

THE TRAVELS

OF

**SIR JOHN CHARDIN THROUGH MINGRELIA AND
GEORGIA INTO PERSIA.**

pages 321-426

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CHAP. I.

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I LEFT Paris on the 17th of August 1671, to return to Persia, where the late king had, by letters patent, made me his merchant, and ordered me to procure many jewels of value, his majesty having drawn with his own hand, the models by which he would have them set. Mr. Raisin, a gentleman of great integrity, who had been my companion in my former travels, engaged again in this trade. We spent fourteen months in the richest countries of Europe, in search of the largest stones, and the finest wrought corals. We caused to be made the richest goldsmith's work, watches and curious clocks, and besides took with us 12,000 ducats in gold.

We travelled by the way of Milan, Venice and Florence, and arriving at Leghorn, embarked in a ship under a Dutch convoy; and sailed to Smyrna, which we reached on the 2d of March 1672,

and twelve days after arrived at Constantinople. In this city we remained four months; but in the mean while there happening a quarrel between the grand vizier and the French ambassador, a report was spread, that the former intended to arrest, not only the ambassador, but all of the French nation in that city; when being afraid that our goods, which were very rich, would be seized, we endeavoured, by all possible means, to leave Constantinople, and to proceed on our journey to Persia. The caravans in those hot months did not travel; but the Porte being about to send a new commander with soldiers, and the annual supply of money to the fort of Azoph, on the lake Mæotis, we obtained a passage in a Turkish saick belonging to the fleet, and on the 27th of July embarked at a port in the Thracian Bosphorus.

This strait, which is about fifteen miles in length, and in most parts about two in breadth, though in other parts it is less, is so called, from its being supposed that an ox may swim over it. It is, certainly, one of the finest channels in the world; for the rising shores are covered with pleasure-houses, gardens, woods, parks and wildernesses, watered with a multitude of springs and fountains. In fair weather the passage through it is rendered exceedingly diverting, from the great number of barks that are continually sailing backwards and forwards; and the prospect of Constantinople from the top of it, at about two miles distance, is more charming than can be imagined. There are four castles well fortified with great guns, two of them opposite each other, eight miles from the Black Sea, and two at the mouth of the channel.

On the 3d of August, in the morning, we arrived

at Caffa, a port in the Tauricus Chersonesus, a peninsula so called, from its being first inhabited by the Scythians of Mount Taurus. It is thirty-five leagues from north to south, and fifty-five from east to west. But the isthmus that joins it to the continent is not above a league in breadth. It is inhabited by the Crim Tartars, who dwell in cities and towns, while their neighbours, the Nogays and Calmucs, dwell in tents, as the rest do on the continent.

Caffa is a large town in Crim Tartary, built at the bottom of a hill, on the bank of the sea, extending in length nearly from north to south. It is surrounded with strong walls, and has a castle at each of the two ends, which advance into the sea, whence the town, on being viewed from a vessel in the harbour, has the appearance of a half-moon. The castle to the south is on an eminence, which commands all the parts about it: it is very large, and the residence of the bassa: the other is smaller, but is well provided with artillery. The houses in the town are computed at about four thousand, of which two thousand three hundred belong to the Turks and Tartars, and the rest to the Greeks and Armenians; they are small and built of earth, as are also the mosques, bazars, and bath; for it has not any edifice of stone, if we except eight ancient ruinous churches, erected by the Genoese: the soil about it is dry and sandy, bearing little fruit, and the water is bad; but the air is very pure and wholesome. All provisions are very cheap and good, mutton not being above a farthing a pound, and other things in proportion. There is a great trade carried on here in salt fish and caviare, which being taken out of the lake Mœotis, at twenty-six miles distance, in great quantities, are transported into

Europe. The inhabitants also furnish Constantinople and several other places, with corn, butter and salt; for the Caffa butter is the best in all Turkey.

On the 30th of August we left Caffa, in a ship bound for Mingrelia, and the next day arrived at Donslow, on the salt-pits, which are situated on the shore, fifty miles from Caffa. Here are great quantities of salt made by letting in the sea-water, and suffering it to congeal by the heat of the sun. The people say that two hundred vessels are annually laden with this salt, paying only two shillings a day to those who load it. About a mile from the shore is a village of the Tartars, where there is not above ten or twelve houses, with a little mosque, and round about it a great number of tents, with several waggons close covered, which serve them instead of houses. Some of these tents are handsome enough, being made of round poles, with others crossing them, covered on the outside with large felts drawn tight over them. They have a door of the same, and above a little window, to admit the light, and to let out the smoke. The inside is hung with tapestry, and the floor also covered with it. Every family has not only one of these tents, but two others, covered with a large coarse woollen cloth, one for the servants and kitchen, in which is a pit five feet deep, to make a fire in for dressing their meat; the other tent is for their horses and cattle. Their corn and forage they store in magazines under ground, which they cover so exactly that none can find them but themselves. They can remove their tents with little trouble, and in a very short time; on which occasion they carry them away in carts drawn by horses

and oxen, of which they breed a great number: they profess the Mahometan religion; but intermix it with ridiculous opinions of divination.

From Donslow we sailed along the channel to Cape Cuodos, the Corocondama of Ptolomy, where the coasts that bound the lake Mæotis, which are very mountainous, are seen at thirty miles distance. From Caffa to the straits that open into this lake, is one hundred and twenty miles. The country on both sides is subject to the Turks, and thinly inhabited by the Tartars, almost all the coast being desert. From the strait to Mingrelia is reckoned six hundred miles along the shore, which consists of pleasant woods, thinly inhabited by the Circassian* Tartars, who are neither subject nor tributary to the Porte. The vessels that come from Constantino-ple to Mingrelia trade with this people, but do it with their arms in their hands, and by hostages; for they are remarkable for their infidelity and perfidiousness, and seldom fail to steal wherever they find an opportunity. The trade with them is carried on by exchange; the Circassians bring down slaves of all ages and sexes, honey, wax, leather, jackals, and the skins of some beasts, for such commodities as they want.

Circassia is a pleasant and fertile country, that produces great plenty of all sorts of fruit without labour, as apples, pears, cherries, walnuts; but the chief wealth of the inhabitants consists in cattle, as sheep, whose wool is as fine as that of Spain, deer, goats, and well-shaped horses, so swift and strong, that they will tire the wild beasts, and overtake

* The Turks call them Cherks; but they were named by the ancients Zagæans, or Mountaineers, and Pomponius Mela calls them Sargacians.

them in the chase. They sow no grain but millet for their bread, and barley for their horses, and their women till and manure the ground. Their drink is boza, which is a liquor made of millet, as intoxicating as wine. They live in wooden huts, and go almost naked: their beds are made of sheepskins sowed together, and stuffed with millet leaves beaten in the thrashing as small as oat-chaff. They were formerly Christians; but now of no religion, except observing some superstitious ceremonies borrowed from the Christians and Mahometans; and they are all sworn enemies to those who live in the provinces round about them.

The Abcas border upon the Circassians, and possess about one hundred miles on the coast between Mingrelia and Circassia. They are not so savage as the Circassians, but are as much inclined to robbery; so that the merchants are obliged to take as much precautions in trading with them. They, like their neighbours, are in want of all the conveniences of life, and have nothing to exchange for them but human creatures, furs, the skins of deer and tygers, box-wood, wax and honey.

On the 10th of September we arrived at Isgaour, a port in Mingrelia, where all the vessels lie that trade thither. It is a desert place, without any houses; the traders, therefore, build themselves huts and booths of boughs for the time of their stay, which is usually as long as they find themselves safe from the Abcas.

Colchis or Mingrelia, is situated at the end of the Black Sea. It is bounded on the east by the little kingdom of Imeretta, on the south by the Black Sea, and on the north by Mount Caucasus,

The rivers Codours and Rione* part it, the first from Abcas, and the other from Imeretta. Its length is about one hundred and ten miles, and its breadth sixty. It was once fortified against the Abcas by a wall of sixty miles in length, which has been long since demolished.

The inhabitants of Caucasus, who border upon Colchis, are the Alanes, Suanes, Gugues, Caracioles, or Cara-cherks, that is, Black Circassians, so called by the Turks, not from their complexion, for they are esteemed the fairest people upon earth; but from their country, which is always darkened with clouds and fogs. They were anciently Christians, but now live by robbery and rapine, and profess no religion, having little besides speech that can entitle them to humanity. They are very tall and portly, and their very looks and speech show their savage dispositions, they being the most resolute assassins, and daring robbers in the world.

The ancient kingdom of Colchis was much larger than Mingrelia is at present, extending on one side to the lake Mœotis, and to Iberia on the other. Its capital city, named Colchos, was at the mouth of the Phasis, a river to the west. The country is uneven, full of hills and mountains, valleys and plains: it is almost covered with woods, except the manured lands, which are but few, and those preserved by grubbing up the roots that are continually spreading into them. The air is temperate with respect to heat and cold, but as it rains almost continually, the wetness and warmth of the climate breed in summer the pestilence, and several other diseases. It abounds with rivers, which descend

* Two famous rivers in ancient history, called the Corax and Phasis.

from Mount Caucasus, and fall into the Black Sea. The soil is very bad, and produces little corn or pulse, and the fruits are without taste, and unwholesome, except their vines, which thrive well, and produce most excellent wine. Did the inhabitants know how to prepare it in a proper manner, it would be the best wine in the world. The vines encompass the trunks of trees, and rise to their very tops. In the seed-time the earth is so moist, that they sow their wheat and barley without plowing; for they say, that should they plow it, the land would be so soft as not to be able to support the stalk. For their other corn they plow their lands with plow-shares of wood, which, in this moist soil, makes as good furrows as iron. Their common grain is gomm, which is as small as coriander seed, and resembles millet. Of this they make a paste, which they use for bread, and prefer it to wheat: this is not to be wondered at, for it is very agreeable to the palate, and conducive to health, it being cooling and laxative. They have also great plenty of millet, some rice, with wheat and barley, which are very scarce. The people of quality eat wheaten bread as a rarity, but the meaner sort seldom or never taste it.

The ordinary food of the country is beef and pork, of which last they have great plenty, and the best in the world: they have also goats flesh, but it is lean and ill-tasted. Their venison is, the hart, stag, and fallow deer: they have also wild boars and hares, all which are excellent food. They have partridges, pheasants and quails, in abundance, with some river-fowl, and wild pigeons, which are good meat, and as big as crammed chickens: these pigeons they take in nets, and thus catch great numbers in summer.

Their nobility spend their whole time in the field, using hobbies, goshawks, &c. for their sports, to catch water-fowl and pheasants; but the pastime in which they most delight is, flying the falcon at the heron, which they catch only for the sake of the tuft upon his crown, in order to put it on their bonnets, for they let him go again, when they have cut it off, that it may grow up afresh.

Mount Caucasus produces a great number of wild beasts, as lions, tigers, leopards, jackals and wolves; which last make great havoc among their cattle and horses, and frequently disturb the inhabitants in their houses, with their dreadful howlings. They have great numbers of very good horses, almost every man keeping several of them; for they cost little or nothing, as they neither shoe them nor feed them with corn. They have no cities nor towns, except two, by the sea-side: but their houses are so scattered up the country, that you can hardly travel a mile without seeing three or four of them. There are nine or ten castles in the country, the chief of which, where the prince keeps his court, is called Rues. This castle has a stone wall, but it is so small, and so ill-built, that it might be battered down by a small piece of artillery: it has, however, some cannon, which the other castles have not. They are made in the following manner: in the midst of a thick wood the people build a stone tower, thirty or forty feet high, capable of containing fifty or sixty persons. This tower is the place of strength, where they shut up all the riches of the prince. Near this tower are five or six others, of wood, which serve as magazines for provisions, and as places of retreat for their wives and children, in case of an attack. There are also seve-

ral huts made of wood, others of branches of trees, and others of canes and reeds. The area in which they are inclosed is surrounded by a close hedge, and by a wood, which is every where so thick, that it is impossible to find these retreats, but by the way cut to them, which is stopped up by trees, whenever they apprehend the approach of an enemy.

The houses of the Mingrelians are built with timber, which they have in great plenty; but the poorer sort never raise them above one story, nor the rich above two. The lower rooms are always furnished with beds and couches, to lie down or sit upon, on account of the moisture of the earth; but they are inconvenient, from their having neither windows nor chimneys, and but one room for the whole family; so that they all lie together, and at night have also their cattle along with them.

The men are well shaped, and the women so handsome, that they seem born to inspire love; yet they all paint their faces, and particularly their eyebrows. They dress themselves in as ornamental a manner as they can, wearing a Persian habit, and curling the hair. They are witty, civil, and full of compliments; but, on the other hand, are proud, deceitful, cruel and libidinous. The men have also many mischievous qualities; but that which they most practise is theft, and this they make their employment and glory. They justify the lawfulness of having many wives, by saying, that they bring them many children, which they can sell for ready money, or exchange for necessary conveniences; yet when they have not the means of supporting them, they hold it a piece of charity to murder new-born infants, and such persons as are sick and past recovery, because by this

means they free them from misery. Adultery and incest are scarce considered as crimes in Mingrelia: when a man catches another enjoying the embraces of his wife, he has a right to oblige him to pay a hog; he seldom takes any other method of revenge, and they all three commonly sit down to feast upon it. It is common for them to have two or three wives at a time.

