender and sinewy, a light step, sure feet, proud and stately attitudes, and nice proportions in all their parts, give them the most beautiful appearance. They are equally full of fire, vivacity, and vigour. But, as if beauty and elegance could exist only at the expense of strength, these handsome looking horses have not so much bottom as the Arabian which are found in the same countries, and which, as is well known, claim pre-eminence in that large family of quadrupeds, which man has made his companions,

* Description de l’Egypte, partie ii. pages 27 and following.

and the chief objects of his attention. Those of the Egyptian breed would not be capable of performing such long journeys as the Arabian coursers; and more delicate, because more elegant, they would soon be exhausted, if they were forced on services as excessive in their length, as in the privations by which they are accompanied.

If, however, the Arabian horses be the first in the world, those of Egypt may assert their pretensions to rank second: they are distinguished by the same mettlesomeness; and their paces are as quick, though more easy to the rider. The Arabian horse possesses in an eminent degree the qualities most useful to man; strength that will stand the severest test, prodigious speed, and inconceivable temperance. The Egyptian horse has the same qualities, only inferior in degree: but what is deficient in him in this respect, he compensates by the nobleness of his motions, the stateliness of his step, and the beauties of his shape, which all together captivate every eye. The Arabian horse will always be capable of rendering his possessor the most essential services, but the Egyptian horse will gratify his vanity more. Were it possible to naturalize him in France, he would no doubt bear off the prize in a country, where beauty is often preferred to strength, gracefulness of appearance to solid advantages.

What

What I have just said of the Egyptian horses, is confirmed by ancient and modern testimony. It was in Egypt chiefly, according to the Jewish historian, that Solomon purchased at a very high price, the prodigious multitude of horses, which were kept in his numerous stables *. One of my countrymen, illustrious in his day, a prince of the house of Beauveau, visiting Cairo on his travels, in 1605, though familiar with the sight of fine horses, could not refrain from admiring those of the capital of Egypt †. Shaw, too, the English traveller, describes them as superior to all others in size and beauty ‡. Lastly, to terminate my series of quotations, by one so transcendant, that it will render them all superfluous, I shall repeat what citizen Buonaparte wrote respecting the

* “ And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.” 2 Chronicles, ix. 25.—“ And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.” 1 Kings, iv. 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, x. 28, 29.

† Relation Journalière d'un Voyage du Levant, fait et décrit par Henri de Beauveau; in 4to. Nanci, 1619, p. 159.

‡ “ But the Egyptian horses have deservedly the preference of all others for size and beauty; the smallest of which are usually sixteen hands high, and all of them shaped, according to their phrase, *kiff el gazel*, like the antelope.” Shaw's Travels, p. 239.

Mameluc cavalry, in his letter to the Executive Directory, dated Cairo, the 6th of Messidor, year 6 : “ The Mamelucs,” says this great man, “ had
“ a magnificent body of cavalry, covered with
“ gold and silver, armed with the best carbines
“ and pistols of London manufacture, the best
“ sabres of the East, and mounted perhaps on the
“ best horses on the Continent.”

These horses were equally esteemed by the people of Egypt and by the Turks, who compared them to those beautiful animals with slender legs, speedy as the wind, that possess such lightness and elegance of shape, and under the name of antelopes are considered by the Orientals as the symbols of swiftness and perfection, while their eyes are deemed the standard of beauty.

Only two paces are allowed to this distinguished breed of horses : the walk, in which they step out well ; and a full gallop. The trot is considered as a mean pace, and these horses are perfectly unacquainted with it. They are accustomed to stop short, if required, in the midst of their course, while running at full speed. Such a practice would quickly ruin the legs of these animals, were they less excellent*.

* And it is probable it frequently does, so that Maillet's account may be nothing but the truth a little exaggerated.—T.

When

When the rider alights, a groom leads about his horse, till he remounts ; and however short a ride he may have taken, the horse is never allowed to enter the stable till he has been walked about in this manner, a sufficient time to have grown cool and recovered his breath. This precaution appears to be a general practice throughout the East. In this part of the world too, horses are constantly rubbed down with the greatest care, and frequently washed. These attentions sufficiently shew the value set upon the animal about which they are employed. Their food likewise differs as much from that of horses in the West, as the methods of riding and managing them. They never touch either hay or oats, eating nothing but chopped straw and barley. All, when in the stable, have their heads perfectly at liberty, without any kind of halter about them, which secures this handsome part of the horse from the defects often occasioned in Europe by the weight or improper construction of the halter. In the stable, as well as in the field, they are kept on their feet by a rope fastened to a stake driven into the ground behind them. Their hoofs, too, are not loaded with thick heavy pieces of iron: a semicircle, without any cramps or turning down at the ends, covers them lightly, and is sufficient to defend them from harm in countries where there are neither muddy roads nor pavements. Besides, it is known, that in hot countries

horses have the crust of the hoof harder than it is in our climates.

A body of cavalry mounted entirely on stallions, seems something very extraordinary ; yet such was that of Egypt. The Arabs prefer mares ; experience having taught them, that these are more robust, more capable of sustaining fatigue and want, and at the same time more gentle. Stallions, on the contrary, are chosen by the Turks and Mamelucs. Michaelis appears to question this ; he considered numerous accidents inevitable from it ; and could not conceive, that in a day of battle it would be possible to make use of a body of cavalry so mounted. In his opinion, the people of the East, to be able to dispense with geldings, must be infinitely more expert in the methods of training horses than the Europeans *. It is, however, the general custom, not only in Egypt, but in Arabia likewise, and almost all parts of the East, to refrain from gelding horses. Probably their copious perspiration may be capable of rendering an operation unnecessary here, which in Europe appears indispensable. And that the difference of temperature occasions a very sensible difference in the disposition of stallions seems confirmed by a curious observation, which a French officer, quoted

* Voyageurs savans et curieux, quest. 54, page 198.

by Niebuhr *, made on the coast of Coromandel, where he spent several years. This officer found, that those employed by the Europeans in their cavalry, were more unmanageable in winter than in summer.

However this may be, in the uniform climate of Egypt, where the European custom is not adopted, horses have the valuable advantage of uniting gentleness and docility with the most beautiful figure. I have seen them led without the least difficulty into narrow and incommodious boats, where they remained several hours without stirring, though in a situation far from easy. Spirited as they are, they are seldom restive under their rider ; they suffer themselves to be mounted readily ; and when their rider alights, it is commonly sufficient to leave them standing against a wall, where they will patiently wait for him, without its being at all necessary to tie them.

The Arabs, when they introduced themselves into Egypt, brought with them their generous steeds, which are too well known to require any account of them here. Accordingly I shall confine myself to a single remark, which will serve to reconcile the different accounts given of these Ara-

* Description de l'Arabie, tome i. p. 72.

bian horses by travellers. It is, that those of the Arabs who have settled abodes, are stouter, and at the same time more plump, than those of the wandering Bedouins. The former are friends, fed and attended with great care : the latter, indefatigable companions of men, who spend their lives in traversing the scorching sands, content themselves with a few handfuls of dried beans once in four and twenty hours, and can pass three days without drinking, notwithstanding the fervency of the sun, and the suffocating heat reflected from the soil over which they speed their rapid course. In this incessant round of fasting and fatigue they preserve incomparable courage and vigour; but their leanness, the consequence of their hard labour and hard diet, alters their appearance so, that their breed may be easily mistaken.

The horse, which man has made the companion of his toils in almost all parts of the world, and ennobled by rendering him a partner in his glory, was exclusively reserved at Cairo for the ruling and most distinguished class, that of warriors. None but soldiers were allowed to mount these valuable animals, real treasures 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 pretended interpreters of the Koran, for whom the stupid sectaries of Mahomet have great
veneration,

veneration, did not enjoy the right of appearing on horseback in the streets of the capital of Egypt. The Consuls of the European nations that had establishments in Cairo, might ride on horses there, conformably to treaties with the Porte; but this was a privilege they rarely exercised, availing themselves of it only when they went into the country, or to have an audience of the Pacha at entering upon or leaving their consulship. It was a dangerous prerogative, which it was incumbent on the Consuls to maintain, but which they asserted with trembling, and never without experiencing insults from a populace, to whom every European is an object of horror.

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 danger and disgrace. The Inspector general Tott took it into his head to have a public audience of the Pacha of Cairo, though he well knew that this officer was nothing but an empty representative of the authority which the court of Constantinople anciently exercised in Egypt, the whole of the power being in the hands of the *Sheik-el-Belled*. He was determined, he said, to assert the rights of the Grand Signior: as if he had been intrusted with such a commission; as if, while alarming the restless jealousy of the Beys, he had not foreseen that he had
nothing

nothing to protect or defend him from the consequences of their displeasure, particularly as he was come to Cairo to fetch away the French Consul whom it was impossible to maintain there any longer against the sudden caprices and enterprises of these ferocious governors; and lastly, as if a pompous and indiscreet step, from which France could derive neither honour nor advantage, and which cost a good round sum to no purpose whatever, would not have exposed to certain peril the merchants, who remained helpless at Cairo, as well as those Frenchmen who had the civility or curiosity to attend a vain and imprudent man.

I was one of those whom curiosity engaged in this pompous affair, with which I had certainly no reason to be pleased. The pacha had received notice of it, and he had applied to the commanding bey, to issue his orders for furnishing us with the requisite horses and escort. His own household was not sufficient to enable him to supply them himself. The aga of the janisaries received orders from the bey to make the proper preparations; and it must be allowed, the task could not have been executed with more magnificence. The horses we rode were most superb; and the lustre of the gold and silver, and richness of the embroidery, with which all parts of their furniture shone, still heightened their beauty. Each horse was led by a groom,
and

and these fiery coursers, obliged to walk with a slow pace, indignantly champed their bits, while their mouths were white with foam. Rounding in a graceful arch their beautiful necks, they brought their nostrils toward their chests, which they moistened with the breath that impatience rolled out in thick volumes, pawing the ground with eagerness, and endeavouring by all the motions, which the restraint in which they were held would allow, to emancipate themselves from it, and satisfy their ardour, by indulging themselves in greater quickness of pace, which habit had rendered natural to them.

Janisaries mounted upon asses led the way. The French interpreters followed them, riding in the same manner. Two lines of soldiers on foot enclosed the cavalcade. Each of us was surrounded by a troop of tall *cavouass*, holding in their hands staves still taller. We marched in file; and to our misfortune were dressed in the French fashion. All the merchants of our nation, clothed in the habits of the East, followed on asses; and some foot-soldiers brought up the rear. We had to traverse a great part of the city, and proceed half a league through the streets of Cairo, before we reached the castle. The people, astonished at seeing France so honoured, quitted their houses, and gathered about us. Hootings, insults, with the epithets of *Na-*

zareans

zareans and *dogs*, followed us. Some of the most moderate contented themselves with pitying the poor horses that carried us. "Poor creatures," cried they, "how much you are to be pitied! Of what crime have you been guilty, to be thus condemned to be ridden by *infidels*, *wretches*, *dogs*?" It was amid these exclamations of contempt and superstition, that we slowly reached the castle of Cairo, where the pacha resided.

The audience passed in the same manner as audiences do in Turkey: that is to say, a few unmeaning words were exchanged between the parties, coffee, sherbet, and confectionary were presented us, perfumes were burned, and we withdrew a few minutes after we had entered.

The populace assembled while we were in the castle, to occupy it at our departure. Mr. Tott had ordered the interpreters to throw *medins* among the crowd by handfuls. Dreadful confusion prevailed around us. The clothes of the interpreters were torn to pieces. The guards endeavoured in vain to disperse the mob, by severe blows with their sticks and sabres. It is not easy to form an idea of the tumult. The sort of munificence with which we threw about money answered no purpose, unless to procure a shower of stones, which was added to the invectives that assailed us on all sides.