As the gentry have full power over the lives and estates of their tenants, they sell or dispose of their wives and children as they think fit; besides, every husbandman is bound to furnish his lord with as much corn, wine, cattle, and other provisions, as is in his power. Thus his riches consist in the number of his peasants. The lords decide the quarrels of their vassals: but when they themselves are at variance, they determine the dispute by arms; and therefore all go armed with a lance, bow and sword.

Their dress is very singular. All the men, except the ecclesiastics, suffer but little of their beard to grow. They shave the top of the head, leaving only a little hair over the forehead, and down to their ears; and even that is clipped short. They wear a bonnet of fine felt, which, in winter, is lined with fur; but they are in general so poor, that, to prevent its being spoiled, they put it in their pocket when it rains, and go bare-headed. Those in mean circumstances go almost naked, and have in general only a covering of a triangular form, at one end of which is a hole, through which they put the head; this covering, which is of strong felt, they turn to the side from whence comes the wind or the rain. They wear shirts which reach to their knees, and tuck into a straight pair of breeches; but they never have above one shirt and one pair of breeches,

which last them a year; and in all that time they never wash the shirt above thrice. Their shoes, or rather sandals, are made of the raw skin of a buffalo, tied round the foot, and fastened with thongs of the same skins; but when the snow lies thick on the earth, they wear a kind of snow-shoes, which spreading much farther than the feet, prevent their sinking into it.

The whole family, both males and females, eat together without distinction: the king with all his train, to the very grooms, and the queen with her maids and servants. In fair weather, they dine in open court, and, if it be cold, make a large fire, for wood costs them nothing. Upon working days the servants have nothing but gomm, and the master pulse, dried fish or flesh; but on holydays, or when they make entertainments, if they have no venison, they kill an ox, a cow, or a hog. Both the men and women are very great drinkers, and at their feasts make their friends drink as much as possible. Their wine is drank unmixed, and beginning with pints, they proceed to much greater quantities. The men, at their merry meetings, discourse about their wars and robberies, and the women tell obscene tales of their amours.

Mingrelia is but thinly inhabited, which is occasioned by their wars, and the vast numbers sold by the nobility to the Persians and Turks. All their trade is carried on by the way of barter; for their money has no settled value. The current specie is, piastres, Dutch crowns, and abassis, which are made in Georgia, and bear the Persian stamp. The revenues of the prince of Mingrelia do not exceed 20,000 crowns, which are raised by customs, on goods imported and exported, by selling of slaves,

and by imposts and fines. But all this he lays up, for his slaves serve him for nothing, and his crown-lands furnish his court with more provisions than they can consume. He is not able to raise above 4000 men fit to bear arms, and these are mostly cavalry, for he has not above 300 foot. These soldiers are not distributed into regiments, or companies; each lord or gentleman leads his men to battle, without order, and without officers; they follow him, as well in flying as in charging the enemy. The prince's court, upon solemn festivals, consists of two hundred gentlemen, but upon other days of about one hundred and twenty.

The religion of the Mingrelians, or Colchians, was formerly the same with the Greeks, they being converted by a slave, according to ecclesiastical historians, in the reign of Constantine the Great. But the Mingrelians say, that St. Andrew preached among them in a place called Pigaitas, where a church now stands, whither the catholicos, or chief bishop, goes once in his life to make the holy oil; yet I was unable to find a Mingrelian who knew what is meant by religion, by sin, the sacrament, or divine worship: for they are now fallen into such a profound abyss of ignorance, that they look upon the life eternal, the day of judgment, and the resurrection of the dead, as mere fables. Their clergy perform scarcely any ecclesiastical duties; for there is hardly one of them that can either write or read, and they have in a manner lost the method of performing divine worship.

On the confines of Mingrelia lie the principality of Guriel and the kingdom of Imeretta: the former is very small, it bordering upon Imeretta on the north, upon Mount Caucasus on the east, upon

Mingrelia on the west, and upon the Black Sea on the south. It lies along the sea shore from the river Rione to the castle Gonie, which is held by the Turks. The inhabitants are of the same disposition and irregularity of manners as the Mingrelians; having the same inclinations to lewdness, robbery and murder.

The kingdom of Imeretta, the Iberia of the ancients, is something bigger than the country of Guriel, and is encompassed by Mount Caucasus, Mingrelia, the Black Sea, the principality of Guriel, and part of Georgia. It is 26 miles long, and 60 in breadth; it is full of woods and mountains like Mingrelia, but the valleys are more pleasant, and the plains more fertile, they producing corn, pulse, cattle, and a variety of herbs. There are some iron mines in the country, and some money current among the people, which is coined in the kingdom. They have also several towns; but their manners and customs differ but little from the Mingrelians. The king has three good castles, one called Scander, seated on the side of a valley, and two on Mount Caucasus, called Regia and Scorgia, which, from their situation, are almost inaccessible. The fortress of Cotatis was once in the jurisdiction of this prince, but is now in the possession of the Turks.

The people of Guriel, Mingrelia, and Abca, were subject to the king of Imeretta, after they had freed themselves from the power of the emperors of Constantinople and of Trebisond; but in the last century setting up for themselves, they became involved in continual wars, till calling in the assistance of the Turks, they were all made tributary to them. The king of Imeretta pays a tribute of eighty boys and girls, from ten to twenty years of age. The

prince of Guriel pays forty-six children of both sexes, and the prince of Mingrelia 60,000 ells of linen cloth, made in that country. The Abcas, however, seldom paid any thing at first, and now pay nothing.

CHAP. II.

A description of Isgaour. A war breaks out, and a trade is carried on in slaves. Sir John Chardin proceeds to the village of Anarghia, and thence to Siplas, the residence of some Theatine monks, where he is visited and invited to dinner by a Mingrelian princess.

AS soon as our vessel had entered the road of Isgaour, I landed with the Greek merchant who conducted me, with the hope of finding houses, some provisions and assistance; but I was much deceived. The inhabitants had fenced round a place a hundred paces from the shore, two hundred and fifty long, and fifty broad; this was the grand market of Mingrelia. It had a street formed of about a hundred little huts on each side, built of branches of trees tied together. Each merchant took one of these huts, in which he slept, and there sold such commodities as he hoped to dispose of in two or three days time: those goods they bought, and those they had no probability of selling immediately, were kept on board the ships. No refreshments were to be had in the market, nor was there a peasant's house in its neighbourhood. At this I was equally surprised and afflicted, for our provisions were almost consumed, and nothing was to be sold by the natives but slaves chained together. There were above a dozen of naked wretches, who, with bows and arrows in their hands, struck every one with terror; these

were the officers of the customs. But my surprise and affliction were much increased, on being informed that the Turks and the prince of Gurriel had taken up arms against the Mingrelians, and begun the war by plundering the houses of their neighbours, and carrying off them and their cattle wherever they found them.

On my taking the resolution of going into Mingrelia, I had depended greatly on the Theatine missionaries, who have a house forty miles by land from Isgaour, where, I was told, I might live in safety, and that they would speedily procure me a passage into Persia. I therefore sent an express with a letter to the prefect of the mission, and returned on board much dejected.

Two days after a number of peasants, who fled from the enemy, passed by Isgaour, and raised a great alarm, by reporting, that the Abcas, whom the prince of Mingrelia had called to his assistance against the Turks, plundered and burned every thing before them, and carried off all the inhabitants and cattle that fell into their hands; adding, that they were already near the port. All were now in a hurry to carry their effects on board. The commanders of the ships landed two pieces of cannon, and the men were under arms all night; but the next day they re-embarked, choosing rather to abandon the wool, salt, earthen-ware, and other merchandize they had not been able to bring on board, than to expose themselves to the danger of falling into the hands of the Abcas. About ten at night we saw all the market in a flame; and the next morning some men landing, they found nothing but the remains of the conflagration.

I now endeavoured to buy from the masters of

the ships as much provisions as possible; but all I could purchase from the several merchants was sixty pounds of biscuit, a little pulse, eight pounds of butter, and twelve pounds of rice. This was but small allowance for six persons; good management, however, made it last longer than I could have imagined: we had dried fish in abundance, and scarcely ate any thing else; and I was delighted when I had prevailed on my men to make a meal without bread.

Hearing no news of the prefect, and not being able to guess the reason, I informed my men of the necessity we were under that one of them should go to him, because none but he could secure us from the evils with which we were threatened, or deliver us from those we endured, and that were increasing every day. My valet offered to undertake the journey. I therefore gave him letters and presents for the prefect and his brethren, and he set out on this expedition.

On the morning of the 4th of October my valet returned, bringing with him the prefect, who was a native of Mantua, called Don Maria Joseph Zampy. I immediately ran to embrace him, when he cried, "God forgive those who have advised you, sir, to come hither: you are arrived at the most barbarous country in the world: and the best step you can take is, to return to Constantinople by the first opportunity." The joy we had conceived at seeing this priest, was damped by this discourse. I took him into my cabin, and there with my comrade deliberated on what was to be done. He told us that he was come to serve us to the utmost of his power; that he would take us to his house, if we desired it, but that he had no bread; that now no

provisions were to be had ; that the air of the country was unhealthy, and the people more wicked than it was possible to imagine. I told him that I had a letter of recommendation to the prince of Mingrelia ; but he replied, that he was as great a villain and as base a robber as any of his subjects : and then added, that if, after this notice, I was resolved to venture, he would do all in his power to preserve our persons and baggage, and procure us a safe passage into Persia.

I did not stay to deliberate on what the father had represented ; the evils with which I was threatened in Mingrelia were future, and I hoped to avoid them : but those I suffered were present, they filled my imagination, and my heart sunk under them. I therefore represented to him, that whatever misfortunes might happen to us in Mingrelia, they must be less than those of returning to Caffa, by which we must infallibly perish ; and this opinion I strengthened by many reasons. He was soon convinced by my arguments, and now only consulted on the manner in which we should travel. The bark in which we had come down the river being proper for our purpose, we embarked in it with all our baggage, and I gave the value of a hundred crowns in goods to father Zampy, who knew the price set upon it, and was to buy it for me. The baggage being embarked before noon, we immediately set sail. I was filled with joy at leaving the ship, where I could not endure the suffocating smell, nor bear the sight of the infamous commerce carried on in it. It was become a prison for slaves, in which the men and boys were chained two and two every night, and loosened every morning. The war of Mingrelia was of advantage to our merchants, who

bought the booty and slaves taken by the Abcas, who were now continually coming on board, to exchange them for arms, clothes, and other commodities. A Greek merchant, whose cabin was next to mine, bought a woman and her sucking child for twelve crowns: the woman was about twenty-five years of age, her face was extremely beautiful, her skin had the whiteness of the lily, and I never saw a finer breast, or a rounder neck. This lovely woman filled me with compassion. What surprised me most was, to see that these miserable creatures were not dejected, and that they appeared insensible of the misery of their condition. As soon as they were bought their rags were taken off, they were dressed in new linen habits, and set to work; the men and boys in doing something about the ship, and the women in sewing.

But to proceed: we had a pretty good wind, and our little bark advanced both with sails and oars. During the voyage I agreed with father Zampy on the means to prevent our falling into the hands of the enemy, and of being neither plundered nor assassinated by the Mingrelians.

At midnight we arrived at the entrance of the Astolphus, one of the greatest rivers in Mingrelia, called by the natives Langur, where we stopped, and sent two of our mariners to Anarghia, to inquire after the enemy, and to see if the inhabitants had not fled. Anarghia is a village two miles from the sea, and the most considerable place in all Mingrelia. It consists of about a hundred houses; but they are so far distant from each other, that it is two miles from the first to the last. There are always Turks in that village to purchase slaves, and barks to carry them off. It is said to be built on the place

where anciently stood the great city of Heracles.

The next morning before day, the two mariners returned with the news, that the Abcas had been no nearer than within fifteen miles of Anarghia, and that every thing there was as usual. Father Zampy caused the men to row hard, in order to arrive early at that village, that we might all land without being seen. This happened according to our wishes. We went to lodge with a peasant, who had the best accommodations of any in the place; and as we had many chests, the largest of which was full of books, father Zampy advised me to open it, as soon as we were at our lodgings, under the pretence of looking for something, to prevent their imagining that these chests were filled with treasures; he at the same time proposed my pretending to be a religious, and that we had brought nothing with us but books. I followed this advice. The people of the house were astonished at seeing so large a chest thus filled, and I believe imagined that the contents of the others were the same.

On the 9th of October a lay Theatine, who was physician and surgeon to all Mingrelia, came to see us. The access which his art gave him to the houses of the prince, and of all the great, had raised his vanity. I received and treated him in a manner that flattered his pride, and in return he gave me a thousand assurances of his protection and assistance. Some days after he came to inform us, that the Abcas had returned home, and had carried off 1200 persons, much cattle, and a great booty. He then told father Zampy, that we might all go to their house at Sipias; and that the prince and the catholicos, who is the head of all the clergy in this country, had ordered him to tell me and my comrade,

that we were welcome, and that they would grant us men and horses to conduct us into Georgia.