Some

Some flew before my face with such force, that they would have fractured my skull if they had struck it. A little too late I firmly resolved never again to swell the train of ostentation, or add to the attendants of vanity.

When we had re-entered the country of the French, an uproar of another kind arose. Each guard, each domestic, each groom, demanded a remuneration, and it was not easy to satisfy them. The aga of the janisaries, however, had directed these demands to be made; so that it was consequently necessary to comply. To sums thus uselessly and disagreeably expended a still more serious inconvenience was like to be added. The jealous and restless Mourat, then governor-general, piqued at the French acknowledging the precarious authority of the Porte, in a country which he ruled with despotic power, and at the very moment when he was attempting to shake off that authority for ever, directed the French consul to be informed of his displeasure; and there is no doubt, but he would have testified it with more severity, and the trade of the French at Cairo would have suffered the mulct of a heavy *avanie*, if Ismael Bey had not taken the place of the offended Mourat two days after.

The castle of Cairo stands on the back of the chain of mountains which is to the east of the Nile, and which is called *Mokattam* (cut mountain), because it is very steep, and in fact 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 only one that defends Cairo, is falling into ruin in every part. It enjoys an admirable prospect. Remains of spacious and magnificent apartments, which are still supported in part by pillars of granite and the most valuable marble, may be seen in it. In the midst of it is the deep excavation, which all travellers have mentioned, and which is commonly called *Joseph's Well*; not because it was dug under the patriarch of that name, as many have supposed, but because it was a work of Joseph the vizir of Sultan Mahomet, son of *Caloun* †. This well, which it was not very difficult to cut in a soft calcareous rock, is formed in two sections, which are not in the same perpendicular line. The descent into them is by a winding staircase, the declivity of which is not steep, and on

* “*Fibbel Moc-catte*, or *Mocattem*; i. e. the mountain that is hewn or cut through:” so called “perhaps because the way up to the castle is cut all the way through the rock.” Shaw’s Travels, p. 340, 341.—T.

† Pocock’s Travels.

the platform that separates the two sections are oxen turning a wheel, by which very brackish water is raised from the bottom. This double well is said to be two hundred and eighty feet deep, and forty-two in circumference.

The beys kept in pay an auxiliary body of infantry, composed of Moors, bad soldiers, on whose fidelity not the smallest trust could be reposed. Less brave than the Carthaginians, they still retain the qualities of their ancestors; as they are lying, revengeful, cruel, and perfidious to excess. These *maugrebis* (men of the west), encumbered with their *bournouss*, a sort of white cloak, of one single piece without seams, with a long pointed hood, sold themselves to any one that would buy them, quitted the service of one bey who paid them well, for that of another who would pay them better, and formed at Cairo an additional instrument for ambition, revenge, and treason.

CHAP. XXXV.

Asses of Cairo—Ladies taking an airing—Asses of Egypt—Aversion of the ancient Egyptians to these animals—Mules—Jumarts—Horses of Cairo—Its circumference, quarries, canal, dancing-girls, and jugglers.

IF the horses of Egypt claim distinction by their beauty and valuable qualities, the asses of the same country are not less remarkable. It is indisputable, that the hottest and driest climates are most favourable to horses, since those of Arabia, Persia, Egypt, Barbary, and Spain, stand foremost in beauty and vigour. Asses, likewise, of a species nearly related to them, attain the greatest excellence of figure and qualities in the same climates, which appear to be natural to them. In proportion to their distance from these they degenerate, so that those of northern countries lose all resemblance to those of the south. If this degeneration be not so perceptible with regard to horses, very fine ones being to be found in the north, it is because Europeans have changed the nature of these animals in their country, by procuring mares and stallions from abroad, forming studs, crossing breeds,

breeds, and lavishing the minutest attentions upon them, while they have not only been careless respecting the breed of their asses, but have degraded it by almost total neglect and unmerited contempt. Badly fed, still worse attended, oppressed by heavy burdens, and ill-treated by blows, the ass of our country is unquestionably a wretched slave. Degraded as low as possible, he serves only the meanest of men, for whom he performs every thing his impaired condition will allow. His name is become that of dulness and stupidity. Yet he is docile, gentle, patient, and temperate to excess. Did neither the horse nor the ox exist in our country, he would be held there in the highest estimation. But this is not the only instance, where modest and useful simplicity, placed by the side of more brilliant and active qualities, has been rewarded by ingratitude and excited derision.

How different this sorry and degraded animal from the asses of Egypt and Arabia, which, as well as the horses of those countries, are superior to any in the universe! Some are to be found there of great height; and these are most valued and esteemed, occasionally selling at a higher price than even horses themselves. Still, whatever be their height, their head is well placed, their eyes are brisk, and their body is plump. They have elegance in their attitudes, gracefulness in their

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movements,

movements, and nobleness and almost haughtiness in their carriage. Their foot is sure, their step light, and their paces quick, brisk, and easy. In short, they are very pleasing to ride. All travellers have praised this fine species of animal. Peter della Valle, who paraded his pride a long time in the East, relates, that the people there do not scruple to ride upon asses, that they trot wonderfully, and that he has been ready to die with laughing at the sight *. For my part, I was greatly surprised at it. In Egypt people not only ride on asses without hesitation, but, as I have already observed, they were the only animals on which Christians of any country were allowed to appear in the capital. The Mahometan merchants, and the most opulent of the inhabitants, used them likewise: and carriages being unknown in this country, ladies of the highest rank, even the wives of the beys themselves, had no other equipages.

I once happened to meet the whole *haram* of a bey, taking an airing in the environs of Cairo. An equivocal figure, an eunuch with a mean and ferocious countenance, preceded the ladies on a fine horse, covered with gold, silver, and embroidery. The ladies were mounted on asses of the highest price. The bridles of these animals glittered with silver and gold, and a magnificent

* Voyages, tome i. p. 142.

piece of tapestry covering the saddle and crupper, reached down to the ground. It is to be presumed, that the ladies were not deficient in charms: but they were masked with thick veils, and bundled up as it were in pieces of stuffs, which did not allow either the face or even figure to be seen, and exhibited nothing but a shapeless mass. Such meetings had nothing in them very pleasant to an European: he was not only obliged to alight in token of respect, but he must also take care to avoid, I will not say looking the ladies in the face, for this was invisible, but even looking at them; the most he could do being to eye them askance as they passed. If he ventured beyond this, it would have afforded a pretence for an *avanje*, or been attended with consequences still worse.

The asses of Egypt have at least as much vigour as beauty. They readily perform the longest journeys. More hardy than the horses, and less difficult with regard to the quality or quantity of their food, they are preferred for long journeys across the desert. Most of the Mussulman pilgrims use them for the long and laborious journey to Mecca; and the chiefs of the Nubian caravans, which are sixty days in passing immense solitudes, ride upon asses, that do not appear fatigued when they arrive in Egypt.

The crust of their hoofs is defended by thin and light shoes. The saddles they wear are shaped like pack-saddles, rounded, and heightened by a pad softly stuffed, on which the rider sits much farther back than on a horse. The stirrups, which are shaped nearly like ours, have only a single flat bar at bottom, the breadth of three fingers. Men ride without any housings; but for women a piece of tapestry, more or less rich, and sometimes reaching to the ground, is laid over this saddle. The asses are bridled in the same manner as the horses. In the principal streets of Cairo, and in the squares, they stand for hire ready bridled and saddled, being the hackney coaches of this city. The person who lets them accompanies his ass, running behind to goad him on, and cry out to those who walk on foot to make way. When on a journey, the rider himself carries in his hand a little stick pointed with iron, with which he pricks his beast on the withers.

When the rider alights, he has no occasion to tie up his ass. He merely pulls the rein of the bridle tight, and passes it over a ring on the forepart of the saddle, which, confining the head of the beast, is sufficient to make him remain patiently in his place.

Though

Though the Arabs do not take quite so much pains to preserve the breed of their asses, as they do for promoting the excellence of their horses, it may be said with truth, that asses are no where attended with so much care as in Egypt and Arabia. They are regularly rubbed down and washed; which renders their coat smooth, soft, and glossy: and their food is the same as that of horses, commonly consisting of chopped straw, barley, and small beans.

To add to the species of useful animals, or, which is the same thing, to improve them so as to render them more useful, is to increase the advantages of public and private economy. If, without remitting our attentions to the horse, we deigned to pay a little regard to the ass, though placed by nature second in the scale, we could not fail to be gainers. For the attainment of this useful object, it would be necessary to cross the breed. Arabian or Egyptian males would improve the offspring of our females in strength and beauty; and these, by repeated crossings, would produce with time and care an excellent breed of animals, suited to the majority in point of expense, and not destitute of pleasing qualities.

The handsomest asses seen at Cairo come from Upper Egypt and Nubia. On ascending the Nile,

the influence of climate on these animals is perceptible, they being of the greatest beauty in Saïd, while toward the Delta they are inferior in all respects. So true it is, that they owe their excellencies to great heat and extreme drought. In countries, which, though very hot, are at the same time wet, they are but indifferent: for in India, and even the southernmost parts of the peninsula, which are nearer the equator, but likewise more humid, than Arabia, Nubia, and Thebais, the asses are small, dull, weak, and ill-shaped*.

From the excellent qualities of the Egyptian asses, it is not to be wondered that they have been objects of luxury. The opulent vied in keeping asses of the highest price. To the Europeans settled at Cairo this was an indemnification for the restraint from riding on horseback, to which they were condemned. But this species of luxury attracted the attention of government in 1779. It was deemed indecorous, that foreign merchants, abominated on account of their religion, should ride upon animals superior even to those kept for the wives of the beys themselves. This was suffi-

* Such at least is the assertion of the author of *Essais Philosophiques sur les Mœurs de divers Animaux étrangers*, pages 240 et 246.—Pliny had observed, that the ass was not fond of cold countries: *ipsum animal frigoris maxime impatiens*. *Hist. Nat. lib. viii. cap. 43.*

cient to bring upon the European merchants a forced contribution, an *avanie* of four or five hundred thousand franks, which they were obliged to pay, for having kept fine asses.

In the East, these were at all times among the number of animals most valued. They formed part of the wealth of the ancient patriarchs, as they still do of the herds of the wandering nations in the same countries. The Egyptians alone abominated them. To them they were the execrated emblem of the evil genius, of Typhon, of that giant monster with a hundred heads, and a hundred mouths vomiting flame, the son of Earth and Tartarus, 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. The inhabitants of Coptos in particular, so publicly declared their inveterate antipathy to these animals, as to throw them down from the summit of a rock; and the people of Busiris and Lycopolis carried their superstition so far as to refrain from blowing the trumpet, because, in their opinion, its sound resembled the braying of an ass*.

It has generally been supposed, that this marked aversion for these animals originated from their

* See the Dissertation sur Typhon, par l'Abbé Banier, member of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, tome iii. page 116.

being red-haired, the Egyptians supposing this to be the colour of Typhon, and consequently holding it in detestation. This opinion has been adopted by the deep learned author of the Philosophical Inquiries concerning the Egyptians and Chinese * ; but it is confronted by facts, for the greater part of the Egyptian asses have a bright gray coat, several are black, and those that are marked with a few shades of red are by no means common.