Upon receiving this agreeable news, we immediately prepared for our departure. Father Zampy made me pass for a capuchin, observing that I should meet with some of that order in Georgia. On the 14th we set out two hours before day for Anarghia, and proceeded two leagues up the river Astolphus, after which we landed our baggage, and with it loaded six small carts; besides two others, filled with the provisions brought by father Zampy. The Mingrelians were not accustomed to see such a quantity of goods at a time; and the report was immediately spread over the country, that some Europeans were arrived, who had eight carts loaded with their baggage. We proceeded four leagues and a half by land, and arrived in the evening at Siplas.

Siplas is the name of two churches, one of them a parish church of the Mingrelians, and the other belonging to the Theatines, an order of friars, who first came into Mingrelia in 1627, when they were admitted as physicians, and a piece of land given them, on which they built several wooden houses, after the manner of the country. Each of the friars have one of these houses to dwell in; for they are all separate: the smallest are for their slaves, and two families of peasants, who are their tenants; but though they have good employment as physicians, none will embrace their religion.

On the 18th the princess of Mingrelia came to the Theatines. She was on horseback, attended by about ten men and eight women, very badly clothed, and ill mounted, with several men on foot who stood about her horse. Father Zampy went immediately to receive her, when she told him, that she had

heard there were some Europeans in his house, who had brought a great quantity of baggage: that she was glad of it, and desired to see them, in order to tell them that they were welcome. I was instantly called, and father Zampy told me, that I must make her a present, since it was the custom to pay thus for the visits of a prince and princess. Being told that I spoke the Turkish and Persian tongues, she called a slave who knew the Turkish, and asked me a thousand questions about my rank and my voyage. I told her that I was a capuchin. She caused me to be asked, if I was in love? if I had ever been in love? how it happened that I had never been in love? and how I did to live without a woman? She carried on this conversation with great vivacity, and all her retinue were very merry upon it; but, for my part, I was much dejected, and would have been glad of the absence both of the princess and her train, whom I every moment feared would pillage our lodgings, for she asked three times to see what I had brought; but father Zampy promising to bring her the usual present the next day, she departed, seemingly well satisfied.

The next morning she sent to invite me to dinner. She was at a house only two miles from ours; but did not live with the prince, who had a great dislike to her, having been forced to marry her. I found her better dressed than the day before. She was painted, and seemed to endeavour to appear lovely; she was clothed in gold brocade, and had jewels in her head-dress. She sat on a carpet, with nine or ten women by her side, and near her were many shabby fellows half naked, who composed her court. They asked for my present for the princess, before they suffered me to enter. It was brought by

my servant, who delivered it to them, and consisted of cases of knives, scissars, and other things, which cost about twenty shillings, and was worth above three pounds in Mingrelia. The princess was satisfied, and suffered me to enter after having seen them. Near her was a bench, on which the slave, who spoke Turkish, desired me to sit. She first told me that she would have me to marry one of her friends, and that I should not leave that country, for she would give me houses, lands and slaves. But a stop was put to her discourse, by one coming to inform her that dinner was ready.

The house in which she lived, was in the midst of five others, each at a hundred paces distance. Before one of them was a raised place, built with wood, eighteen inches high, over which was a small dome. Here a carpet being spread, the princess seated herself upon it, as did her women, at four paces distance, on other carpets. The shabby wretches who composed her court, and were about fifty in number, seated themselves round on the grass. There were two benches near the place raised for the princess, one of which served the Theatines and me for a seat, and the other for a table. When the princess was seated, a long painted cloth was laid before her, and at one end of it were placed two large and two small flagons, four plates, and eight cups of different sizes, with a silver basin, ewer and skimmer. Other servants at the same time laid boards before those who were seated, to serve as tables; and one was also put before the women. This being done, two kettles were brought in, and placed in the middle: one of them, which was very large, was carried by four men, and was full of common gomm; the other, which was smaller, was brought in by two,

and was full of white gomm. This gomm was a kind of paste, of which the Mingrelians make the same use as we do of bread. Two other men brought in, upon a kind of bier, a hog boiled whole, and four others entered with a large pitcher of wine. The princess was served first, then her women, then us, and afterwards her attendants. The princess was also served with a wooden bowl of gomm, and some herbs, and with a silver dish, in which were two fowls, one boiled and the other roasted; but both of them had a very disagreeable sauce. The princess sent me a part of the bread and sallad, and caused me to be told, that I should stay for supper, and that she would kill an ox; but this was mere compliment. A little after she sent me two pieces of fowl, and asked with a loud voice, why there never came into Mingrelia any of the European artificers, who work so well in metals, silk and wool? and why there only came monks, who had no business there, and whom they did not want? It is easy to guess at the confusion into which this question must throw the poor Theatines who were present. I answered, that the artificers of Europe laboured only for gain, and having employment enough there, had no inclination to go farther; but that the religious, having in view the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, these great concerns induced them to leave their country, and travel so far.

The repast lasted about two hours; when it was half ended, the princess sent me a cup of wine, and caused me to be told that it was the wine she herself used, and the cup out of which she drank. Three times she did me this honour, and was much surprised to see me mix water with my wine, saying she had never seen that done before. Indeed, she

and her women drank it unmixed in large quantities. Dinner being ended, she sent to inquire if I had brought any spices or china-ware; she also asked me for a variety of things, and finding that I had none to give her, she at last grew angry, and said she would send to examine my goods; but though I was much frightened, I answered, she might do it whenever she pleased; to which she replied, that she was only in jest. However, as soon as we rose from table, I entreated one of the Theatines, who had accompanied me, to make all possible haste to my comrade, and tell him what the princess said, in order that he might prepare for all events. After dinner she again spoke of the marriage, and said she would soon show me the woman she would give me; but I replied as before, that monks never marry, and was going to take my leave, when unhappily she perceived, under the mean frock I wore, that I had whiter and finer linen than what they had in Mingrelia. She came up to me, took me by the hand, pulled up my sleeve to my elbow, and held me for some time by the arm, talking all the while in a low voice to her women. I was extremely embarrassed, and what gave me most pain was, my not knowing what she said; though I could perceive, by her gestures, that she was talking earnestly about me. I was at a loss how to behave in public to a woman, who had, at the same time, the title of sovereign, and the impudence of a prostitute. But she soon threw me into a greater consternation; for going up to father Zampy, she said, "You both deceive me; you shall come again on Sunday morning, and this stranger shall say mass. The father was going to reply, but the princess turned her back, and bid us go home.

I returned to our lodging very sad and pensive;* the princess's avarice made me apprehend she would do me some ill turn; and father Zampy assured me that he was certain of it. I therefore, the same night, caused a pit five feet deep to be dug in his apartment, in which I placed a chest that contained a clock, and a box of coral; this was so well buried, that there was not left the least sign of the ground having been opened. I then went into the church with the same design, when father Zampy advised me to open the grave of a Theatine, who had been buried six years before, and to deposit among his ashes a small casket I was willing to conceal; but happily I chose to bury this casket, in which were 12,000 gold ducats, in a corner of the church behind the door, for which purpose I made a deep pit like the former. I afterwards concealed in the roof, over the chamber where I lodged, a sabre and a poignard set with precious stones. My comrade and I kept about us what was of the least weight and the greatest value; and such things as were not worth a great deal we gave the Theatines to keep for us.

On the 23d, after dinner, a person came in to inform father Zampy that there were two gentlemen at the door who asked for him. These gentlemen, who were neighbours, were on horseback, and had with them thirty men, horse and foot, well armed. My comrade and I were immediately called. I could not penetrate into their design; but I knew it too soon; for, on our coming up to them, they caused us to be seized, and tied by their men: telling the

* The reader will form a better idea of Sir John Chardin's consternation at being ordered to say mass, when he knows that he was not only no priest, but that he was a Calvinist.

prefect, and the other Theatines who came to salute them, that if they stirred they would kill them. The prefect, being seized with fear, fled; the others, however, would not leave us; and the lay-brother not only made use of all his interest in our behalf, but, though a sword was held up to his neck, he would not abandon us. Our servants were immediately seized, and one of them making resistance, and defending himself with a knife, was thrown down, and tied to a tree. They then declared, that they would see what treasures we had. To which I replied, that they must do as they pleased; we were poor Capuchins, and all our wealth consisted in books, papers, and a few ordinary goods, which, if they would offer us no violence, we would show them. This answer succeeded, they untied me, and bid me open my chamber door.

We had kept about us, as I have already observed, our most precious jewels; my comrade had sewed his in the neck of a close coat, lined with fur; but I had made mine up into two small packets, which I had hid in my chest among my books; not daring to carry them about me, for fear of being robbed or assassinated on their account. I therefore desired my comrade and the lay-brother to take the two gentlemen aside, and to amuse them by offering a little money, in order to give me time to take the two valuable packets out of my chest, and to conceal them in another place. They did so; I entered my chamber, and shut myself in. The gentlemen suspected my design, and went to the door, which I had fastened on the inside; when my comrade bid me, in a low voice, be on my guard, as they watched me through the cracks: this made me snatch the two packets out of the thatch, in

which I had already concealed them, for fear they had seen me put them there. I then put them into my pocket, and seeing the villians were breaking open the door, threw myself out of the window into the garden. In a less pressing necessity I would not have made that leap on any consideration; but a mind seized with fear, dreads nothing but the first object of its apprehensions; I ran to the bottom of the garden, and threw the two packets into a thicket of briars; but was in such confusion, that I did not with sufficient care observe the place where I put them.

I immediately returned to my chamber, which I found full of these robbers, some of whom were struggling with my companion, while others were beating with their weapons on my chests, to break them open. Knowing that there was now nothing in them of great value, I took courage, and bid them take care what they did, as I was sent for by the king of Persia, and that the prince of Georgia would take a severe revenge for the violence that was offered me. I then showed the king of Persia's passport, which one of the gentlemen took, and was going to tear it, saying, he neither feared nor valued any man upon earth; but the other stopped him; for the writing in gold, and the gilt seal, inspired him with respect. He, however, bid me open my chests, and said that no harm should be done me; but, if I made any farther resistance, they would sever my head from my body. I began to reply, instead of showing my obedience; but this had like to have cost me dear; for one of the soldiers drew his sword, and was aiming it at my head, when the lay-brother stopped his arm. I now immediately opened the chests, they began to plun-

der them, and every thing that pleased these gentlemen were taken away.

During the time this pillage lasted, I leaned against a window, and turning my eyes away from these wretches, that I might not increase my grief by beholding them, I cast a look into the garden, and there perceived two soldiers removing the brambles, just where I supposed I had concealed my two packets of jewels. I ran in a rage to the place, followed by one of the Theatine fathers; but the soldiers, I knew not why, retired as soon as they saw us coming towards them. I instantly sought for my two packets; but the confusion I was in prevented my knowing the place where I had put them; and my not finding them, made me certain that they had discovered and taken them away. The reader may judge, from the value of these packets, which amounted to 25,000 crowns, of the consternation with which I was seized. In the meanwhile my comrade and the lay-brother calling me as loud as they were able, I left the garden and ran into the chamber. On entering it, I was seized by two soldiers, who dragged me into a corner, and took every thing they found in my pockets, which was of no great value. They then seized my hands, and attempted to tie them. I cried out, I resisted, I made signs that they should lead me to their master. I caused the chief of the villains to be told, that they need not tie me, either to carry me away or to kill me; for I was disposed to submit with whatever they did with me. They replied, that since we were ambassadors, they would take me to their prince. I let them know that we would go without being tied, and that we hoped he would do us justice, as we had letters to him, to which he

would certainly show respect. It was late, the night approached, and the princess's castle was at fifteen miles distance, they therefore released us, and only took the servant who was tied to a tree, and whose liberty I procured a fortnight after for ten piastres.

As soon as I was out of the hands of these robbers, I went into the garden: the priest, who had followed me when I went to fetch the two packets of jewels I had concealed, told every body in the house of the misfortune I believed I had suffered, and nobody doubted but that these soldiers, having observed me, had followed and taken what I had concealed among the brambles. Allaverdy, one of our Armenian valets, followed me, and to my great astonishment threw his arms about my neck, with his face bathed in tears. "Sir," said he, "we are ruined. Fear, and the common misfortune, have made us forget what we all are." I was at first so surprised, that I took him for some Mingrelian that was going to strangle me, and when I knew him, I was moved by his tenderness. "Sir," said he, "have you made a thorough search?" "I have searched so much," cried I, "that I am quite sure of my misfortune." He was not contented with this, he would have me show him the place, and the manner in which I concealed them. I did so merely out of complaisance for the poor youth who showed such affection; but was so fully persuaded that he would lose his labour, that I would not assist him. It was now night, and I was so uneasy that I knew not what I did; but at length, to my great astonishment, Allaverdy came again to caress me, and gave me the two packets, which he pulled out of his bosom. I could not help imagining that the finger of Heaven was in this; and, believing

now that I was the care of the Almighty, I became confident of the divine assistance, and entertained those hopes of deliverance, that have ever since supported me under all my distresses.

I now went to my chamber, and told my comrade of my success. I found him putting our things in order. What they had taken consisted of clothes, linen, arms, brass vessels, and other things of small value, which did not amount to four hundred crowns; and we agreed to conceal the recovery of my two packets from the Theatines, that they might think we had little else to lose.

The next morning the prefect of the Theatines, and the lay-brother, went with me to the prince, and the catholicos, to demand justice; but neither of them could give us any satisfaction. The prince observed, that while the war lasted, he had but little authority over the nobility; but, at another time, he would have done his utmost to recover what he had lost. The catholicos, to whom he gave a case of silver-hafted knives and forks, talked in the same manner, and endeavoured to comfort us. They, however, each of them appointed a gentleman to go on their parts, to demand what had been taken from us; but their endeavours to find the robbers were ineffectual. From them we learned that the prince was concerned in the robbery, and had a third part of the spoils; and that the Turks had entered Mingrelia, and were laying waste all the country through which they passed, with fire and sword.

I was now in so resigned a disposition, that this news did not much move me; the Theatines, however, were filled with terror, and both they and we prepared for flight. At midnight we heard the re-

port of two great guns, fired from the fortress of Rucks, to give notice of the approach of the enemy. At this signal every body began to fly: and at day-break we ourselves set out. I left every thing that had been buried, and concealed in the roof, and in other places, thinking them much safer than what we took with us. The Theatines had no other carriage but one cart, drawn by bullocks, and two horses. In the cart was carried the baggage, the lay-brother mounted one of the horses, and my comrade, who was sick, rode the other, while two Theatine friars and I followed on foot, accompanied by all the slaves and servants. One of the friars staid alone, to guard the house, in which were a thousand things that we could not take away for want of carriages. I left my books, most of my papers, and my mathematical instruments, imagining that neither the Turks nor Mingrelians would take the trouble to remove them. The wars there consisting chiefly in chasing and plundering, the enemy soon retires. For this reason they always leave a person or two at each house, to prevent the neighbours stealing the corn, wine, and other things that could not be carried away. These men are seldom surprised by the enemy, because they are always upon the watch, and take care to escape into the woods, which are not only near, but thick, and proper for concealment.

The place to which we retired was, a fortress in the woods, like those I have already described. The lord of the place, who was called Sabatar, was a Georgian, who had been a Mahometan, and became a Christian. We arrived at his castle, after having proceeded five leagues through the dirt and mire, in which the cart was continually sticking.

fast, so that it was obliged to be unloaded and loaded twenty times. Meanwhile we were in continual danger of being robbed and murdered. We met with a favourable reception, and the Theatines telling the lord Sabatar that I would repay the obligations he should confer on us, he lodged us in a bakehouse; a little mean hut, in which we were sheltered but little better than if we had been in the open court, for the rain poured in on all sides. Our having it was, however, a great favour, as it prevented our being mingled with a multitude of miserable objects. The fortress was full of people before we arrived, and contained eight hundred persons, almost all of whom were women and children.

On the 27th the prefect of the Theatines left us, to go to the house for some vessels and provisions we had left behind. I designed to have accompanied him, but he set out two hours before day. On entering the house he found it full of rangers, belonging to the bassa and the prince of Gurriel, who beat him with their staves, and insisted on his opening the church, saying he had concealed there all the treasure; but the prefect had cast the key among the brambles immediately on his perceiving them, and, notwithstanding the ill treatment he received, he refused to tell where it was. At length, stripping him of part of his clothes, and taking out of the house only such things as were most portable, they went away, without touching either my books or my papers. However, on the 29th, a gentleman of Mingrelia, with thirty of his men, went thither in the night, and uncovered almost all the roof of my chamber, with the hopes of finding something I might have concealed. He carried off all the chests

that had been left, and my more cumbersome materials; in short, every thing which the Turks had left, except what was of great value, which he happily did not discover. This rapacious wretch having no light, made a fire with my papers and books, tearing off the covers because they were finely gilt; for I had caused my best books to be curiously bound, before I left Paris, and this villain did not leave me one.

On the 30th, in the morning, I, with the deepest concern, learned these particulars. We began to be in want of the common necessaries of life; my servants were reduced to despair, and we had nothing before our eyes, but the prospect of death or slavery. This made me resolve to hazard every thing, in order to leave Mingrelia while I had strength to do it. I caused guides to be every where sought for: I promised, I entreated, I made presents; but none would conduct me. They told me, that men in arms possessed all the passes of Imeretta, between Mingrelia and Georgia; and that it would be the greatest folly to go thither, since we should all be certainly made slaves. I then proposed to make the tour of Mount Caucasus, or to proceed along the sea shore; but nobody would conduct me: for it can scarcely be conceived, how much afraid the Mingrelians are of death; no reward can induce them to undergo the least danger.

Sabatar, to whom the fortress belonged, had now submitted to the Turks, and was not only to enjoy all his lands, but to have a Turkish guard for the security of his castle; for which he was to pay twenty-five slaves and eight hundred crowns, which he was resolved to raise among those to whom he granted his protection. From every family that

had four children, he took one; and it was a most dreadful sight, to see them torn from the arms of their mothers, tied two and two, and led to the Turks. I was taxed at twenty crowns.

At length I was constrained to take the resolution to go by sea, that is, to take a circuit of seventy leagues. For that purpose I went to Anarghia, a village and small port, already described; and having found there a Turkish felucca, I freighted her for Gonia, and returned to the house of the Theatines to prepare for the voyage.

I left the castle on the 10th of November, early in the morning, having agreed with my comrade on the methods I should take, in order to deliver him out of Mingrelia, if it should please God to give me a happy voyage. I took with me 100,000 livres in precious stones, 800 pistoles in gold, with a part of the baggage that remained. The jewels were concealed in a saddle, made in Europe for that purpose, and in a pillow. I took one of our servants with me, the same whom I had redeemed from slavery, who was a wicked, drunken fellow, and whom it was not safe to leave in Mingrelia. Father Zampy accompanied me, as he had always done, and the lay-brother also went with me to Anarghia. The prefect and I walked, because we could only hire one horse, on which was placed my baggage and my valet; but the lay-brother rode on horseback, having a horse of his own. I cannot express the fatigue we endured, in the two days we were upon the road; for it rained very hard, and we were obliged to wade through the mud, in which I commonly sunk above the knees. On the night of the second day we arrived at Anarghia, soaked through with rain.

On the 19th father Zampy received advice, that the night before, the church had been broke open, and nothing left but the bare walls; the tomb had been opened, and every thing taken out, which the poor Theatine, who had been left in the house, had buried in it. It is easy to imagine the apprehensions with which I was seized, on receiving this news, having left above 7000 pistoles buried in the church. I immediately dispatched a messenger with a letter to my comrade, who wrote me word, that they had not touched our money, and that every thing we had buried was safe. This news revived my courage, and I went to hasten the Turks, of whom I had hired the felucca.

CHAP. III.

The author leaves Anarghia. The Euxine or Black Sea described. He proceeds to Gonia, then passes over Mount Caucasus, which is described. His arrival at Teflis, and return to Mingrelia. Treachery of his valet.

ON the 27th of November I left Anarghia, and after an hour's sailing reached the sea; for the river Langur is very rapid, and we proceeded with great swiftness down the stream.

The Euxine, or Black Sea, is nearly two hundred leagues in length from east to west, and its greatest breadth, from the Bosphorus to the Borysthenes, is about three degrees: but the opposite end is not half so broad. The water of this sea appears neither so clear, so green, nor so salt as the ocean, which probably arises from the great rivers that discharge themselves into it. It did not receive its name from the colour of the water, but from the tempests, which are said to be there more frequent and more

furious than in other seas: hence the Greeks gave it the name of Axin, which signifies intractable; and the Turks that of Cara Denguis, or the Stormy Sea; for cara, which properly means black, also signifies stormy.

On the 29th we reached the river Phasis, and proceeded a mile up it to some houses, where the master of the felucca landed, and put some goods on shore. The river Phasis has its source in Mount Caucasus, and is now called by the people of that country the Rione. It is confined within a narrow bed, and runs with great rapidity. I sought for the great city of Sebasta, which geographers have placed at the mouth of the Phasis; but the ruins of that city, like those of Colchis, have no traces of them left. All that I observed to have any conformity with what the ancients have written of this part of the Black Sea is, that it abounds with pheasants. There are authors, and among others Martial, who say, that the Argonauts brought those birds from Greece, where they had never been seen before, and that they gave them the name of pheasants, from their being taken on the banks of the Phasis. This river separates Mingrelia from the principality of Guriel, and the little kingdom of Imeretta.

On the 30th, in the afternoon, we arrived at Gonia, about forty miles from the river Phasis. This is a large square castle, built of hard rough stones of an extraordinary size, situated on a sandy bottom on the sea-shore. It has neither ditch nor fortifications, and only consists of four square walls, fortified with two pieces of cannon, and defended by a small garrison of janizaries. Within it are about thirty small, low, inconvenient wooden houses; and near it is a village that contains about the same number.

Here is a custom-house belonging to the grand seignior; but the officers pay no respect either to the quality of the persons who land there, or to the sultan's passports. Those who command in this extremity of the empire, think themselves so far from him that they may act with impunity.

Our felucca no sooner came to land than my valet leaped on shore, kissed the earth, and showed the most extravagant and frantic signs of joy, and then entering the castle, left me at a time when I most wanted him. Soon after the custom-house officer and the lieutenant-governor came to see my things landed, and to receive the duty; they instantly let me know that they were informed of my being an European, and of all the misfortunes that had happened to me in Mingrelia. This surprised me; but I found I was betrayed by my rascal of a valet. The officer of the customs asked me several questions, and gave orders for examining my goods; but they could find nothing I wanted to conceal. My saddle, however, weighed very heavy, and this rendered it suspected, especially as the Turkish saddles are extremely light. It was examined and handled on all sides: but being able to find nothing within it besides hair and wadding, they laid it down.

Of the 800 pistoles I had brought, I carried half of them about me, and the other half in a wallet, fastened with a padlock, with some things, which though of small value, I knew the Turks would seize if they saw them. The custom-house officer and his janizaries being told of this wallet, ordered me to open it; on which I told them, that I would freely do it in the house, but not on the sea-shore, before so many men. On which the officer of the customs took me home with him to his house, and

the lieutenant-governor went with us. The latter made me pay the value of one per cent. on my goods, and the other five. The custom-house officer likewise took twenty-two pistoles in gold, and every thing he liked, that was found in my wallet; among the rest he got from me a pair of pistols, which were the only arms I had; he, however, paid me for them, but gave me no more than half their value. After this rapacious behaviour he invited me to lodge with him; but I could not help expressing my astonishment, that he, who had unjustly made me pay a duty for the gold and silver I brought, should immediately assume the mask of friendship; but he vindicated what he had done, renewed his invitation, and even promised to supply me with a guard to protect my baggage, and conduct me over the mountains. But though he renewed his entreaties, and, as I afterwards found, really meant me well, yet I was afraid of accepting his invitations, for fear he should take that opportunity of causing my saddle and my clothes to be more narrowly examined.

It was almost night when I left this office of the customs, who was also governor of the territory of Gonia. My valet had carried my baggage to the place where the men who came with us lodged. This was a wretched cottage, which admitted the air on all sides, and was as dirty and stinking as possible. I then received many compliments of condolence, if I may use the term, for all the men appeared sorry for my loss, and blamed me for not letting them keep the wallet for me; their goods paying no duty. While I was eating a piece of a biscuit, a janizary came to tell my valet that the lieutenant-governor wanted him: my valet went, and an hour after the same janizary came for me. I

found the lieutenant and my valet sitting together both drunk. Having obliged me to eat and drink, the lieutenant demanded 200 ducats, as due to his master from all Christian church-men who came there; this occasioned a long dispute: I attempted to retire but was detained by force, and threatened to be put in irons: I was at last glad to escape by paying a hundred ducats to the lieutenant, and four to the janizaries; but this was not all, the lieutenant obliged me to entreat him to accept of the money, and to swear that I would not complain of him.

The next morning, the officer of the customs sent a party of soldiers to my miserable lodgings, to examine again my saddle, and to search me: but though they filled me with the greatest uneasiness, they could make no discovery. After this, I was allowed two men to carry my baggage, and a Turk to conduct me as far as Acalzika; he also gave me a passport, and advised, that I and my valet should wear a white turban, in order to be treated with the greater respect. This I did, and set out at eight o'clock in the morning, transported with joy at leaving so wicked and dangerous a place, and at having nothing more to fear. I then began to feel some peace of mind. For five months past I had suffered the most dreadful agitations; insult, slavery, marriage, the loss of my substance and liberty, during all this time, distracted my mind by turns, and a thousand real evils had kept me under the deepest dejection. I now ascended Mount Caucasus with a lightness which surprised my porters; for the body is literally light when the heart is eased of a heavy load. This is true without a figure; for I seemed to have been delivered from the weight

of a mountain. We kept constantly ascending, frequently so near the most frightful precipices, that it was impossible to avoid being struck with terror; and in eight days, after performing a journey of thirty-six leagues, on the 8th of December reached the top of Mount Caucasus.