If in the vast field of conjecture, which the history of the remotest antiquity leaves open, I may be allowed to hazard my opinion respecting the horror testified by the Egyptians toward a race of useful animals, I shall ascribe to it a very different origin. I have already observed, that the ancient inhabitants of Egypt were neither conquerors, travellers, nor merchants. Journeys from one place to another were made by navigating the Nile and the canals, with which Egypt was still more intersected than it is at present. Consequently horses as well as camels and asses, which nature has placed in a country nearly isolated, to establish an intercourse between people separated by uninhabited plains of sand, must be much neglected. But, as it was not sufficient for the Egyp-

* “ The aversion of the Egyptians (for the ass) was extreme, which has always been ascribed to the colour of its hair, which is commonly red in their country.” Tome ii. p. 131.

tians to be free from a thirst of conquest, since it was necessary that they should keep themselves in a state of defence against the enterprises of ambitious neighbours, and the incursions of the Arabs, they were obliged to maintain troops and a body of cavalry. The horse, excluded from the list of animals honoured by the Egyptians, was still necessary to them on this account. Yet, being employed in a measure against their will, and on a service repugnant to the genius and political system of the nation, his utility was not sufficient to procure him general esteem. It appears indeed that soldiers alone enjoyed the right of keeping horses. The ass, ranking inferior to the horse, and, from the principles generally adopted, considered as of no utility, was absolutely proscribed; and it seems as if the Egyptians had endeavoured to revenge themselves upon him for the use they were compelled to make of the horse. Every being considered as useless soon becomes an object of contempt, and from contempt, founded on reason and reflection, the passage to hatred and disgust is but short.

Thus eminent in her breeds both of horses and asses, it was natural for Egypt to boast fine mules. There were some of these animals at Cairo far superior in price to the finest horses. In this capital of Egypt they were the common riding of the Mahometan priests, and the officers of the revenue.

Their

Their furniture was the same as that used for asses; their pace was an amble with very long steps; and to this they were brought by fastening each fore foot to the hinder one of the same side with a cord for some time.

She-mules were preferred, because they were reputed to be more docile, and better able to support fatigue; the reasons for which the Arabs prefer mares to horses.

If we may credit the testimony of several persons, the ox too has its mules, the reputed offspring of a bull with a mare or she-ass, or of a horse or an ass, with a cow. These have been called *jumarts*. They say these monstrous productions, and, they add, extremely rare, are chiefly to be found in the burning climes of Egypt and Barbary; yet, during more than three years travelling in the East, I was never able to obtain the sight of such a creature, though I made all possible inquiry for the purpose. Doctor Shaw has described one in Barbary*, but he appears to have been negligent in the natural

* Travels, p. 239. "To the mule we may join the *kumrah*,
 "as, I think, these people call a little serviceable beast of bur-
 "den, begot betwixt an ass and a cow. That which I saw was
 "single hooped like the ass, but distinguished from it in all other
 "respects, having a sleeker skin, and the tail and head (except-
 "ing the horns) in fashion of the dam's."

history of animals. Besides, he has not examined into the production of this pretended hybrid, and was not a witness to any of the circumstances that could serve to confirm the reality of the existence of a jumart, as the congress, gestation, and birth. Accordingly, Shaw's account has not prevented Buffon from considering the existence of jumarts as fabulous, or at least 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, of a species so nearly related to the bull, and forming likewise numerous herds, brought up and fed with it all over Egypt, never couples with the cow, or the bull with the female of the buffalo.

The French settled at Cairo assured me, that a little before my arrival a jumart was shewn there, said to be the offspring of an ass and a cow. But these popular reports were confirmed by no observation or particularity. I could not even obtain any knowledge of the principal outlines of the figure of this animal; so that possibly, as well as that described by Shaw, it was nothing more than a particular variety of the ox. Thus, the pretended jumarts of Dauphiny, and the Pyrenees, are nothing but the offspring of the horse and she-ass.

* Supplément à l'Hist. Nat. des Quadrupèdes, art. des *Mulets*.

I made very few excursions in the city of Cairo. The first time of my being there was a period of confusion, tumult, and disorder. The gates of the quarter appropriated to the French were almost always shut, and it would have been imprudent to venture into the street. I enjoyed little more liberty on my second visit to this place. The retirement of the French Consul had left our merchants abandoned to themselves: and though the presence of a Consul was not at all times capable of affording any great security, and did not prevent *avaries* from taking their course, his place, from somewhat of the habit of respect still remaining, gave them a little more consequence, and served as a barrier against more exorbitant demands. This total desertion increased the anxiety of my countrymen, whose eyes and thoughts were continually bent upon a traveller, by whose curiosity they might be involved in difficulties; and however circumspect I might have been in my observations abroad, I should have been wanting in deference and attention, had I not sacrificed my inclinations to the tranquillity of those to whom the trade of my country was under obligations.

The houses of Cairo are badly built. A numerous and wretched populace is crowded together in the smallest and lowest. Those inhabited by the rich are commonly surrounded by a court; but
all

all built without any regard to the rules of architecture, without external decorations, and almost all constructed of three different materials, stone, bricks, and wood. Within is a large hall paved with marble, having in the middle one or more basins or fountains of water, made of marble likewise. These halls are as lofty as the house. On the top is a little dome, opening on the north side with a sort of funnel, into which the wind rushes, and, proceeding with rapidity through a narrow passage, diffuses itself over the hall, increasing the coolness kept up by the marble and the water. These halls are very pleasant; and the fresh air respired in them forms a delightful and unexpected contrast with the extreme heat felt without.

Cairo is defended by no fortifications. It was once surrounded with walls, flanked by very fine towers: but these are no longer entire; part of them, like those which surround the Alexandria of the Arabs, having fallen beneath the stroke of time, and part under the more destructive hand of barbarism. Two gates, which I have seen, are fragments of the most simple and noble architecture. One of these is called *Babel Nasr*, the gate of victory; the other, which is the handsomer of the two, is called *Babel Foutouh*, the gate of passage, because it was on this side sultan Selim entered the city by a breach. Without the walls,

on

on the eastern side, the ground is covered with fine buildings, the tombs of the ancient sultans of Egypt. Most of these are half fallen down. From appearances it may be inferred, that formerly the city extended much farther than at present: at least this may be presumed, from the great quantity of ruins lying on the ground about it. The great haste, however, with which my countrymen, who had the politeness to shew me the most remarkable buildings in Cairo, forced me to examine them, for fear of rousing the malevolence of the inhabitants, did not allow me to form any very clear idea of them, and I would rather say nothing, than speak of them inaccurately.

Pursuing my way round the walls, to the east of the city, I arrived at the mountain on which the castle is built, and proceeded along it for some time, about half way up. From this are obtained the stones used for building at Cairo. They are white, and of the calcareous kind. I had here an opportunity of observing the little understanding displayed by the people of the country in the exercise of the rudest arts. They do not get out the masses of stone in courses or strata, as is practised in all quarries; but they cut off and separate huge irregular blocks with great labour and fatigue.

A large

A large canal, opening a little above Old Cairo, crosses the middle of the city from the west to the north-east : over this are bridges in different places, with a row of houses on each side of them. Ptolemy ascribes the construction of this canal to Trajan : but there can be no doubt, that it is of higher antiquity than the time when the Roman Emperor reigned, and that it is the work of the Pharaohs. Its bed is cased with marble, according to the Arabic historians : but at present this superb flooring is covered thick with mud. The Nile no longer flows through it, except during the months of August, September, and October. With its waters it fills large squares, which at this period form lakes, surrounded by the houses of the great. Boats richly decorated float on them by the light of torches and illuminations, while artificial fireworks seem to set both air and water in a blaze. Bands of musicians row about, and a great concourse of people, repairing to these places to refresh themselves with the cool evening air, convert these spacious basins into the delightful seats of pleasure and festivity. But the canal half choked up, does not allow this to be of long duration. These inundated squares, so pleasing to the eye, soon become stinking marshes, plains of mud and slime, which in a short time appear to the astonished spectator covered with golden harvests and the verdure of culinary vegetables and forage.

The breaking down of the dike, which closes the entrance of the canal, constitutes a festival and a day of jollity for the people of Cairo. The pacha and beys are present on the occasion with great ceremony. In 1777 it took place on the 9th of August.

As the canal dried up, its bottom, which was never cleansed, and on which was deposited all the filth brought from the sewers of the city, emitted an offensive stench, which rendered the houses bordering upon it scarcely habitable. Happily the heat accelerated the process of its drying up, when it became a street, wider than most in the city, and as much frequented.

I spent one day at the windows of the consul's house, behind which the canal passes. This being dry at the time of my last residence at Cairo was become a sort of theatre. There were dancing girls whose steps and leaps have no resemblance to those used in the dances of our countries. For the greater part of the time their dances consist of quick and astonishing movements of the loins, which these women agitate with extreme suppleness, but great indecency, the rest of the body remaining still. These movements are interrupted by quick and light leaps. These dances, or rather agitations, are performed to the music of a hautbois, a three-

a three-stringed lute, and a tambour de basque. Two women usually dance together. In the interval between their capers, they stop facing each other, approach, and vie for some moments in this brisk agitation of the loins to the measure of the music. This most impudent exhibition of a lascivious spectacle was highly pleasing to a depraved and unpolished people. It always attracted a number of spectators; and the women took great delight in looking at it through their blinds, and thus receiving lessons of immorality.

The same dancers have a little basin on the thumb and fore-finger of each hand, which they strike against each other like castanets in regular cadence. Their faces are bare; and this, as has been said, is the height of impudence in these countries. Accordingly they are prepared and accustomed to a trade still more dishonourable than that of performing lascivious dances in public. Most of them wear a ring in one of the nostrils. They conclude their dances with a kind of music far from agreeable. Letting down their veils, and holding their ears with both hands, they sing, or rather scream, with all their might.

The dancers are succeeded by jugglers, whom I have seen perform the same tricks as ours in Europe, and with the same dexterity. Tumblers

likewise exhibit various feats of agility ; and these are constantly attended by a buffoon, like the merry-andrew of our mountebanks, to make the mob laugh.

On the much-frequented road from Cairo to Boulac passengers are pestered with improvisatori. These half-naked poets, their heads covered with a rush-cap, compose verses in honour of every one that passes by, from whom they have any hopes of obtaining a little money. They form a dialogue on the spot, between two interlocutors, on the virtues of the person to whom they are addressed, and with whom they are perfectly unacquainted. Thus they spend the whole day in making eulogies on those who come and go, consisting of commonplace phrases uttered with great volubility.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Marriages—Circumcision—Commerce—Nubian caravans—Black slaves—Nubian domestics—Scorpions—Ancient statue—Pyramids—Mummies' well at Sakkara—Bolti, bayatte, and benni, fishes of the Nile—Titlarks.

BESIDE the little exhibitions, the sight of which I enjoyed from my windows, and of which the canal, become a frequented thoroughfare, was the theatre, the various processions attending civil or religious ceremonies, which sometimes passed by the entrance of the *country* of the *Franks*, contributed to the amusement of the melancholy and retired life I was obliged to lead at Cairo. Among the most pompous and noisy of these processions were those attendant on weddings. As soon as the preliminaries of the marriage are settled, whenever the bride elect stirs abroad she is attended by a numerous company. Preceded by drums and hautbois, she marches slowly under a sort of canopy, closed on all sides by squares of stuff, and is followed and surrounded by a numerous crowd. The first time of her going out is to the bath, where she is deprived of the mysterious

veil of nature. To distract her thoughts from this painful operation, various amusements are devised: she is equipped successively in the dress of a Janisary, a Mameluc, or some other class of men; and these masqueradings, which bursts of laughter and merriment accompany, occupy a part of the day.

A few hours after bathing, the bride is conducted from the house of her parents to that of the man to whom she is betrothed. The same company, the same noisy instruments, attend her, and she is preceded by a number of persons carrying all her effects, that is to say, her clothes, jewels, and a few moveables. These constitute the whole of a daughter's dowry, the father giving nothing else; on the contrary, he receives one; for the bridegroom not only enters into an engagement, to give the woman he marries a jointure proportionate to his fortune, but he likewise pays down a sum of money to the father, so that he may be said to purchase his wife. The greater the load of baggage the bride carries with her, the more the vanity of the parties is gratified. Nothing is omitted to make a great parade; the different articles are distributed among several persons, some of whom do not carry above the weight of a few ounces; but the magnificence of the ceremony consists in having the greatest possible number of bearers, this

this giving a high opinion of the opulence of her for whom so many are required.