Asia is divided by a chain of mountains, the three highest of which have been named Taurus, Imaus, and Caucasus. The first advances farthest into Asia, and the whole chain, in general, is called by the name of Mount Taurus. Caucasus is the highest and the most difficult of access. When I passed it, it was entirely covered with snow, and my conductors were, in many places, obliged to clear it away with shovels. The top, which is eight leagues over, is perpetually covered with it. I passed the night of the 7th and 8th in the midst of the snow, where I caused some fir-trees to be cut down, and lay upon the boughs by the side of a great fire. On our arrival at the top, my conductors made long prayers to their images, to do us the favour to prevent a wind; and, indeed, if it had been high, we should doubtless have been buried in the snow, for, as it is as small as dust, a little wind fills the air with it. The horses sunk so often into holes covered by it, that I often thought we should lose them. I almost constantly walked, and did not ride above eight leagues in crossing this frightful mountain, which is thirty-six leagues over.

During the two last days I seemed in the clouds, not being able to see twenty paces before me. The firs, it is true, with which the top of the mountain is covered, tend greatly to obstruct the view. On descending I saw the clouds move under my feet.

Mount Caucasus is fertile almost to the top, and

its sides abound in honey, corn, fruits, hogs and large cattle. The vines twine about the trees, and rise to such a height, that the inhabitants cannot gather the fruit from the upper branches. There are many streams of excellent water, and a great number of villages. It was the time of vintage, and I found both the grapes and the new and old wine excellent. The peasants live in cabins built of wood, each family having four or five of them, and in the centre of the largest they make a great fire, which serves for all the cottages around it. The women grind the corn as often as they want bread, and bake the dough on round stones, about a foot in diameter, and hollowed two or three fingers deep. The stone being well heated, they put the dough into it, and cover it with hot ashes and burning embers. I lodged at the house of a peasant, of whom I hired horses, and men to carry my baggage. The Turk, my conductor, caused me to be as well served as the place would permit. The natives supplied us with fowls, eggs, pulse, wine and fruit in abundance, for which nothing was demanded; and my conductor hindered me even from making them any present in return.

The inhabitants are, for the most part, Christians of the Georgian church. They have very fine complexions, and I have seen among them very beautiful women. They are infinitely better accommodated than the Mingrelians.

On the 9th I proceeded five leagues across a fertile plain, and at night arrived at Acalzika. This is a fortress built in a hollow between near twenty little hills. It has a double wall and towers, with ancient battlements on the top; but it has very few guns. On these eminences are about four hundred

houses, all of them lately built; the only ancient buildings are two Armenian churches. The town is inhabited by Turks, Armenians, Georgians, Greeks, and Jews. The Christians have churches, and the Jews a synagogue. There is also a small caravansera, built of wood, as are most of the houses in the place. The river Kur, or Cyrus, passes near it; it has its source in Mount Caucasus, and at length discharges itself into the Black Sea. The bassa of Acalzika lodges in the fortress, and the principal officers and militia dwell in the neighbouring villages.

On the 13th I set out from Acalzika, proceeding to the east, and having gone three leagues, found the plain of Acalzika contract, and the mountains approach each other, so that the plain is not more than half a league in breadth. It has there a strong Turkish castle, built on a rock on the side of the river Kur. The foot of this rock is encircled by a double wall, and about it is a little town, named Usker, between the fortress and the opposite mountain. Two leagues from thence we ascended a mountain that separates Persia from the dominions of the Turks, and then proceeded along the side of it. Upon this mountain are many villages; at its foot runs the Kur, and we there saw the ruins of several castles, fortresses and churches, vestiges of the former grandeur of the Georgians, and of the conquests of the Turks and Persians.

The two following days we passed through the delightful plain of Surham, by a large village, with a fortress of the same name. This plain is covered with little woods, villages, small eminences, houses of pleasure, and small castles of the Georgian lords. This fine country is entirely cultivated. We then

passed over a mountain, leaving on the right a city, which has now no more than 500 inhabited houses, though formerly it was said to have had 12,000, and to have been the see of a bishop.

I now approached Gory, and went directly to the house of the Capuchins, who are Italian missionaries of the congregation de propaganda fide, to whom I had letters of recommendation. I related to those fathers the misfortunes I had suffered in Mingrelia, and my being obliged to leave there the things I had brought for the king of Persia; that I was come into Georgia in search of assistance, entreating them to give it to me. They assured me that they would do every thing in their power to serve me, as soon as they received the orders of their prefect, who was at Teflis, the capital of Georgia. They gave me such reasons for going thither, that I resolved to set out immediately; and having hired a horse for me, the superior directed a lay-brother, named Angelo de Viterbo, to accompany me.

This lay-brother was both an honest man, and an able physician and surgeon, on which account he was much respected and esteemed. He was well acquainted with the language and country, and being endowed with much good sense, courage and patience, I could not have a better companion.

In two days we arrived at Teflis. The lay-brother led me to the convent of the Capuchins, where I immediately told the prefect the cause of my journey, and gave him my letters of recommendation. He was soon sensible of the necessity of attempting to recover what I had left there. It was agreed to say I was a Theatine, who had been sent to beg assistance of the Capuchins; and they were to send one of their companions with me, in order to bring them

away, on account of their being reduced to the greatest distress by the war.

This was no sooner determined than I prepared for the journey; I took out of my saddle and pillow the jewels I had concealed, and committed them to the care of the prefect. We thought we should never have been able to hire horses; but, by the means of money, we gained over two men, and gave security for their horses and clothes, in case they should be robbed of them. I also dismissed my valet, after I had expostulated with him on the numerous instances of treachery of which he had been guilty. I paid him for the whole time he had served me, and exhorted him to amendment; but this mildness had no effect, and the reader will see the dangerous snare he laid for me.

On the 20th of December I set out with brother Angelo and a Georgian belonging to the Capuchins, who had frequently been at Colchis and all the neighbouring countries, and whom the prefect recommended as a person in whom I might place the greatest confidence. We were only five men with four horses. Brother Angelo and I mounted two; the two others carried provisions, and every where we reported, that we were going in search of the Theatines of Mingrelia. We again passed mountains covered with snow, and at length arrived at a village named Sesano, situated in the finest part of the country of Imeretta.

The aunt to the king of Imeretta being sick, and hearing that a Capuchin was arrived at the village, sent for him; the missionaries being, in these countries, taken for physicians, and indeed they all practise physic. Brother Angelo went to her, and was in hopes of making this event turn to our advan-

tage. Two hours after he left us, a Capuchin of Gory arrived to inform us, that the valet I had dismissed had been at Gory, and discovered all he knew of my enterprise; swearing to ruin me, and he was gone nobody knew whither. This greatly alarmed me, and having given the Capuchin a thousand thanks, I prevailed on him to accompany me.

The next day we proceeded five leagues through a plain, which contains many villages and woods; leaving on our right the fortress of Scander, said by the natives to have been built by Alexander the Great. We afterwards passed by Chicaris, a village that contains fifty houses, and took up our lodging at the distance of a league from it, where we were obliged to stay two days; our carriers refusing to proceed farther. The news of the war made their hearts fail them; and they were seized with the dread of being led to death or slavery. To raise their courage, we told them that they had nothing to fear; that we were well informed of every thing; that we had our lives and goods to preserve as well as they, and that we would answer for the safety of their horses and persons. One of them spoke for the rest, and desired me to give them a writing, by which I would engage to buy them, in case they should be taken for slaves, or give one hundred and twenty crowns to their wives, if they should die. This I readily granted, and making them also other great promises, prevailed on them to proceed.

The next day we reached Cotatis, and lodged at the house of the bishop, who was not at home, but his officers gave us a very kind reception. Cotatis is built at the foot of a hill, on the banks of the river Phasis, and contains about two hundred houses.

At a little distance are those of the lords, and the king's palace. The town has neither fortifications nor walls. On a higher hill on the other side of the river, opposite the town, is the fortress of Cotatis, which has a high double wall, strengthened with towers.

I stayed at the town all the next day, when, while I was at dinner with the two Capuchins, the carriers and my guide being also, according to the custom of the country, at table with us, I saw the rogue of a valet enter, with an Armenian and a priest. I was not much surprised at seeing him, for my apprehensions kept him constantly in my thoughts. The villain entered with fury in his looks, and seated himself by my men, without being asked. This insolence offended me, and I asked from whence he came. He replied, from Acalzika, whence he had come in two days. I asked if the way was so easy, and the mountains so little covered with snow, that he could cross them in so short a time. "The way is the worst in the world," he cried, "and the mountains are covered with snow, like those we passed in coming to Gonia. You shall see, for you must come to Acalzika; I have orders from the bassa to bring you to that town." "You must have force to carry me thither," said I, "for I have no business there. You are ill-advised; you know I paid you at Teflis; and, if you are not satisfied, you ought to make known your demands; for without going so far as Acalzika on so trifling an affair, there are sufficient numbers at Cotatis capable of deciding it." This I spoke with the greatest mildness possible. But the villain turned with a furious air to his companion, and bid him bring in the Turks. He went out immediately; but this

was only an artifice to terrify me: I was, indeed, extremely frightened, and thought myself lost. The priest of Cotatis was ignorant of what passed, because we talked in the Turkish tongue; but being informed by father Angelo of the nature of the dispute, and the equity of my proposal, he immediately interested himself in the affair, and, with several Georgians, pressed the fellow to agree to so reasonable an offer; but the more they said, the more insolent and abusive he grew. Till at last, losing all patience, I struck at him with my sword; but they stopped my hand, and the villain fled in a great fright.

The next day, which was the 2d of January, brother Angelo set out with all the horses and men I had brought from Teflis, while I returned to Chicaris with the Capuchin, where we proposed to wait till his return.

I had continued there a fortnight, when one morning I was agreeably awakened by my comrade. He told me that brother Angelo, with the men and horses, arrived at Sipias on the 19th, when, to his great joy, he heard of my arrival at Teflis, and that I was then waiting for him near Cotatis. He instantly prepared for the journey, dug up the chests, and took out of the roof of the house half of what we had concealed there, and having staid till the 11th, to rest the horses, set out, leaving the remainder of the treasure to the care of the most faithful of our valets, not daring to run the hazard of losing the whole at once.

Having proceeded thus far, he added: "Don't be frightened at what I am going to relate, every thing goes well. On Saturday the 14th we happily arrived at Cotatis, and brother Angelo took me to

the bishop's house. I did not know of the menaces made you by the valet you had dismissed, till yesterday; if I had I should not have stopped at Cotatis. Father Angelo and our men, never once thinking of him, entreated me on Sunday morning to stay till noon, in order to refresh ourselves a little after our fatigues. I consented; but while we were at dinner, the rogue of a valet entered with twenty janizaries. 'Where is my master?' he cried with a loud voice: 'he attempted to kill me, and has not paid me; but I will certainly pay him.' He then looked about for you; but not finding you, he entered another room, with the hopes of finding you concealed there. I followed him, entreated him not to ruin us, and told him, that if my comrade had used him ill, or had not paid him, I was not answerable for it: but that, let his demands be what they would, I would pay him immediately, if he would but send away the Turks. He answered, that he agreed to this, and when he had dismissed them, he would come to me again.

"He then returned to the hall, and showing brother Angelo to the janizaries, bid them take that man to the governor of the fortress. He was instantly seized. The janizaries looked around to see if there was any thing they could steal, and casting their eyes on our two cloaks, carried them off. These were all they seized; they took none of my arms, nor the bags I carried about me, in which were gold and precious stones to the value of 40,000 crowns. The moment I saw the janizaries out of the house, I sent a valet to follow brother Angelo, and conjured the carriers to fly with us immediately. We saddled, and loaded our horses in an instant, and, thank God, arrived here in safety,

with every thing I brought from Mingrelia; having lost nothing but what the janizaries have taken, which is scarcely worth two pistoles."

It is impossible to express the joy I felt on this occasion. The Capuchin went immediately to the bishop and the queen, to complain to them both, and to desire them to procure the deliverance of father Angelo; and having now obtained more horses, my comrade set out on his return to Mingrelia, with five men, to take away the rest of the treasure, while I, with the Capuchin and three men, took the way to Teflis. But being arrived at Gory, I sent the Capuchin with a sum of money to Cotatis, in order to purchase the release of father Angelo.

On the evening of the 6th of February my comrade arrived at Teflis, with the remainder of the treasure, and the valets I had left in Colchis, together with a Theatine father, and brother Angelo: as soon as I had embraced them, the latter drew me aside, to tell me the sequel of his adventure.

"You have heard," said he, "in what manner your perfidious valet had me seized by the janizaries. The governor of the fortress of Cotatis had sent them, on his representing that you owed him three hundred crowns; that you were an ambassador; that you were going into Mingrelia in search of the treasures you had left there, and that in your person he would obtain a prize that would enrich him for ever. The villain pressed the janizaries who conducted me to the fortress, to bind me and use me ill; but there was among them a renegado Italian, who caused me to be treated more mildly. I walked along as slowly as possible, and amused them, to give your comrade time to fly; for I did

not doubt but that he would take that step. When they had brought me before the governor, he asked the villain, if I was his master; he replied, that I was not, and that he could not find him; but that I certainly knew where he was. The governor then examined me about you; I told him I did not know where you were; but that when you left me, you designed to go to Teflis. He then asked me many questions about your quality, and told me, that I should pay the three hundred crowns it was pretended you owed. I replied, that you were a poor friar, who had taken the trouble to give me notice of the miserable state to which those of your order were reduced in Mingrelia; and upon this I was going to visit them. That this was all I knew of you, and that every body at Cotatis, from the king to the meanest of his subjects, knew that I made a profession of poverty.

“Upon this the governor ordering me to be searched, they found the girdle you had given me, wherein was seven pistoles; but the jewels you had wrote to your comrade to give me, I had happily not received. The governor then cried, ‘Wretch, where are the riches thou hast promised me; hast thou brought this poor man to mock me? Thou art a villain, and I’ll order thee to be bastinadoed to death.’ ‘My lord,’ replied he, trembling, ‘these riches are in the hands of my master’s comrade, who is at the bishop’s.’ ‘Dog as thou art, returned the governor, why hast thou not brought him then? Go and fetch him.’ He went with the janizaries. I was dreadfully afraid that he would find him; but my fear was turned into joy, when returning, the janizaries reported he was fled. The governor flew into a rage against your valet, who

appeared confounded. I then related the ill offices he had done you, and how generously you had paid him his wages.

“At night the governor invited me to supper, and learning that I was a physician, made me visit some soldiers in the fortress, to whom I administered remedies. The next day the queen and bishop sent two gentlemen to the governor to demand my release, and at noon there came two others from a great lord of the country, whose lady being ill, and hearing that I was confined in the fortress for debt, paid the governor twenty-five crowns for my discharge; and I was released, notwithstanding the clamours of the valet, who said that you would give a thousand crowns, rather than leave me there. I now went to visit the lady, and a few days after, father Justin arrived at Chicaris, where hearing that I was with this lord, he came to me, restored the twenty-five crowns, and we went together to Chicaris. Two days after your comrade arrived, with the remains of what had been left in Mingrelia. He told us the way he had taken to avoid coming near Cotatis; and that he had heard the rogue of a valet was confined in the fortress, and, probably, would not escape without due chastisement.”

It was late, but my comrade and I could not go to supper till after we had some discourse on the happy success of our labours. We could not have hoped thus to save every thing, when we were surrounded with dangers that made us dread the loss of all; yet our losses in this fatal journey had amounted to no more than about one per cent.

CHAP. IV.

A description of Georgia, and of the manners of the inhabitants; the capital city, Teflis, described. Sir John Chardin proceeds to Dilyjan, and thence to Irivan, which, with the customs and manners of the inhabitants is described. He travels to Nacchivan, Abrener, Julfa, and Taurus to Ispahan.

GEORGIA, by which I would be understood to mean the whole country of that name subject to Persia, is bounded on the east by Circassia and Russia, on the west by Armenia Minor, on the south by Armenia Major, and on the north by the Black Sea, and that part of Mingrelia called Imeretta. This is, in my opinion, the whole country the ancients distinguished by the name of Iberia. It has many woods and mountains, that inclose large and beautiful plains; but the middle part, which is watered by the river Kur, the ancient Cyrus, is the most fertile. The natives call themselves Carthueli; and, it is said the Greeks gave them the name of Georgoi, which, in their language, signifies Labourers.

The air of Georgia is dry; very cold in winter, and hot in summer. The fine weather does not begin till the month of May; but then it lasts till the end of November. The inhabitants are, therefore, obliged to water the earth; by which means it produces all sorts of grain and fruit in the greatest profusion. The bread is as good as any in the world. The fruits are excellent, and of ail sorts: no part of Europe produces finer or better tasted pears and apples; nor any part of Asia more excellent pomegranates. The cattle are extremely nu-

merous, and very good. The wild-boars are as common and as delicate as in Mingrelia; and the common people live almost entirely upon swine, which are seen all over the country, and their flesh is not only palatable, but very wholesome. The wild fowl are incomparable, and of all sorts. The Caspian Sea, which is near Georgia, and the Kur, which runs through it, afford the greatest plenty of sea and fresh-water fish,

In no other country do the inhabitants drink so much, or such excellent wine. The vines grow about the trees as in Mingrelia, and great quantities of wine are sent from Teflis into Armenia, Media, and to Ispahan. A horse load, which is three hundred weight, sells for about the value of eight shillings: this is the price of the best sort, for the ordinary wine does not sell for more than half as much. Georgia also produces great quantities of silk, which is exported to Turkey and the neighbouring countries.

The Georgians are the handsomest people not only in the East, but, I believe, in the whole world; I never observed an ordinary person of either sex in this country, and I have seen some that have been quite angelical. Nature has given most of the women such graces as are no where else to be seen; and it is impossible to behold, without loving them. They are tall, easy, not encumbered with fat, and have slender waists: but they injure their beauty with paint, which they use as an ornament, in the same manner as jewels and rich clothes are worn among us,

The Georgians have naturally much wit, and, had they a proper education, might possibly be distinguished by their learning, and their skill in the arts

and sciences; but the neglect of all instruction, and the force of ill example, render them ignorant, dishonest, and extremely vicious. They will, with the greatest effrontery, deny what they have said and done, and assert and vindicate the most notorious falsehoods. They are irreconcilable in their hatred, and never forgive; but then they are not easily displeased, and never conceive a perpetual hatred without just cause of anger. They are addicted to drunkenness and luxury, which are not even esteemed crimes. The women are no less vicious than the men; their desires are warm, and they are even more to blame than the other sex, for that torrent of impurity that overflows the country. The Georgians are also great usurers. In other respects they are civil, friendly, and appear with great gravity. Their manners and customs are a mixture of those of most of the nations that surround them. This, I believe, proceeds from the commerce they carry on with many different countries, and from the liberty every one enjoys in Georgia, of living according to his own religion and customs, and of freely defending them. Here you see Armenians, Greeks, Turks, Persians, Indians, Tartars, and Moscovites. The Armenians are even more numerous than the Georgians themselves; they are also more rich, and fill most of the inferior posts and employments of the state; but the Georgians are more powerful, more vain, and ostentatious. The difference between their dispositions, manners and belief, has caused a reciprocal hatred. They naturally abhor each other, and never intermarry. The Georgians, in particular, consider the Armenians in much the same light as that in which many Europeans behold the Jews.

The habit of the Georgians is almost like that of the Poles: they wear their bonnets like theirs; their vests are open at the breast, and fastened with buttons and loops; their covering for the legs and feet resembles that of the Persians, and the habit of the women is entirely Persian.

The houses of the great, and all the public edifices, are erected on the same models as those in Persia. They build very cheap, for they have wood, stone, plaister and lime in abundance. They also imitate the Persians in their manner of sitting, lying and eating.

The nobility exercise the most tyrannical power over their vassals, whom they oblige to work for them whole months together, and as often as they please, without giving them either pay or food. They think they have a right to their substance, liberty and lives; they take their children and sell them, or keep them as slaves: but they seldom sell any, especially women, who are above twenty years of age.

The Georgians are almost as ignorant with respect to religion as the Mingrelians. Both these countries received the knowledge of Christianity in the fourth century, from a woman of Iberia, who embraced the Christian religion at Constantinople; and both have now lost the spirit of it. There are many bishops in Georgia, besides the catholicos or patriarch. The prince, though of the Mahometan religion, commonly fills the vacant sees, and generally chooses his own relations; even the catholicos is his brother. The churches in the towns are kept in decent order, but in the country they are very dirty. The Georgians, like other Christians situated to the north and the west of them, have a strange custom

of building most of their churches on the top of mountains, in distant and almost inaccessible places: they see and salute them at three or four leagues distance, but they hardly ever go to them; and it is certain that most of them are not opened once in ten years. They build them, and then abandon them to the injuries of the weather, and to the birds. The reason of this custom I could never discover.

Most of the Georgian lords make an outward profession of the Mahometan religion; some to gain employments at court, or pensions from the state, others to obtain the honour of marrying their daughters to the prince, or only to introduce them to the service of his women. There are some of these base nobles, who will, themselves, lead the most beautiful of their daughters to the prince, for which they are rewarded by a post in the government, or a pension.

Georgia has but four fortified towns, Teflis, Gory, Suram and Aly, of which the former is the capital of the province. It is situated at the foot of a mountain, and by it runs the river Kur. The city is surrounded with handsome, strong walls, except on the river-side, and extends from north to south. It has a large fortress on the declivity of the mountain, where the garrison consists only of native Persians. Here is a public square, an arsenal, and a market. The prince of Georgia is obliged to pass through this fortress, when he goes, according to custom, without the gates of the city, to receive the letters and presents sent him by the king of Persia; because the city has no other entrance on the road from Persia, but through this fortress; and the prince never passes through it, without apprehensions that the governor has secret orders to seize

his person. Teflis has fourteen churches, which is a great number in a country where there is so little devotion. Six of these belong to the Georgians, and the remainder to the Armenians. The cathedral, which is called Sion, is situated on the bank of the river, and is entirely built with hewn stones. It is an ancient building, very entire, and has four naves. In the middle is a large dome, supported by four massy pillars. The great altar is in the centre of the nave facing the east. The inside is filled with modern Greek paintings, executed by such wretched hands, that it is extremely difficult to discover what they are intended to represent. To this edifice joins the bishop's palace, and the principal churches of the Georgians:

Though this city belongs to the empire of Persia, and is governed by a prince who professes the Mahometan religion, it has not one mosque. The Persians have, indeed, made use of their utmost endeavours to build them, but have never been able to accomplish it; for the people immediately rose in arms, pulled down the work, and beat the workmen. The princes of Georgia were glad of these seditions, though they pretended the contrary; for having abjured the Christian religion only to obtain the viceroyalty, they were not willing to consent to the establishment of Mahometanism. The Georgians are naturally mutinous, fickle, and brave; and being situated near the Turks, the Persians have not been willing to come to extremities with them; hence Teflis and all Georgia are allowed the liberty of preserving their religion. They use bells in their churches; they daily sell pork in the market, and wine is sold at the corners of the streets.

The public buildings of Teflis make a handsome

appearance; they are of stone, and kept in good order, particularly the bazars and caravanseras. The palace of the prince is one of the principal ornaments of the city. It has grand saloons, which open upon the river, and front very extensive gardens. There are aviaries filled with a great number of birds of different kinds, and a very noble falconry. Before the palace is a large square, which is surrounded with shops; and opposite the gate of the palace is the grand bazar, from the upper end of which the square and the front of the palace appear in a beautiful perspective. In the neighbourhood of the city are many pleasure-houses and fine gardens.

On the 10th, the prefect of the Capuchins informed the viceroy of my arrival; which, indeed, could not be concealed from a prince, who knows the most trifling things that happen at Teflis: but I was desirous of seeing him, and presenting the passports of the king of Persia, addressed to all the governors of provinces, to whom I was strongly recommended; for I had no doubt but at the sight of these orders he would give me a good reception, and an escort to conduct me out of his dominions. This prince, who is called Chanavas Khan, told the prefect I was welcome, and that I should do him a favour to come and see him as soon as I could. On the 12th he sent a gentleman to inform me, that as he was entering on a week of rejoicing, every day during which he should give a public entertainment to his whole court, he invited me to come. The Capuchins entreated my comrade and I to dress as well as possible, and, on their account, to make a noble present to the prince. To this I agreed, being very glad of an opportunity of showing my gra-

titude for the important services I had received from them.

It was near noon when we went to the palace, accompanied by the prefect, and one of the community, named father Raphael. The prince was in a hall about a hundred feet long and forty broad, built on the bank of the river, with an open front on that side. The ceiling was covered with mosaic work, and supported by a number of pillars between twenty-five and thirty feet in height, painted and gilt; the whole room was covered with rich tapestry. The prince and the principal nobility were placed near three fires, which, with several pans of coals, sufficiently heated the room. Chanavas Khan causes himself to be saluted like the king of Persia, by kneeling at two or three paces distance, and bowing the head three times successively to the floor. But this is dispensed with in regard to the Europeans, and I saluted him without kneeling. Two gentlemen in waiting afterwards led me to my place, but I would not sit above the Capuchins, for I was glad of an opportunity of doing them honour.

While I was bowing, a gentleman at the door of the hall took my letters patent from the king of Persia, which I held in my hand, and the present for the prince, which I had brought, and had ranged in a large silver bowl. The prince opened the patent, put it to his mouth, then to his forehead, and gave it to his first minister to tell him the contents: afterwards he looked at the present, which was placed at his feet, with much curiosity and pleasure. It consisted of a large watch in a silver case, chased and gilt; a crystal mirror mounted in silver; a gold box enamelled, to hold pills of opium, which most of the Persians take several times in the day; a very

neat case of surgeon's instruments, and knives with curious handles.