This interview between the two spouses is the first, for they have never seen each other before. The bride appears in different men's dresses, and repeats the disguises which she had before assumed at the bath. The fondness of the women in these countries for disguising themselves in the habits of men is remarkable. It is well known how jealous the orientals are of those signs of chastity, which are frequently equivocal; so that they may be the occasion of unmerited dishonour to one, and render another respected who as little deserves it. The precautions taken in regard to these in Egypt, the trials to which the bridegroom subjects the bride without seeing her, the importunate crowd which besieges the bridal chamber on the wedding night, the joy testified when the real or imaginary signs of an insulted chastity are displayed to this crowd, are particulars necessary to a complete knowledge of the manners of nations: but, however interesting they may be, it would be difficult to enter into them without offence to modesty, and my pen therefore declines the task.

Though priests no where enjoy more weight and greater credit than in Egypt, and like most of those of other religions are devoured with
Y 4 ambition,

ambition, the lust of power, and the desire of trenching upon authority, they have never pretended among the Mussulmans to interfere in affairs that concern society alone, or to prescribe the formalities of marriage, which the Mahometans are agreed in considering as a purely civil act. The two parties make their appearance before the Cadi, who receives their declaration, writes down their agreement, and draws up the contract.

The circumcision of infants is another of those ceremonies, in which the Egyptians, as well as the Turks, display most pomp and parade. Those numerous bands of musicians, gay cavaliers, and people of all kinds, accompanying the young man, when carried to undergo this initiation into the religion of Mahomet, form a pleasing spectacle enough. I shall have occasion to describe one of these ceremonies, which I saw in Upper Egypt, where they have nearly the same concomitants as at Cairo, though conducted with less pomp than at this chief seat of wealth and magnificence.

The city of Cairo, as the reader has already seen, was the repository of the trade of almost all parts of the world. There were shops filled with the manufactures of India, and those wonderfully fine stuffs of silky texture which are furnished by the wool of Cashmire. In others, the gems of
Golconda

Golconda displayed their beamy lustre; the pearl of the eastern ocean, less dazzling than these, modestly exhibited its silvery rays; or the porcelain of Japan appeared with its vivid and permanent hues. Some filled with an immense quantity of the fragrant berries of the coffee-tree of Yemen, and the spices of the Molucca islands, regaled the sense of smell; while the finest essences, the perfumes of Africa and Arabia, the odoriferous woods as precious as gold, embalmed others with a pleasing mixture of the most exquisite emanations. The productions of the manufactories of Europe were equally abundant there: and the scorching realms of Africa poured in from various parts their gold, ivory, gums, and slaves.

The last-mentioned living species of merchandise is brought to Cairo by the Nubian caravans. Usually two arrive in a year, and the number of negroes annually exhibited in the market of Cairo may be estimated at fifteen hundred, or two thousand. Commonly there are fewer males than females among them. When I was at Cairo, their price varied from two to three hundred franks, according to the number on sale; but the finest negro, either male or female, never sold for more than a hundred crowns; a moderate price, if compared with that of slaves of the same colour in our West India islands, when they
were

were sullied by the infamous trade in slaves, and the atrocities consequent to it. The long journey, however, which the Nubian caravans had to make, and the parched and dangerous solitudes over which they passed, were so many occasions of death to several of these men, destined for sale, as well as to the beasts of burden, sinking under heat, abstinence, and toil. When they reached *Siout*, a city in Upper Egypt, ninety leagues above Cairo, the duties to be paid by the merchants that brought them, the freight of vessels hired to transport them down the Nile to the capital, the fresh duties paid there, the expense of keeping themselves and their beasts of burden, would seem, by an accumulation of charges, to augment the price of their merchandise; but these men go as naked as the slaves they bring, and are as abstemious as their camels themselves,

At Cairo these unfortunate blacks are huddled together in a large building appropriated to the purpose, and along the narrow street adjacent they are exposed to sale by their countrymen. Here every one is at liberty to examine them, handle them, turn them about, and make them walk in all directions, as if going to purchase a beast. They do not all remain in Egypt; other dealers in human flesh purchase some of them for Constantinople. The young Nubians are particularly valued

valued in the capital of the Ottoman empire, where men, who have no confidence in chastity, mutilate their brethren, to secure the fidelity of their wives.

Among us the idea of black slaves is associated with that of whips, tortures, excessive toil, and all those kinds of cruelty, with which the civilized nations of Europe loaded, or still load, those who had the misfortune to become their property. There is no feeling heart, that, detesting the scandalous traffic in men, has not been wounded with the sight or hearing of the daily sufferings which the negroes in the European colonies endure. There is no grateful mind, that does not hold dear the remembrance of those philosophers, the courageous friends of humankind, to whom France is indebted for being no longer disgraced by the practice of treating men with far more rigour and barbarity than the vilest beast.

But throughout all Turkey, and in Egypt particularly, humanity has no call to sigh over the fate of the negroes brought thither. If, condemned in their own country to be dragged about and sold as cattle, they experience from their countrymen the affront of being made an article of trade, and the fatigues inseparable from laborious journeys and the state to which they are reduced, their condition

tion ceases to be that of wretchedness as soon as they pass into the hands of the wealthy inhabitants of Egypt. The severe treatment under which their fellows languish in the West-Indies, is the shameful prerogative of civilized nations, and unknown to those people among whom barbarousness is reported to have fixed its sway. The Nubian ceases to be a slave as soon as purchased by an Egyptian master, and every trace of servitude disappears. He is a distinguished domestic, and a favourite companion. Several increase the military households of the beys, and arrive at offices and dignities, as well as the white Mamelucs, among whom they are received and educated. I have seen some attain the rank of *Kiaschef*, which is the second place in the Mameluc government. They who fall into the hands of private persons are not less happy, receiving better treatment and more respect than the other domestics. In the *haram* the women are the companions and confidants of the wife, are treated with affection, and not unfrequently share the favours of the master, who, keeping all the women indiscriminately in confinement, converts these retreats of weakness and beauty into real abodes of slavery.

Other blacks come voluntarily from Nubia, to offer their services to the inhabitants of Cairo, where they are known by the name of *Berberies*, which
the

the Europeans have corrupted into *Barberins*. These return to their own country, at the expiration of a few years, with the money they have gained. They are intelligent and handy servants, but knaves. Their food and clothing cost next to nothing, and their wages are very moderate. The Europeans readily take them into their service, the French excepted, who, it is said, have been prohibited from keeping any Nubian domestics, ever since 1706, as a sort of retaliation for the murder of the physician du Roulle, whom the Jesuits had prevailed on Louis XIV. to send into Abyssinia, to prepare the way for them into that country. I have read, in the registers of the chancery at Rossetta, the ordinance of the Consul Maillet, containing this prohibition, more detrimental to the French than to the King of Sennaar, who cared very little about it. The following is the substance of it, and will give some idea of the character of these Africans.

“ M. de Maillet, Consul General at Cairo, hav-
 “ ing assembled all the merchants of Cairo, on the
 “ 9th of September 1706, informs them, that the
 “ petty king of Sennaar had the barbarity, after
 “ having received into his house M. du Roulle,
 “ envoy from the king to the king of Ethiopia,
 “ and after his having resided three months in the
 “ chief place of his abode, to cause him and all his
 “ suite

“ suite to be massacred, out of pure avarice ; he
 “ thinks, that the first mark of resentment to be
 “ shewn to the nation, is to expel for ever from
 “ their service the subjects of that insensate prince,
 “ who are called Barberins ; particularly as this
 “ perverse race, having lately seen among them a
 “ French monk, sent to M. du Roulle by the said
 “ Consul, not only refrained from protecting him
 “ against the persecutions of the chiefs of those
 “ parts, but even some who had been in the service
 “ of the French, and eaten their bread, loaded him
 “ with revilings and threats, so that he found
 “ himself obliged, in places where the interest of
 “ the inhabitants ought to have procured him an
 “ asylum, to relinquish the property he took with
 “ him, and make his escape into the desert naked,
 “ in order to save his life : besides, the theft
 “ lately attempted in the house of the late Sieur
 “ Daupin, by persons of this nation, and others
 “ which they have committed before and since,
 “ are sufficient reasons for completely excluding
 “ them from a service, from which they ought to
 “ be rejected by the greater part of the nation.
 “ The complainant,” &c.

The deliberation of these merchants is followed
 by the ordinance of the Consul, which enjoins all
 the Frenchmen in Egypt, and foreigners under the
 protection of France, to dismiss from their service,
 within



E

Hieroglyphic text in a horizontal band, including symbols for a bird, a lotus, a seated figure, and a lotus flower.

F

Hieroglyphic text in a horizontal band, including symbols for a seated figure, a lotus, a lotus flower, and a lotus flower.

Statue found in the Thebaide.

within three days, all the Nubians, otherwise called Barberins, and other subjects of the petty king of Sennaar, whom they might have in their employ, and neither to take them again, nor any others, on pain of forfeiting 300 livres, to be applied to the redemption of poor slaves, &c.

One of these Berberies, who was very young, and of an interesting countenance, frequented the quarter inhabited by the French merchants. To gain a few medins, he shewed a number of scorpions, which he carried under his cap, and handled with impunity. He gave out, that he, as well as his countrymen, possessed the secret of being secure against the stings of these venomous insects; but this pretended secret, as he confessed to me, consisted in the precaution of plucking out the sting, with which the last joint of the scorpion's tail is armed. The liveliness and native wit of this young Nubian induced me to take him into my service, but I was soon weary of him, and I had reason to confess that Consul Maillet was not much to blame for driving the men of that nation from the houses of the French.

Plate XXIV. represents an ancient statue, which I saw at Cairo, in the hands of an Italian monk, of the congregation of the *propaganda*, who gave it to M. Tott. This statue is of a white calcareous

stone, somewhat more than a foot in height, and was found in the Thebaïs. It is the figure of one of those priestesses who carried the images of the gods at the Isiac processions, and who were called by the Greeks *pastophores*. The divinities in the case are Osiris, with the head of the hawk, and Isis with a human head. Between them, as far as can be judged from the indifferent manner in which it is executed, as well as all the other parts of the statue, is a serpent's head, surmounted by the lunar orb. The summit of the head of each of the two divinities is perforated with a small circular hole of some depth.

Among the numerous hieroglyphics around this statue may be distinguished the horned serpent, the *tau*, the ibis, the hawk, the eye, the lotus, &c.; images of which the signification has escaped the most learned research, and which will perhaps long remain enveloped in impenetrable obscurity.

The letter E indicates the row of hieroglyphics sculptured on the face C of the pedestal. That on the back of the pedestal is shewn at F. At G are seen the hieroglyphics on that side of the support of the deities which is opposite to A. And the long line of hieroglyphics, H, is on the back of the statue, extending from the neck of the priestess to the pedestal.