The first minister, after having read the patent, in a low voice, told the prince what it contained. All the great men admired the words wrote in gold, and the flowered work in the margin, which was very large. It was one sheet of paper, two feet and a half long, and thirteen or fourteen inches broad. Besides the writing in gold, there were words in blue, and others in red; thus the principal words and sentences were distinguished, while the rest were wrote in black.

In bowing to the viceroy I spoke not a word, nor did he move. A moment after I was seated, he sent me half a large loaf, which stood before him, upon a gilt dish, and ordered me to be told, that I was welcome. A little after he sent to ask me, how the war went on between the Turks and the Poles.

I shall not describe the order and magnificence of this feast; I shall only say, that a great deal of wine was drunk, and that a prodigious quantity of meat was eaten. We arose from table, after having sat three hours; and the roast meat was not yet brought in. We made a low bow to the prince, on our retiring, when he sent again to tell us, we were welcome, and ordered us to be conducted home.

On the 16th the prince invited us to the marriage of his niece, which was performed at the palace. I went there with the prefect, and father Raphael, one of the Capuchins; but the marriage ceremony was almost over before we arrived. It was celebrated in the grand saloon, where we had dined before, and, being full of ladies, no men were admitted but the prince and his near relations.

On the 20th, I desired the prefect and father

Raphael to return thanks to the prince for the honours he had conferred upon me, and to desire him to grant me an officer to conduct me as far as Iriyan, the capital of Armenia Major; to which the prince readily agreed. He professed to entertain an esteem for the Europeans, and that he should be glad to have a number of them settled in Georgia; and added, that if they came thither for the sake of trade, he would grant them all the advantages they could desire; and, that as his country extended to the Black Sea, they would find their advantage in travelling through it to the East-Indies.

On the 28th of February we left Teflis; the next day we proceeded eight leagues through a beautiful plain, to the town of Cuprikent, or the Village of the Bridge. The town consists of about one hundred and fifty houses, and the bridge, which joins two mountains that are separated by the river, is supported by four unequal arches, that rise from two irregular masses of rock found in the river. Those at the two ends open on each side, and are hollowed out into small chambers, or porticoes, for the accommodation of passengers: an arch near the middle of the river has an opening on each side, with two chambers at the ends, and two large covered balconies, where the people may enjoy the fresh air during the heat of summer. You here descend by two flight of stairs, which are cut down from the arch.

The three following days we passed over high mountains, difficult of access, and arrived on the 4th of March at Dilyjan, a town consisting of about three hundred houses, situated on a river that runs at the foot of a high and frightful mountain, which, as well as the others we had passed, forms a

part of Mount Taurus. On these high mountains we were much incommoded by the snow and cold; but there is every where to be found abundance of water, and here and there are small fertile plains. The goodness of the soil, and the number of the villages, are almost incredible; some of these are on points of land, so high that the passengers below can scarcely see them. Most of them are inhabited by Georgian and Armenian Christians; but they are not intermixed, for they are such enemies, that they will not dwell together in the same village.

Most of the houses in these villages are properly caverns, for they are hollowed out of the earth. The others are built of large beams quite up to the top, which is made flat, and covered with turf, an opening being left in the middle to admit the light, and let out the smoke: this hole they stop when they please. The above caverns have the advantage of being warm in winter, and cool in summer.

The town of Dilyjan, and all the country for six leagues round, is called the territory of Casac, and depends on Persia, in the same manner as Georgia. it being always governed by its natural princes, in a direct line from father to son. Abas the Great conquered all these countries, at the same time that he made himself master of Georgia.

On the 5th we proceeded five leagues in passing the frightful mountain already mentioned. The whole mountain was covered with snow, and nothing else could be seen above us. The road was a narrow path of snow, hardened by being trampled upon by travellers and their hores: and as soon as we set foot out of this path, we sunk up to the middle. There is no possibility of passing this mountain while the snow is falling, or when the wind blows;

for then the track is lost, and thus many people perish every year. This snow never melts, and the mountain is perpetually covered with it.

The next day, though half dead, I continued my journey, and, spurred on by the hopes of finding some relief at Irivan, we proceeded five leagues to Bickni, a considerable town, situated at the foot of a mountain, on the banks of the Zengui, and lodged at a handsome monastery belonging to the Armenians, built between the town and the mountain. The monks received me with much humanity; but it being lent, nothing could prevail upon them to make me some chicken-broth, and my conductor was obliged to make use of all his authority to get me a few eggs.

The next morning, at break of day, we departed, after having made a small present to the monastery, and travelled nine leagues over plains covered with snow. The travelling in these snows is attended with great pain and danger, from the rays of the sun, which falling upon it, give it an insupportable brightness, that was very prejudicial to the sight, notwithstanding all the precautions we could take, by following the example of the natives, in putting a thin black or green silk handkerchief before our eyes, which only served to lessen the evil. When we met with peasants, it was necessary to dispute who should enter the snow, for the track was so narrow, that two horses could not pass by each other upon it. When the numbers are equal, they usually come to blows, otherwise the weakest yield. They unload their horses, and make them enter the snow, in which they sink up to their bellies, and thus stand to give a passage to the others. To this all whom we met were obliged by my conductor to

submit. We passed by several towns and villages, and at night arrived at Irivan.

Irivan is a large dirty city, the greatest part of which is filled with gardens and vineyards. It is situated in a plain surrounded with mountains, and on the banks of two rivers, the Zengui washing it to the north-west, and a river called the Forty Fountains, from the number of its sources, running to the south-west. The fortress, which is at a little distance, might pass for a small city. It is of an oval form, four thousand paces round, and contains eight hundred houses. None live in it but native Persians. The Armenians have shops, in which they work, and trade in the day; but at night they shut them up, and return to their houses. This fortress has three walls of earth, and battlements of white bricks, flanked with towers, and provided with narrow ramparts, extending on the north to a dreadful precipice, above two hundred yards deep, at the bottom of which flows the river. This inaccessible part is only fortified with terraces, furnished with artillery. The garrison consists of two thousand Persians. It has as many gates and walls, all of them cased with iron, and defended by batteries, porteullises, and fortified guard-houses. The palace of the governor of the province is on the brink of the precipice, and makes a handsome appearance. On an eminence, at a thousand paces distance, is a fort, fortified with a double wall and artillery, that commands the fortress.

There are several churches in the city, the principal of which is the bishop's, and another called Catovike; these were erected during the reigns of the last kings of Armenia. The others, which have been since built, are small, and sunk in the

earth, and have some resemblance to catacombs.

Near the episcopal church is an old tower, built of hewn stones; but I could neither learn the time nor the use for which it was built. On the outside are inscriptions, in characters like those of the Armenians, but the Armenians cannot read them. This is an antique work, of a singular architecture, and around it are several ruins, which seem to have belonged to a cloister. Near the above structure is a mosque, in ruins; and at some distance is a large square, four hundred paces in diameter, surrounded with trees: this is used for carousals, horse-races, wrestling-matches, and all exercises either on horse-back or on foot. There are many baths in the town and fortress, and several caravanseras; the finest of which is within five hundred paces of the castle. It was built a few years ago by the governor of Armenia. The gate is eighty paces deep, and forms a fine gallery, filled with shops, where all sorts of stuffs are sold. The body of the edifice is square, and contains three great lodging-rooms, and sixty small ones, with large stables, and many spacious warehouses. Before it is a market, surrounded with shops, in which are sold all sorts of provisions; and by the side of it is a fine mosque, and two coffee-houses.

Irivan is situated in $41^{\circ} 15'$ north latitude, and enjoys a good air; but it is thick, and very cold. The winter lasts long, and the snow sometimes falls in April. The country is, however, extremely fertile, and the wine produced in its neighbourhood is good and cheap. The Armenians have a tradition, that Noah planted the vine near Irivan, and point out the spot. All sorts of provisions are produced in the neighbourhood of the city, and sold at a low

price. The two rivers that flow by its side, and the lake of Irivan, which is at three small days journey to the north-west, furnish the city with fine fish, particularly trouts and carp, that are remarkably good, and famous all over the east; some of them I have seen three feet long.

The Armenians esteem this the most ancient city in the world, and believe that Noah dwelt there, both before and after the deluge, when he descended from the mountain on which the ark rested. They even say, that here was the terrestrial paradise.

At twelve leagues from Irivan, is the celebrated mountain, on which almost all the people of the country are firmly persuaded that the ark rested. This mountain is so high and large, that when the air is clear, it does not appear above two leagues distant. The Armenians even believe that the ark is still on the summit of this mountain, and say that a monk named James, being resolved to see it, or die in the attempt, went half way up the acclivity; but could go no farther, because, having ascended thus far every day, he was, while asleep in the night, carried back to the place where he set out in the morning. They add, that this continued a long time, till God being willing to satisfy, in part, his desires, sent him a piece of the ark by an angel, and ordered him to be told, that all access to the top was forbidden to mankind.

At the foot of the mountain is a village of Christians, and a monastery; for which the Armenians have great devotion, believing that Noah first offered sacrifices there after the deluge. This is called the monastery of the Apostles; from its being pretended that the bodies of St. Andrew and St. Mat-

they were found there, and that the skull of that evangelist is preserved in the church of the monastery.

I having sent to inform the governor of Irivan of my arrival, a messenger came to tell me I was welcome; and that he was very desirous of seeing me, and a part of my jewels I had brought. I was then asked, how many men I had with me, and whether I chose to lodge in the fortress, or in the great caravansera. I chose the latter; because there can be no place more secure, and there is no want of company; for merchants come there from all parts of Asia. On this the governor giving orders for my having one of the best apartments, I went thither the next day, with all my baggage, and about noon an officer belonging to the governor brought me an order from the intendant, to receive daily from the proper officer, bread, wine, flesh, fish, fruit, rice, butter, wood, and other necessaries fit for six persons.

On the 10th I went, by the governor's desire, to pay him a visit, and found him in a large, handsome, light closet, with several lords of the country. He treated me with great complaisance, told me three times that I was welcome, and entertained me with sweet-meats and Russian brandy. I showed him my patents, after which he spent an hour in asking me news of Europe, in relation to the wars in that part of the world; the present disposition of the Christian princes, and the state of the sciences, with the new discoveries that had been made. He spent another hour in examining the jewels I had brought, of which he talked like one who was well acquainted with them. He set aside those that particularly pleased him, and such as he

thought would be agreeable to the princess his wife. Having kept me to dinner, he honoured me afterwards with his conversation for half an hour longer, and then dismissed me, ordering my mehemander to suffer me to want for nothing.

This governor was one of the greatest lords of Persia; he was beloved by the king, and revered by the court; his two sons were his majesty's chief favourites; and he was respected by the people, on account of his justice and integrity. Indeed he well deserved his good fortune; for, besides these amiable qualities, he was a man of sense, and fond of the arts and sciences.

On the 12th I dismissed the officer belonging to the viceroy of Georgia, who had conducted me to Irvan, on which occasion I made him a present of eight pistoles.

On the 5th of April the governor went to a camp, which he had caused to be formed a league from the city, in a large and beautiful meadow, always covered with flowers during the spring. The two rivers that pass by Irvan, wind in a serpentine course, with a gentle stream, forming many small islands. The governor's quarter, and that of the princess his wife, and those of the most considerable persons who accompanied them, were separate, and each in an island; but they had a communication with each other, by means of small flying bridges. The governor's tent was extremely magnificent; they had all the accommodations of a palace, in miniature, even to baths and stoves. His household consisted of five hundred men, without reckoning women and eunuchs. The great are here accustomed thus to pass the spring in the country. They take the diversions of hunting, fishing, walk-

ing, and exercises on foot and on horseback. Thus they taste the freshness of the air, of which they are extremely fond, and if they have no business that call them to the city, they continue to enjoy these delights during the summer, in the most delicious parts of the neighbouring mountains.

I left Irivan on the 8th of April, and on the 12th arrived at Nacchivan, once a vast city, but now a prodigious heap of ruins. Five leagues to the north is a large village named Abrener, which signifies a fertile field. The inhabitants of this, and seven other neighbouring little villages, are of the Roman Catholic religion. A Dominican of Bologna, 350 years ago, brought this part of the country under the authority of the Pope, and above twenty other villages submitted to him; but they have since returned to their obedience to the Armenian patriarch; the number of those who adhere to the church of Rome diminishing daily, on account of the persecution of the patriarch and the governors of Nacchivan.

The next day having passed the river Nacchivan over a large bridge, we proceeded through a dry and barren country, to the river Aras, the ancient Araxes, opposite the ruins of the city of Julfa the old. The city was situated on the declivity of a mountain, facing the river. The avenues that led to it, which were naturally difficult of access, were guarded by forts. I don't think there is in the world a more hideous and barren place, neither a tree nor a blade of grass is to be seen.