The

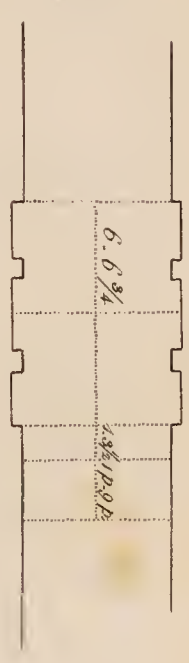
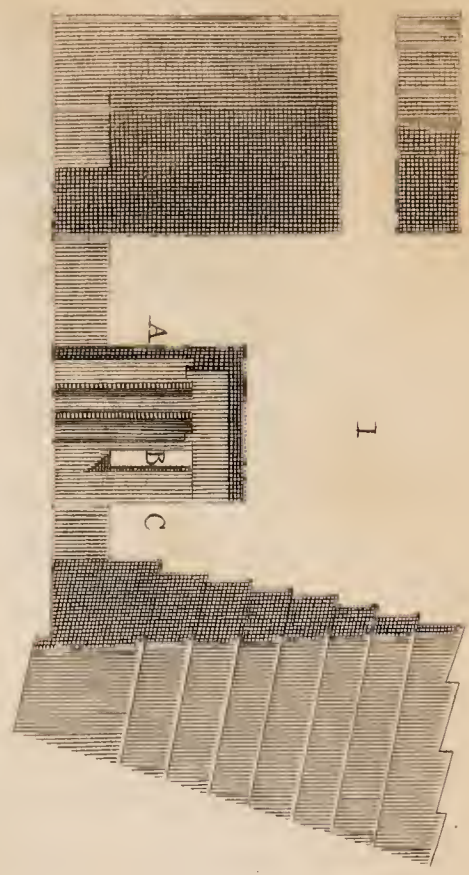
The same circumspection which kept me so secluded at Cairo, prevented me from visiting at my ease the monuments of antiquity remaining in its environs. I could only take a hasty view of the pyramids, and the subterranean galleries in the plain of Sakkara.

Who has not heard of the pyramids of Egypt? whose mind has not swelled at reading the descriptions or hearing the recital of these prodigies of human power? Their indestructible mass, the admiration of ages, and despair of time, still presses the ground where the proud Memphis anciently stood; though this city is now entirely swept from the face 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 gloomy asylum of death. Its inside, completely bare, had been exposed to pillage; and the precious things it included had become the booty of some barbarian usurper. I shall not attempt to give a description of the pyramids, or enter into the particulars of those subterranean galleries and funereal apartments, which are the abodes of an incredible number of bats. A hasty and fearful inspection was not sufficient for me; and I will not follow the example of Savary, and copy the work of another Frenchman, by whom they have been de-

scribed with great care and accuracy*. What Maillet wrote, however, was far from settling men's opinions respecting the intention of monuments, which the ancients considered as one of the chief wonders of the world. But conjecture will soon give way to certainty: those pyramids, which have remained untouched, are about to throw light on the purpose of their construction, and our countrymen are on the point of rending a veil, thickened by the doubts of thousands of years.

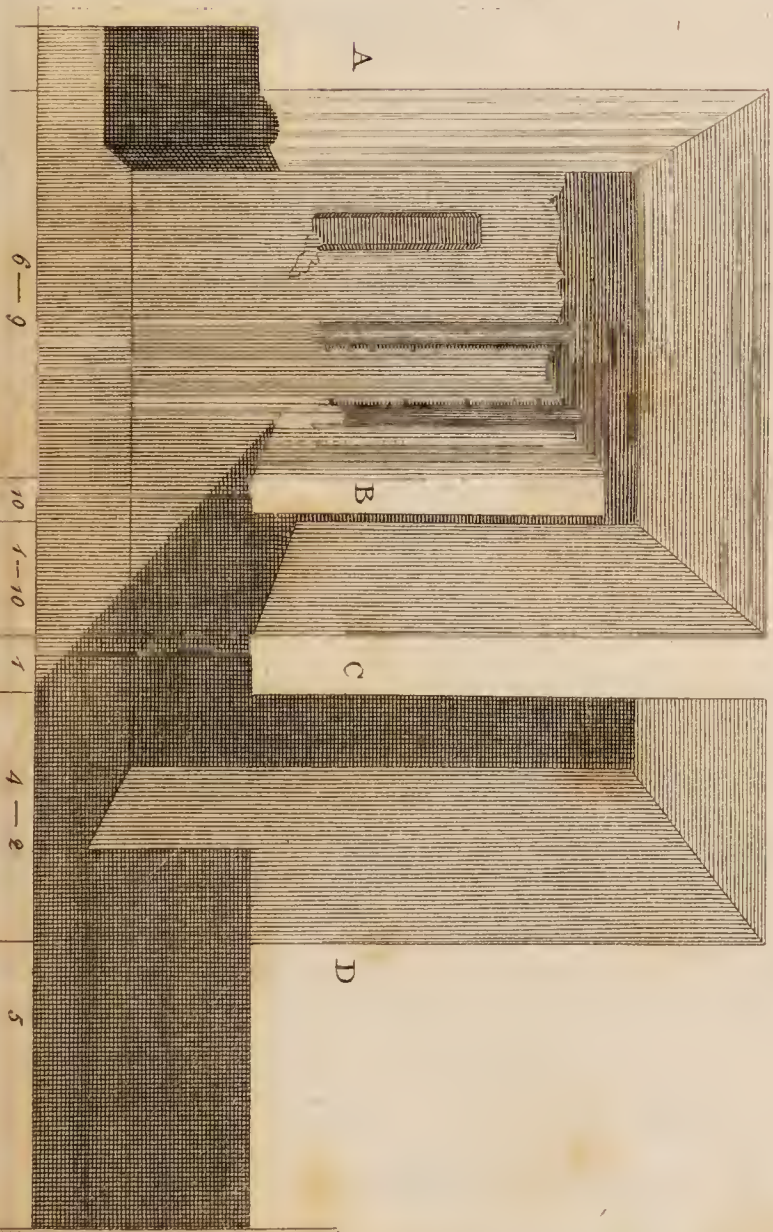
I have had in my hands two drawings of some parts of the great pyramid, accompanied by a memoir in manuscript, which were intrusted to me by the late Duke de Chaulnes, who had engaged me to pursue certain inquiries, which he pointed out. As it was impossible for me to execute this design, I left the paper at Cairo, that M. de Chaulnes might be enabled to find out some person there possessing leisure sufficient to accomplish his views, only taking copies of the two drawings, which have never yet been published. (*See Plate XXV.*) The reader will observe, that the letters refer to explanations and observations contained in the paper intrusted to me, which of course I did not attempt to copy, consequently he will not expect an explanation of them here.

* See the Description de l'Egypte, par Maillet, partie i. letter 6, page 215.



2

12-5



The first figure is a simple section, of which Mr. Dalton has given the perspective. This section being taken on a much smaller scale than the perspective view, a portion of the chamber of the tomb is added in it. This drawing was made by Mr. Davison, as first secretary to Mr. Edward Wortley Montague, and afterwards to M. de Chaulnes.

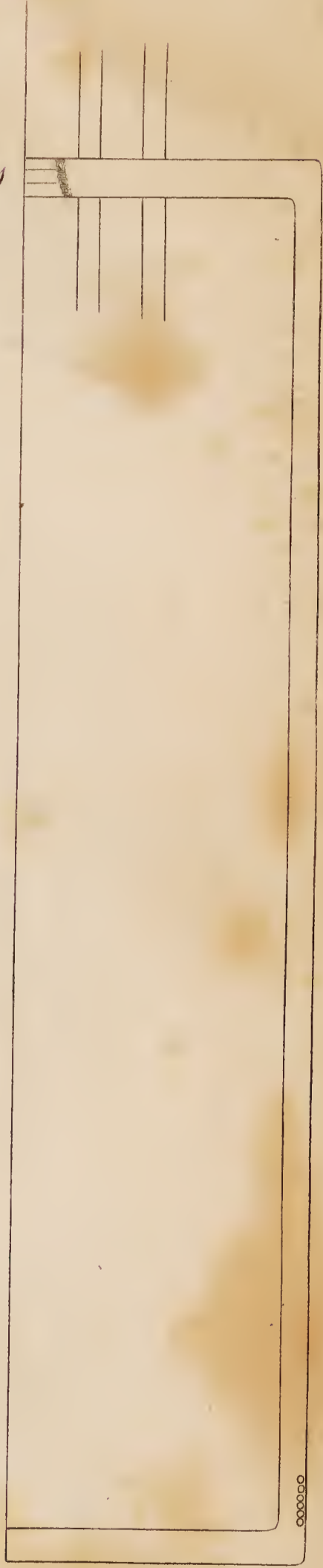
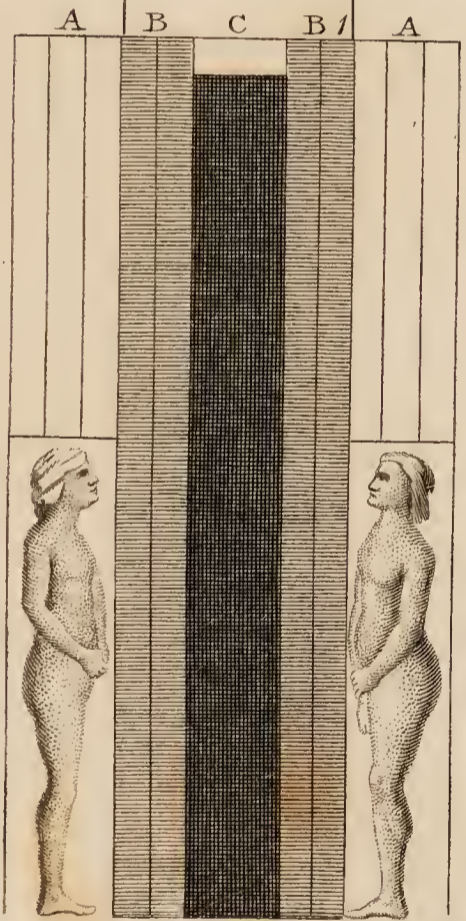
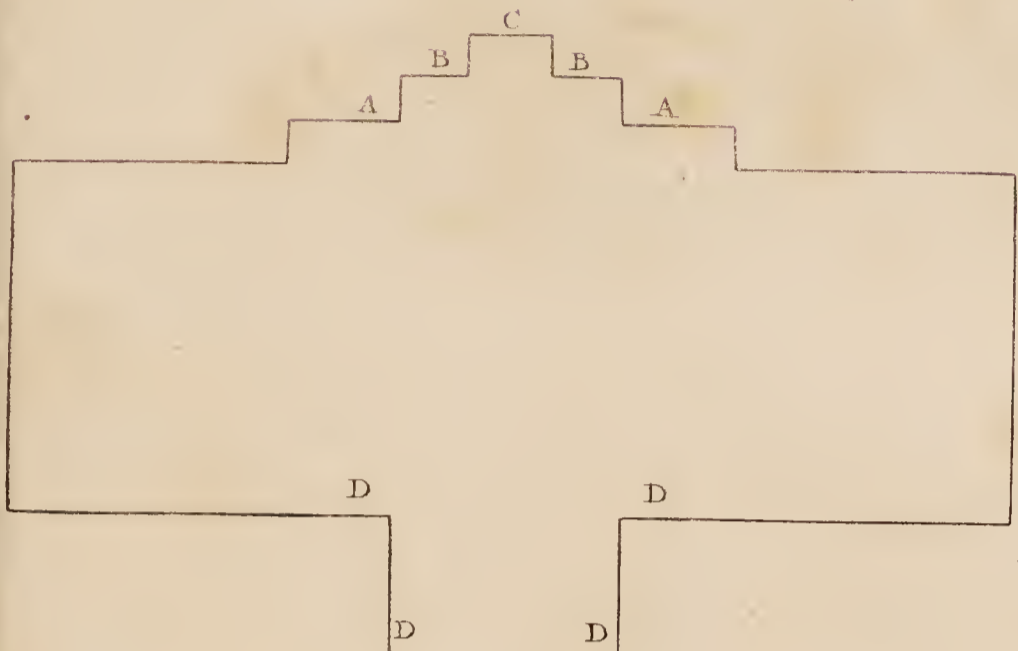
In *fig. 2.* is seen a view in perspective, drawn by Mr. Dalton, of the space between the chamber of the tomb, and the great inclined gallery. These parts are in the inside of the largest of the pyramids at Memphis, which is open.

The English measures are used in both these drawings.

The object to be verified was the measures, and the purpose for which these drawings were sent by M. de Chaulnes was, to compare them with actual measurements on the spot. It will be seen, that the section given by Davison (*fig. 1.*) notices only the spaces comprised between A, B, and C. In this drawing B is an isolated wall, and C the pile of masonry between these spaces and the gallery: while in the perspective view by Dalton (*fig. 2.*) C is a second isolated wall, leaving a second space between C and D, which here represents the massy pile.

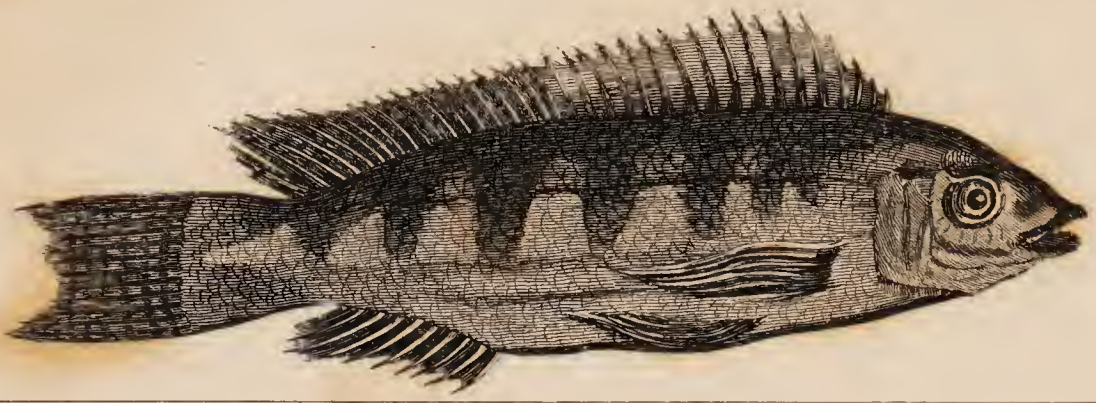
Two drawings or plans were added to the memoirs I have mentioned. They were those of the Mummies-well, in the plain of Sakkara, south of the pyramids of Memphis. (*See Plate XXVI.*) The two little sides of the plan (*fig. 1.*) indicate the two wells, into which you descend, to reach the subterranean trench or gallery, which the Arabs have made, and which forms the long lower side of the same plan. The line parallel to this gallery marks the surface of the ground. The distance from one well to the other is about a hundred or a hundred and fifty paces. That which is on the left of the plan is a spurious opening made by the Arabs; the true entrance is on the right. A little below we meet with trunks of palm-trees, and ruins. There were two horizontal galleries, the commencements of which are traced in the plan. It is probably the darkness of the shadow which prevents the entrances from being seen in the cavity of the well. The little line of *Oes* on the left in the trench of the Arabians marks the place from which the embalmed birds are usually taken.

The general plan of the real Mummies-well, the entrance of which is on the right of the plan at *fig. 1.* is traced in *fig. 2.* It is to be observed, the letters of the plan and elevation correspond. At this place are seen the fine figures represented in the drawing.



General Plan of the Mummies Well, at Sakkara.

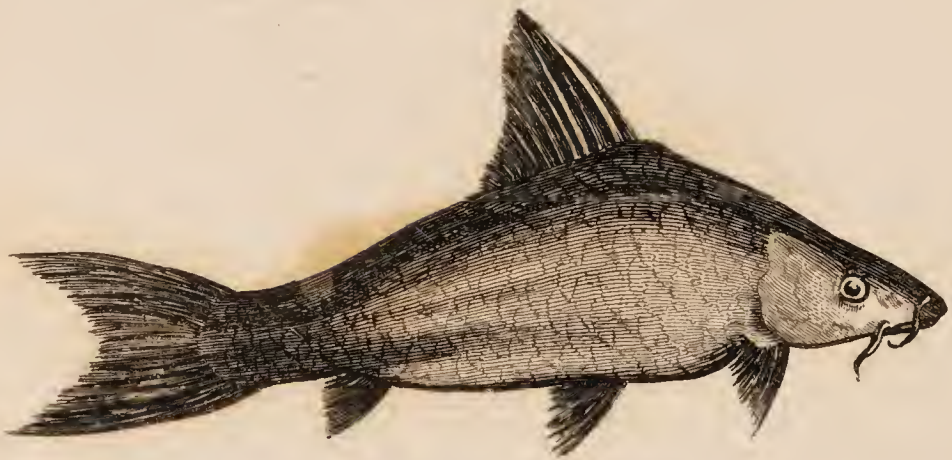
Published by I. Stockdale.



Bolti.



Bayutte.



Benni.

If commerce brought all kinds of merchandise to Cairo, its markets were not without a profusion of articles necessary to life at the same time. These its population and luxury attracted thither in abundance, and a table might be furnished with a number of excellent dishes at no great expense. Every kind of fish that the Nile afforded, was to be found there, and I had an opportunity of examining three, which I had not before seen; the *bolty*, the *bayatte*, and the *benni*.

The first of these fishes, already observed and described by Hasselquitz *, is, according to this naturalist, of the somewhat equivocal genus *labrus*, so called from the Latin word *labrum*, because the *labrus* of the ancients had large thick lips. (See the representation of the *bolty*, Plate XXVII. fig. 1.) It is the *nebuleux* of the history of fishes in the Encyclopédie Méthodique; a denomination taken from the sort of clouds, with which the fins are waved †. The fish from which this drawing was taken, was a foot long, and four inches and half in its greatest breadth. The jaws are nearly equal in size, and furnished with a row of small, slender, close teeth. Behind this row are several more teeth, or asperities, so minute, that the eye with difficulty discovers

* Voyages, partie ii. page 50.

† *Labrus niloticus*, Lin.—*Labrus niloticus caudá integrá, pinnis dorsali, ani, caudæque, nebulatis*. Arted. Gen. Pisc. page 258.

them, and they make no more impression on the finger than the teeth 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: and the bone of the head projects over each eye, forming a border, or bony eyebrow.

The scales are large, advancing on the head beyond the anterior angle of the eye. The colour of the body is white, with broad blackish bands descending from the back to the belly, and growing lighter as they descend. Some tints of red and blue, on the sides of the head, enliven the general dulness of its hue. The iris of the eye is of a golden colour. The fins, in general gray, are diversified with blackish stripes and spots. The plate given in this work, and the description of Hasselquitz, render it unnecessary for me to mention any farther particulars of its figure.

On opening this fish I did not find any air-bladder. Probably it lives at the bottom of the water, for its stomach was filled with a quantity of greenish matter, much resembling the moss that grows on mud. I found likewise in its stomach a worm seventeen lines long, with a round body, terminating in a point at each end, of a dirty white colour, with a few reddish tints.

The

The *bolty* is caught in the Nile, but chiefly in the little canals that run out of it, and the pools of water that remain after the inundation. It is of the small number of Egyptian fishes that may be reckoned delicate and well-flavoured. I saw an Egyptian, in the neighbourhood of Rossetta, catch a great number of small ones, in one of the pools formed by the waters of the Nile. He used that kind of net which we call a casting-net. Every time he threw it he caught a great many *bolties*, but no other fish.

The second figure in the same *Plate XXVII.* represents one of those bad fishes destitute of scales, with naked slippery skins, which are common in the Nile, and of which naturalists have formed a genus by the name of *silurus*. Its common appellation in Egypt is *bayatte*; but I have likewise heard it called *saksatt*, and *hébedé*. The inhabitants of Saïd call it also *bogar*, on account of the size it attains. *Bakar* in Arabic signifies an *ox*, and the people of Saïd, like other peasants all the world over, speaking their language badly, pronounce it *bogar*. Forskal has given an account of this fish, in his description of the animals of Egypt and Arabia*.

* *Silurus bajad*: *pinnâ dorsi posticâ adiposâ*; *cirrhis octo*, page 66.—Arted. Gen. Pisc. page 569.

The predominant colour of the *bayatte* is sea-green, shaded with brown on the back and upper part of the head. Tinges of red are observable on the bony coverings of the gills, on the first dorsal fin, on the pectoral, and more faintly on the ventral and caudal fins. The iris of the eye is yellow.

Though I found nothing but a greenish slime in the stomachs of some fishes of this species, it appears that they can devour other fish, for their jaws are furnished with teeth, small it is true, but at the same time very sharp and close, and the upper jaw has a double row. They are very common in the Nile; but are soft, insipid eating, and little esteemed. According to Forskal these fish attain the length of twelve inches; and if he had said more, he would not have exceeded the truth, for I have seen them near three feet long, and there are some much larger. To give me an idea of the extent of their growth, some Egyptian fishermen, whom I questioned on the subject, told me that they grew as big as a man.

The fifth, which is the 3d figure in the same plate, might be taken at first view for the barbel of our rivers*, to which it has in fact great resemblance. But though it is of the same genus as the barbel, it differs from it in the convex shape of

* *Cyprinus barbus*, Lin.

its back and of its belly, and most particularly in the first three rays of the dorsal fin, which are so close and so hard, that they may be considered as one single prickle. This fish, very common in Egypt, is the *benni* mentioned by Forskal* ; who is with great reason astonished, that as it is to be found in all parts of Egypt it escaped the notice of Hasselquitz. Another modern traveller, Mr. Bruce, has given a figure and description of a fish of the Nile, which he supposed to be the *benni* †, but he was led into a mistake. The fish, concerning which he related many interesting particulars, must be of a different genus from the *benni*, since it has two dorsal fins, the cirrhi differently disposed, a dissimilitude in the shape of particular parts, and such a general appearance as takes away every idea of comparing it with the *benni*. This fish, according to Forskal's observations and mine, is of the same genus with the barbel, the carp, the tench, and some other fishes well known in Europe; a genus which naturalists have agreed to designate by the name of *cyprinus*, into which, numerous and striking differences will never allow us to introduce the fish erroneously considered by Mr. Bruce as the *benni*.

* *Cyprinus bynni*: *pinnâ dorsali radiis tredecim*; *tertiq crasso, corneo*. Forskal, *Fauna Egypt.-Arab.* page 71.—*Arted. Gen. Pisc.* page 22.

† Binny. *Travels to discover the Source of the Nile.* Natural History.

The *benni* has the upper jaw a little longer than the lower; the nostrils large; the eyes tolerably large and round; four cirrhi, two on the upper lip, and one at each corner of the mouth; no teeth; and the lateral line formed of oblong points, dividing the body into two equal portions. The scales with which it is covered are large, and shining with a silvery lustre. The caudal and anal fins are of a red saffron colour.

This fish grows large, but a great number of small ones are caught. It is tolerably nice eating.

The lustre of its scales gives much probability to the presumption, that it is the *lepidotos* (scaly fish), which was revered in ancient Egypt. It is known from a passage in Athenæus, that this sacred fish, which gave its name to a city and a district in Egypt, was of the carp genus*; and the silvery lustre with which the *benni* shines, was sufficient to make it be distinguished, and even to lead superstition to ascribe to it something precious and supernatural, for we know, that whatever dazzles, disposes people to admiration and respect.

In September a great number of *tit-larks* † are eaten at Cairo. These, when they arrive in Egypt,

* Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois, tome i. page 131.

† Farlouse, ou l'alouette des près. Buffon, Hist. Nat. des Ois. et pl. enlum. No. 574, fig. 2.—*Alauda pratensis*, Lin.

remain in numerous flocks on little stripes of land, surrounded with the water, in the plains that are inundated. The bird-catchers use a large net, with which they take great quantities of them, and bring them to the city in cages. The period of their passage continues but a few days in the beginning of September, and when this time is past they disperse, so that scarcely any are to be seen after. As they arrive from the west with respect to Cairo, that is, from the coasts of the Mediterranean, bordering on Barbary, they are called in Egypt *asfour dsjebali* (mountain birds), because they appear to come from the sandy mountains of the desert. The Provençal merchants settled at Cairo, call the tit-lark, which is a bird of passage in their own country likewise, *colantine*.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Electricity—Meteorological observations made at Alexandria and Cairo—Winds—Columns of sand—General state of the weather in Egypt.

A FEW days previous to my arrival in Egypt, two Germans, carrying about an electrical machine, had made some experiments at Alexandria, Rossetta, and Cairo. They had supposed that they should get a great deal of money by it: but they had scarcely any spectators, except the small number of Europeans that resided in the three cities, with a few Greeks and Syrians. They were even advised not to endeavour to astonish the people of the country by the effects of their machine, as they would not have failed to raise the cry of sorcery, for which the electrifiers, and probably the other Europeans likewise, would inevitably have suffered.

I endeavoured to obtain some knowledge respecting the intensity of electricity here, but I could obtain no very definite information. However, from the questions I put to the different persons who attended the electrical experiments of the two Germans, I satisfied myself, that electricity can be excited more powerfully in our northern climates than in Egypt.

It

It is difficult, and even impossible, for a traveller to make an uninterrupted series of meteorological observations, which require much attention even in a sedentary man: yet I availed myself of the short stay I made at Cairo, and at Rossetta, to mark with precision the temperature of the air, the state of the weather, and the winds, which I observed several times in a day. If observations of this kind be of any utility, it is chiefly when they are made in foreign countries, of the climate and state of vegetation in which they convey information. It need not be said, that this knowledge leads to much more, both physical and moral. These considerations, and the certainty, that few persons have made meteorological observations in the same places, have determined me to give the fragments here offered to the public. Though they are of little extent, and not in one continued series, they will serve hereafter to complete the natural history of the climate of Egypt; and such, I must repeat, are all that can be expected from a traveller.

For these observations I used mercurial thermometers: one, constructed by Cappi and Mossi, philosophical instrument makers to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, was graduated on one side according to the scale of Fahrenheit, on the other according to that of De Luc. The other thermometer, made by Assier Perica, was graduated according

according to Réaumur. These two thermometers were very nearly equal in their movements: and I neglected no precaution necessary to ensure the precision of my observations.

Before I give my own observations, I conceive it will not be amiss, if I copy those made by Greaves at Alexandria, in the months of January and February 1639. The reader will thus be enabled to form a more accurate idea of the climate of Lower Egypt, and will have data for the temperature of the three principal points in the country. These are taken from Shaw*, who says, that he “copied them out of Mr. Greaves’s pocket-book, that is deposited in the Savil study.”

“ *An Account of the Weather at ALEXANDRIA in*
 “ *EGYPT, in the Months of JANUARY and*
 “ *FEBRUARY, A. D. 1639.*

“ JAN. 1. Fair, the wind little and southerly.
 “ 2. Fair.
 “ 3. Fair, at night it rained a little.
 “ 4. Cloudy and rainy in the afternoon, and at
 “ night.

* Shaw’s Travels in Barbary and the Levant. Collection of papers, serving to illustrate his observations, p. 55.

“ 5. Cloudy,

- “ 5. Cloudy, 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 sudden gusts, afterwards a little
 “ fair, then again cloudy and rainy. At night it
 “ rained very much, and in the morning snowed.
- “ 11. Friday, it rained, the afternoon fair, at
 “ night rainy. N. W.
- “ 12. Saturday, in the morning rainy, the
 “ afternoon fair, and at night little wind.
- “ 13. Sunday, fair, a little wind. N. N. W.
- “ 14. Monday, little wind, S. E. fair.
- “ 15. Fair, little wind, S. E. the air full of
 “ vapours, so that although no clouds, yet the
 “ body of the sun shined not bright.
- “ 16. Fair, little wind. S. E.
- “ 17. Fair, little wind. S. E. These four days,
 “ especially the two last, though no clouds, yet a
 “ caligo all day and night, so that the sun gave
 “ but a weak shadow, and the stars little light;
 “ this caligo or hazy weather arose partly from the
 “ rains that fell before, and partly from the usual
 “ overflowing of Nilus.

“ 18. Friday, like Thursday, or rather worse,
“ the E. S. E. wind being great.

“ 19. Saturday, like Friday.

“ 20. Sunday, the wind N. and cloudy, night
“ fair.

“ 21. Monday, the wind N. W. fair.

“ 22. Tuesday, fair, the wind N. W. it rained
“ a little towards night, the wind great.

“ 23. Wednesday, fair day and night, the wind
“ N. W. The wind somewhat great.

“ 24. Cloudy, at night it rained much. N. W.

“ 25. Sometimes fair, sometimes cloudy, N. W.
“ about 4 P. M. it rained, so likewise at night
“ very much.

“ 26. Saturday, very windy, N. W. and often
“ rainy.

“ 27. Sunday, in the day very windy, N. W.
“ sometimes rainy, at night fair; no great wind
“ but full of vapours, so that the pole star nor
“ the yards could be clearly seen.

“ 28. In the day a dusky sky all over, yet not
“ many clouds; the sun could not be seen, so at
“ night; in the night it rained a little, the winds
“ east.

“ 29. The sky full of vapours, but not so ob-
“ scure as the 28th. A quarter of an hour before
“ sun-set, the sun being immersed in the vapours,
“ about the horizon, seemed for a while like burn-
“ ing iron, or like the moon as I have seen some-
“ times

“ times in an eclipse, as she grew low or half,
 “ more or less appeared, and so by degrees, till
 “ the upper edge; at last she was quite lost,
 “ though not below the horizon. This may
 “ sometimes serve to shew the manner of these
 “ vapours; above 4 P.M. the N. N. W. begun
 “ to blow; all night fair.

“ 30. Fair. N. N. W.

“ 31. Fair, so till ten at night, then it grew
 “ dusky from store of vapours by the east wind.

“ FEB. 1. Cloudy at night, fair, sometimes
 “ cloudy, a very great N.W. wind, and some rain.

“ 2. Cloudy, fair, rainy, N. N. W. wind great
 “ Saturday at night.

“ 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 ob-
 “ scure.

“ 7. Thursday obscure and dusky, little wind.

“ 8. Fair, little wind; at night the wind nor-
 “ therly, and it rained much.

“ 9. Saturday morning rainy, afternoon fair,
 “ wind E. at night.

“ 10. Very fair day and night, wind N.

“ 11. Fair, rainy. N. W.

- “ 12. { Fair, day and night. }
 “ 13. {
 “ 14. { Very fair. } Little wind nor-
 “ 15. { } therly.
 “ 16. { }
 “ 17. I saw two spots in the sun.
 “ 18. I went to Cairo.
 “ 19. Very fair.
 “ 20. Fair and obscure.
 “ 21. Obscure; at night it rained much, being
 “ at Shimone, a great village, some fifty miles
 “ from Cairo, on the outside of the river, for fear
 “ of rogues, and there I saw boats of leather, and
 “ two men sailing upon 225 pots.”

In his inquiries concerning the mean heat of different degrees of latitude, where observations have been made, an indefatigable observer, Citizen Cotte, has given the following table, as the result of remarks made at Cairo*.

- “ Number of observations, 3.—January, 11,0°.
 “ February, 10,9°. March, 14,5°. April, 16,5°.
 “ May, 20,5°. June, 22,7°. July, 23,7°. Au-
 “ gust, 24,2°. September, 21,6°. October, 19,4°.
 “ November, 17,4°. December, 12,5°. Annual
 “ mean, 17,9°.”

But it is time to proceed to the observations, which I myself made in the capital of Egypt.

* Journal de Physique, Mois de Juillet, 1791.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS,

MADE AT CAIRO,

In the Month of AUGUST, 1777.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Thermometer of Cappi and Mossi.		Therm. of Assier Perica.	Wind.	STATE OF THE SKY.	REMARKS.
		De Luc.	Fahren-heit.				
18	8 A. M.	23	82	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Covered with blackish clouds, except the arc of the horizon included between the E. and S. W. which was almost perfectly clear.	The wind was pretty fresh throughout the course of the day, blowing in squalls, and increasing in the evening.
		26 $\frac{1}{2}$ 26	91 89	27 26 $\frac{1}{2}$			
19	8 A. M.	22	81	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Several large blackish clouds dispersed over every part of the sky, except the east.	The wind was pretty fresh the whole day.
		25 25	88 88	27 26 $\frac{1}{2}$			
20	8 A. M.	23	82	23 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	A few large scattered clouds.	The wind, which was pretty fresh during the whole of the day, blew a very hard gale at 6 P. M. and then the northern part of the atmosphere was darkened by the sand raised by the wind.
		26 $\frac{3}{4}$ 26 $\frac{3}{4}$	91 $\frac{1}{4}$ 91 $\frac{1}{4}$	27 $\frac{1}{4}$ 27 $\frac{1}{4}$			
21	8 A. M.		80 $\frac{1}{2}$	22 $\frac{1}{4}$	W. N. W.	The whole sky besprinkled with thin blackish clouds driving along with great swiftness.	Hard gale.

31	Noon.	26	90	26½	N. N. W.	Free from clouds.	—	—	The gale not so hard as in the morning.
	6 P. M.	27	92	27½	N.	Clear (net).	—	—	The gale not so strong as at noon. It moderated afterward, and was very faint by 8 P. M. when a few little flashes of lightning were seen in the E.; but no thunder was heard. The sky still continued perfectly clear.
32	8 A. M.	22½	82	23	N.	Clear.	—	—	Little wind.
	Noon.	25½	89	26	N. N. E.	A few small scattered clouds.	—	—	Fresh breeze.
	6 P. M.	26	90	26¾	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	—	Fresh breeze. After sunset the wind fell, and during the night the weather was calm and serene.
33	8 A. M.	21¾	80½	22¾	E.	Several scattered clouds.	—	—	Fresh breeze.
	Noon.	24½	86	25	N. E.	A few small scattered clouds.	—	—	Fresh gale.
	6 P. M.	26	90	26⅞	N.	Clear.	—	—	Fresh gale, with violent squalls at times.
34	8 A. M.	21½	79¾	22	N. E.	A few scattered clouds.	—	—	Wind feeble.
	Noon.	22¾	82	23¼	N. E.	Clear.	—	—	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	24¾	85½	24¾	N. by E.	A few scattered clouds.	—	—	Very fresh gale. The horizon, without being cloudy, is so loaded with vapours, that it is gloomy, and appears as if foggy, chiefly in the west.
35	8 A. M.	20½	77	21	N. E.	Clear and serene, except that there were a few light clouds at the horizon, chiefly in the E.	—	—	Wind feeble.
	Noon.	24½	86	25	N.	Clear.	—	—	Fresh breeze.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Thermometer of Cappi and Mossi.		Therm. of Assier Perica. Réaum.	Wind.	STATE OF THE SKY.		REMARKS.
		De Luc.	Fahren-heit.					
25	6 P. M.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25	N. E.	Clear.	—	Little wind. After sunset the wind rose, and continued to blow violently the whole night.
26	8 A. M.	22	81	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Scattered clouds.	—	Very hard gale.
	Noon.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	Hard gale.
	4 P. M.	25	88	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E.	Do.	—	Do.
	6 P. M.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25	N. E.	Do.	—	Do.
	8 A. M.	21	79	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Do.	—	Do.
27	Noon.	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	84 $\frac{1}{2}$	24 $\frac{1}{4}$	N.	Do.	—	During the whole of this day the wind was feeble; but about two hours after sunset it rose, and blew strong till daybreak.
	6 P. M.	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	86	25	N.	Do.	—	Though the wind is feeble, the clouds fly swiftly from that quarter whence the wind blows.
	8 A. M.	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	80	22	N. E. by N.	Almost entirely covered with thick clouds.	—	Little wind.
28	Noon.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	Do.
	6 P. M.	25	88	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Do.	—	Do.
	8 A. M.	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	80	22	N. E.	Almost entirely covered with clouds.	—	Little wind during the whole of the day.
	Noon.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. by E.	Clear.	—	
	6 P. M.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. by E.	Do.	—	

30	8 A. M.	21	79	$21\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	—	—	Little wind.
	Noon.	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	84	23 $\frac{1}{4}$	N. E. by E.	Do.	—	—	—	Very fresh gale.
	6 P. M.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N. E. by E.	Fleecy clouds in the E.	—	—	—	Strong gale, which abated at sun- set.
31	8 A. M.	21	79	$21\frac{1}{2}$	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	—	—	Little wind.
	Noon.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	N.	Do.	—	—	—	Moderate wind.
	6 P. M.	24	85	24 $\frac{1}{2}$	E. N. E.	The horizon loaded with vapours, most abundantly in the west.	—	—	—	Little wind.

Results of the preceding Table.

The hottest day, from the 18th of August to the 31st, inclusively, was the 21st, when the thermometer of Cappi and Mossi indicated in the afternoon 27° for the graduation of De Luc, and 92° for that of Fahrenheit. Réaumur's thermometer was a little above $27^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$. In the morning there were some clouds, which were quickly dispersed by the violence of the wind blowing from the W. N. W. While coming round to the N. the wind abated by imperceptible degrees, and the sky continued serene the remainder of the day. The blackish clouds, which the westerly wind had driven into the eastern quarter, and the heat of the day, produced there in the evening some little flashes of lightning, very vivid, without thunder. I saw no others during the whole of this month.

The coolest day was the 24th, when the thermometers, in the afternoon, were, De Luc's $22^{\circ}\frac{3}{4}$, Fahrenheit's a little more than 82° , Réaumur's $23^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$. In the morning, and in the evening, the sky was besprinkled with a few scattered clouds; but in the middle of the day it was perfectly clear. The wind was N. E. feeble during the day, but blowing very fresh toward sunset. The horizon was loaded with vapours, which were thickest in the W. the quarter opposite to that whence the wind blew.

Thus

Thus the difference between the hottest day and the coldest was, according to the graduation of De Luc, $4^{\circ}\frac{1}{4}$, and the mean heat $24^{\circ} 7$ -8ths.

According to Fahrenheit's graduation, the difference was about 10° , and the mean heat 87° .

According to Réaumur, the difference was about 4° , and the mean heat $25^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$.

During these fourteen days the wind was constantly toward the N. and varied from N. to E. except on the 21st, the hottest day, when it came round in the morning to W. N. W.; at noon it returned to N. N. W.; and in the evening it came back to the N. The W. N. W. wind, as it traverses a great extent of dry and burning sand before it reaches Cairo, must be much hotter there, under similar circumstances, than the North wind, N. N. E., or even the N. E.; all of which blow from the sea, and pass over cultivated lands, different branches of the Nile, canals, several lakes, and other places covered with water.

SEPTEMBER, 1777.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Thermometer of Cappi and Mossi.		Therm. of Assier Perica.	Wind.	STATE OF THE SKY.	REMARKS.
		De Luc.	Fahren-heit.				
1	8 A. M.	21	79	21½	N. N. E.	The horizon covered with dense clouds, blackish in the W.	Little wind.
	Noon.	23	83	23½	N. N. E.	Clear.	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	24	85	24½	N. N. E.	Dense clouds in the W.	Little wind. After sunset it increased.
2	8 A. M.	21	79	21½	N. E.	A few clouds, most numerous and dense in the W.	Little wind.
	Noon.	23	83	23½	N.	Clear.	Fresh breeze.
	6 P. M.	24	85	24½	N.	Do.	Little wind.
3	8 A. M.	20	76½	20½	N. E.	A few large, very dense, black clouds.	Do.
	Noon.	22½	82	23	N. N. E.	Clear.	Do.
	6 P. M.	24	85	24½	N.	Do.	Calm.
4	8 A. M.	20½	77	21	N. N. E.	The arc of the horizon included between the N. and W. S. W. covered with dense black clouds.	Do.
	Noon.	23	83	23½	N.	Clear.	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	24	85	24½	N.	Do.	Do.

5	8 A. M.	21	79	21½	N.	The whole sky covered with very black and very dense clouds. The aspect of the weather terrible.	Little wind.
6	Noon.	23½	84	24	N.	Clouds clearing away.	Fresh breeze.
	6 P. M.	25	88	25½	N. N. E.	Clear.	Do.
7	8 A. M.	22	81	22½	N. E.	Some clouds, thickest in the N.	Little wind.
	Noon.	23½	84	24	N. E.	Clear.	Do.
	6 P. M.	24½	86	25	N. N. E.	Do.	Fresh breeze.
	8 A. M.	20	76½	20½	N. N. E.	Do.	Little wind.
8	Noon.	22¼	83	23¼	N. E.	Do.	Do.
	6 P. M.	22½	82	23	N.	—	Fresh breeze.
	8 A. M.	19½	75	20	N.	Clear.	Calm.
	Noon.	21½	80	22	N.	Do.	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	22	81	22½	N. E.	—	Fresh breeze.
9	8 A. M.	18½	73	19	N. N. E.	Little clouds scattered here and there	Little wind.
10	Noon.	21	79	21½	N.	Clear.	Do.
	6 P. M.	21½	80	22	N.	Do.	Fresh breeze.
	8 A. M.	19	74½	19½	N.	Do.	Little wind.
	Noon.	21½	80	22	N.	—	Do.
	6 P. M.	22	81	22½	N.	—	Fresh breeze.
11	8 A. M.	19	74½	19½	N.	Little, thin clouds, at a distance from each other.	Little wind.
12	Noon.	21	81	22½	N.	Clear.	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	22½	81½	22¾	N.	Do.	Fresh breeze.
	8 A. M.	19	74½	19½	N.	A few clouds in the E.	Little wind.
	Noon.	21	79	21½	N.	Clear.	Fresh gale.
	6 P. M.	22	81	22½	N.	Do.	Do.

Day of the Month.	Hour.	Thermometer of Cappi and Mossi.		Therm. of Assier Peica. Réaumur.	Wind.	STATE OF THE SKY.		REMARKS.
		De Luc.	Fahrenheit.					
13	8 A. M.	19	74½	19½	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	Very little wind.
	Noon.	21	79	21½	N.	Do.	—	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	22	81	22½	N. N. E.	Do.	—	Fresh gale.
	8 A. M.	19	74½	19½	N. N. E.	Several large black clouds, particularly in the W.	—	Little wind.
14	Noon.	22½	82	23	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	Fresh gale, which increased in the afternoon.
	6 P. M.	23	83	23½	N. N. E.	Do.	—	Very strong gale.
	8 A. M.	19½	75	20	N. N. E.	Clouds all over the sky.	—	Strong gale.
	Noon.	22½	82	23	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	Do.
	6 P. M.	23	83	23½	N. E.	Do.	—	Very strong gale.
	8 A. M.	20½	77	21	N.	The whole sky covered with very black dense clouds.	—	Strong gale. The clouds flying with great rapidity.
	Noon.	22	81	22½	N.	Clear.	—	Very strong gale.
	6 P. M.	23	83	23½	N.	Do.	—	Do.
17	8 A. M.	20	76	20½	N. E. by N.	The whole sky covered with clouds, except that part of the horizon whence the wind blows. These clouds gather in the S. W.	—	Fresh gale.
	Noon.	22	81	22½	N. N. E.	Clear.	—	Strong gale.
	6 P. M.	22	81	22½	N. E. by N.	Do.	—	Do.
18	8 A. M.	19½	75	20	N. E.	Loaded with clouds.	—	Calm.

18	Noon.	23	83	23½	N. E.	Clear.	—	—	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	23	83	23½	N. E.	Do.	—	—	Do.
19	8 A. M.	19½	75	20	N. E.	A few small clouds in the N.	—	—	Little wind; the clouds however fly very swiftly.
	Noon.	21½	80	22	N. E.	Clear.	—	—	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	22	81	22½	N. N. E.	Do.	—	—	Strong gale.
30	8 A. M.	20	76	20½	N.	Clouds in the N.	—	—	Calm.
	Noon.	23	83	23½	N.	Clear.	—	—	Little wind.
	6 P. M.	23	83	23½	N.	Do.	—	—	Fresh gale.
31	8 A. M.	21	79	21½	N.	Black clouds all over the sky.	—	—	Strong gale.
	Noon.	22	81	22½	N.	Clear.	—	—	Do.
	6 P. M.	23	83	23½	N.	Do.	—	—	Very strong gale.

N. B. In consequence of my leaving Cairo, I had not an opportunity of continuing my observations to the end of the month.

Results of the preceding Table.

The heat during the month of September was much less than during the month of August.

The hottest day was the 5th, when the thermometer of Cappi and Mossi indicated, in the afternoon, according to De Luc's graduation, 25° , and according to Fahrenheit's 88° . Réaumur's thermometer was at $25^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$. The wind was N. and but little in the beginning of the morning; and the sky was entirely covered with dense black clouds, appearing to threaten the most dreadful storm; but before the morning was over the wind freshened, and gradually dispersed all these clouds, so that in the evening the sky was entirely clear.

The coolest day was the 9th, on which the first thermometer indicated, in the afternoon, according to the graduation of De Luc, $21^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$, and to that of Fahrenheit 80° . Réaumur's thermometer at the same time was 22° . In the morning the wind was N. N. E.; but before noon it came to the N. blowing little, and the sky clear.

Thus the difference between the hottest and coolest day, by De Luc's graduation, was $3^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$, and the mean heat $23^{\circ}\frac{1}{4}$.

By Fahrenheit's, the difference was 8° , the mean heat 84° .

By

By Réaumur's, the difference was $3^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$, the mean heat $23^{\circ}\frac{3}{4}$.

During these 21 days the wind varied from the N. E. to the N. blowing most frequently from the latter point, from which it never deviated toward the W.

It is well known, that land winds never blow with an equality of force, and continued uniformity; but there is no country, perhaps, where they are more unequal and interrupted, than at Cairo and in all Upper Egypt; this country being nothing but a stripe of land, confined between two chains of lofty mountains, that break the force and direction of the winds; which are often driven into the narrow passes of these mountains, whence they rush out with violence, and a whirling motion, that very frequently raises columns of sand in the plains, resembling water-spouts.

It may be remarked also, from both the preceding tables, and this is a constant observation, almost without an exception, which I made during my residence in Cairo and Upper Egypt, that early in the morning the sky is never free from clouds, more or less numerous, and more or less dense, which fly along rapidly, though frequently there is no wind at the time perceptible on the surface of the earth. In the course of the morning these clouds disperse, as the sun increases its height above the horizon. In general, too, the
wind

wind increases ; and it is seldom that the sky does not become clear by ten o'clock in the morning, and remain so the rest of the day. In the evening, at sunset, the horizon is loaded with vapours, particularly in the west, where they are more dense. By night the sky is clear and serene, and the clouds do not make their appearance till the dawn. In this climate the atmosphere rarely experiences any other change, or varies from this sort of uniformity.

From the end of September, till November, I was no where sufficiently settled to continue my meteorological observations, which I could not resume till the beginning of November, at Rossetta. In this interval my thermometer with the graduations of De Luc and Fahrenheit was broken ; and I had lost a similar one, previous to my arrival in Egypt. I mention this only to show, how difficult it is for a man travelling in remote countries, to preserve the different instruments, for which he will have occasion, and how many precautions are necessary, to prevent their being destroyed by the clumsiness of the people about him.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.