It was Abas the Great who ruined Julfa. That great and polite prince, seeing his forces unequal to those of his enemies, and reflecting on the means of preventing their returning every year into Persia,

to make and preserve their conquests there, resolved to render all the country a desert between Erzerum and Tauris, on a line with Iriwan and Nacchivan, which was the way by which the Turks commonly came, where they fortified themselves, because they found provisions sufficient for the subsistence of their army. He therefore removed the inhabitants and the cattle, ruined the edifices of every kind, set fire to all the fields and trees, and even poisoned several fountains.

But to return: the Aras has its source in the mountains on which it is pretended that Noah's ark rested, and after dividing Armenia and Media, falls into the Caspian Sea. This river is large and rapid: bridges have been built over it, but however massy and strong they were made, they could not resist the force of the current. Indeed the noise of the waters, and the rapidity of their course, are very astonishing. We passed it in a large boat, made to carry twenty horses and thirty persons at a time. I suffered none to pass over with me but my men and my baggage. Four men took care of the boat, and proceeded three hundred paces along the bank up the river; by little and little they got into the stream, and then made use of only a long helm, to direct its course to the other bank. The boat was then driven by the current with an incredible impetuosity, and proceeded five hundred paces in an instant. The boat-men were above two hours in going and coming, on account of the efforts they were obliged to make in going against the stream.

I have observed that this river separates Armenia from Media. This last kingdom, which formerly held the empire of Asia, composes only a part

of a province of Persia, called Azerbeyan, or Asurpaican.

We now proceeded to the north-west, and the next day reached Marant, a good city, composed of 2,500 houses, situated at the foot of a hill, at the end of a fine fertile plain, watered by a small river named Zeloulou. The gardens of the Marant take up more room than the town itself, and produce great quantities of fruit, esteemed the best in Media. In this country is also gathered the cochineal insect.

From hence we proceeded four leagues, constantly turning between the mountains; afterwards we passed through fine fertile plains, that are well cultivated, and on the 17th arrived at Tauris, the second city of Persia, both with respect to its extent, its commerce, riches, and the number of its inhabitants.

Tauris is situated in a plain, at the foot of a mountain: it is of an irregular figure, and has neither walls nor fortifications. Through it passes the little river Spingtcha, which sometimes swelling, carries away the houses on its banks. Another river called the Agi, passes by the north side of the city, and is salt six months in the year, from the torrents which fall into it, after they have passed over lands covered with salt. The city is divided into nine quarters, or wards; the bazars composing the heart of the city, and the dwelling-houses, most of which have a garden, are on the outside. There are here many magnificent structures, the bazars just mentioned make as fine an appearance as in any part of Asia, from their largeness and great extent; from the beautiful domes with which they are covered; from the multitude of people, and the vast quantity

of merchandize with which they are filled. The finest of these, in which the jewels and most valuable merchandize are sold, is an octagon, and is called the Kaiferie, or Royal Market. As to the other public buildings, they are equally noble. There are said to be three hundred caravanseras, which are so spacious, that three hundred persons may lodge in each; and the mosques and baths are answerable to the grandeur of the other buildings. There are three hospitals in the city, in which nobody is lodged; but provisions are given twice a-day to all who come. Upon a hill, at the west end of the city, is a pretty hermitage, and at the east end are the ruins of a castle.

There is the largest square at Tauris I have ever seen; it being much more spacious than that of Ispahan. The Turks, when they were in possession of this city, have frequently drawn up within this square 30,000 men in order of battle. In the evening the populace are diverted there with drolls, mountebanks, wrestling, ram and bull-fights; the repeating of pieces in prose and verse, and dancing wolves. The people of Tauris place their highest entertainment in seeing these dances: those wolves that are most expert at them are sold for fifty crowns each. This spacious square is in the day time used as a market for all kinds of provisions.

The number of inhabitants in Tauris, I believe, amounts to at least 550,000 people, besides a multitude of strangers that are constantly there from all parts of Asia. The finest Persian turbans are made in this city, and I have been assured by the principal merchants, that the inhabitants annually manufacture 6,000 bails of silk. The commerce of

this city extends not only all over Persia, but into Turkey, Russia, Tartary, the Indies and the Black Sea.

Though Tauris is situated only in the thirty-eighth degree of north latitude, the air is cold, dry and healthful. This proceeds from its being exposed to the north, and from the tops of the surrounding mountains being covered with snow nine months in the year; from whence the wind almost constantly blows in the evenings and the mornings. The city abounds with all the necessaries and luxuries of life; and these are extremely cheap. The Caspian Sea, which is not above forty leagues distant, supplies it with fish, which are also found in the river Agi, already mentioned. In the summer they have abundance of deer and wild fowls: in the mountains are eagles, which the people of distinction bring down with the hawk. This kind of fowling is very curious and astonishing. All kinds of fruit are in the greatest plenty, and there are said to be above sixty sorts of grapes in the neighbourhood of the city. In short, there is not any part of Persia, where a person may live better and cheaper than at Tauris.

In the neighbourhood of the city are large quarries of white marble; one kind of which is transparent: and at a small distance are two little mines, the one of gold, and the other of salt: the gold mine has, however, been long neglected; the quantity found of that valuable metal being so small, as to be scarcely worth the labour of procuring it.

I stayed at Tauris for some time, during which I sold a number of jewels to the governor, and the son of the receiver-general of the province, for which I received a thousand crowns; but they

would not allow me to get any thing by them; the first placed to my account his father's interest with the shah, and the other that of his brother's, and of his uncle, Mirza Sadec, the great chancellor, forcing me to take the letters of recommendation they offered me, as a recompence for giving them the profit I ought to have made. It is impossible to conceive the caresses, the flattery, the engaging and agreeable behaviour, used by the great in Persia, to promote their own interest, even in affairs of the smallest moment; in which they act with such an appearance of sincerity, that a person ought to be perfectly acquainted with the genius of the country and of the court, to prevent his being deceived by them.

As this was the time when the Curdes, the Turkumans, and other nations who dwell in tents, and are mostly robbers, quit the plains, on account of the heat of the sun, and remove, with their flocks and habitations, into the mountains, in search of shade and pasture, we were advised, for the greater security, to wait for company; for this purpose I staid till the 28th of May, and then set out with the provost of the merchants, who had fourteen horses and ten valets.

The first night we lodged at Vaspinge, a town consisting of six hundred houses. Several fine rivulets run with a serpentine stream on all sides, and it is adorned with many gardens and plantations of poplar and linden trees, that are raised for the use of building. The next day we proceeded through fertile plains, interspersed with villages; our road then winded among the mountains, and again opened into plains, and after crossing several rivers, we arrived, on the 5th of June, at the city of Zen-

gan, situated in a valley between the mountains, where they are not above half a league distant from each other.

This city is surrounded with gardens, and a pleasant country, but on the inside it is only remarkable for the extent of its ruins. It is said to have been founded several centuries before the birth of Christ, and that it once contained 20,000 houses. It was entirely destroyed by Tamerlane, on his first coming to it; but he afterwards hearing that the sciences had long flourished there, and that it had produced many great men, caused it to be, in part, rebuilt: since that time, it has been frequently sacked and plundered by the Turks,

On the 6th we passed through the most delightful country I ever beheld, the way was even and straight, through a fine plain, watered by a considerable number of brooks, that rendered it extremely fertile: we saw so many villages that we could scarce count them; with a variety of gardens and groves, through which were beautiful avenues, that afforded the finest landscapes. Having proceeded five leagues through these pleasing scenes, we alighted at a large caravansera, within a cannon-shot of Sultania.

This city, which is situated at the foot of a mountain, makes a fine appearance at a distance; but on approaching it, the beauties we admire afar off vanish. There are, however, some public edifices that are well built, and about 3,000 houses.

The next day we travelled through plains as beautiful as the former, and on the 8th arrived at Ebher, a considerable town, intermixed with gardens, built on the banks of a small river that runs through the midst of it. Its situation is extremely

agreeable; the air is good, and the soil produces abundance of fruit, and all the necessaries of life.

Leaving Casbin, or Caswin, to the right, we proceeded on our journey towards Ispahan. We had, for some time, set out an hour or two before sun-set, and completed a journey of five or six leagues by about midnight. People in the East generally travel in this manner during the heat of the summer, to secure themselves from the heat of the sun, which is very fatiguing both to man and beast. In the night they travel with greater speed. The servants, from time to time, proceed on foot, and their masters themselves are glad to walk a little, to prevent their being seized with sleep, and to keep themselves warm, which eases the horses. On their arrival they go to bed, and gain in the day the sleep they lost in the night. Another advantage of travelling in the night is, that the beasts of burden take their rest at a time when they would be incommoded by the heat of the sun and the flies. Besides, what is wanted both for man and beast may be more easily provided during the day.

On the 13th, two hours before day, we arrived at Sava, a city situated in a sandy and stony plain. It is two miles round, and encompassed with a wall; but it is thinly peopled, and the houses in the suburbs are ruinous, for want of inhabitants: the walls are also but ill preserved. However, the remains of some grand edifices show that it was once a place of great importance. The histories of Persia agree, that the whole plain of Sava was formerly a morass, or salt-lake, like that called the Sea of Salt, which lies twenty leagues to the west of this city, and is crossed by a causeway extending thirty leagues, in going from Ispahan to Hyrcania.

Opposite Sava, to the west, is a tomb, rendered famous by the Persians going in pilgrimage to it; this is called Echmoul, or Samuel, from the opinion that this prophet was interred there. They have built over his tomb a fine mausoleum, in the middle of a magnificent mosque.

At the distance of nine leagues to the east of the city, are some ruins of the ancient city of Rey, once the largest in all Asia. The Persian geographers say, that in the ninth century it was divided into 96 quarters, each of which had 46 streets, 400 houses, and 10 mosques: that the city also contained 4,600 colleges, 16,600 baths, 15,000 minarets belonging to mosques, 12,000 mills, 1,700 canals, and 13,000 caravanseras. The Arabian authors represent it as the most populous city in Asia, and that, except Babylon, no city ever exceeded it in wealth, and the number of inhabitants. Hence it obtained the pompous titles given it in history, as, the Spouse of the World, the Gate of the Gates of the Earth, and the Market of the Universe. This city was situated in $30^{\circ} 35'$ north latitude.

On the 13th we proceeded to Kom, a large city situated along the bank of a river. It has also several handsome caravanseras, and fine mosques; the most beautiful of these last is, that in which are interred the princess Fatima, Mahomet's daughter, and the two last kings of Persia. The structure of this mosque is beautiful, and its ornaments extremely sumptuous. The access is through four large and stately courts, the first of which is a handsome garden, and the last is paved with transparent marble, and surrounded with neat lodgings for the priests. The door to each mausoleum is plated with silver, and the tombs are surrounded

with grates of the same metal. Nothing can be imagined richer, neater and more magnificent, than these mausolea. To that of Fatima the Persians give the name of Massuma, or pure, and hold it in great veneration. There is a revenue of 3,200 to-mans belonging to the place.

We left Kom on the 16th, and three days after arrived at Casan, a large town, the houses of which are built of earth and brick. It has several caravanseras, one of which was built by Shah Abbas, and is esteemed the finest in all Persia. On the inside are four noble rooms, surrounding a square court, with an arcade both above and below, that above being secured by a balustrade. The entrance is under a high and magnificent portico, which, as well as the rest of the building, is adorned with Mosaic work. In the middle of the court is a reservoir of water, raised about five feet high.

On the 24th we left Casan, and on the 29th arrived at Ispahan, the metropolis of Persia, and one of the largest cities in the world; for, including the suburbs, it is not less than twenty-four miles in circumference. It is built on the banks of the Zenderoud, over which are three fine bridges, one near the middle of the city, and one at each end. The walls of Ispahan are about 20,000 paces round; they are only built with earth, and are so hid by the houses and gardens, both on the inside and without, that, in many places, they cannot be seen. The city is also defended by a ditch and castle.

The beauty of Ispahan particularly consists in the great number of its magnificent palaces, handsome houses, large caravanseras, beautiful bazars, and in its canals, and spacious streets, the sides of which are adorned with rows of lofty plane-trees;

but the other streets are generally narrow and crooked. The worst is, they are not paved; but as, on the one hand, the air is very dry, and on the other, the people water the street, before their houses, morning and evening, they are neither so dirty nor so dusty as might be expected. They have three considerable inconveniences: one, that the streets being over vaults, made for the passage of the canals, which run under them, they sometimes fall in, and endanger the lives of the passengers. Another is, there being wells in the streets, the sides of which are even with the earth, by which the passengers are exposed to the same danger, if they do not take sufficient care. The third inconvenience is a very disagreeable one, which is, that under the walls of the houses are large holes for receiving all the filth, and sometimes serving as common necessaries. The streets, however, do not stink, as might be imagined; which is in part owing to the dryness of the air, and also to the pits being emptied every day by the peasants, who bring fruit and other provisions to the city, and load their cattle with the ordure, which they carry away to manure their gardens. This city, on every side, appears at a distance like a wood, intermixed with large and lofty domes and minarets.

CHAP. V.

The author leaves Ispahan, and visits the remains of the ancient palace of Persepolis, which are particularly described; proceeds to Schiras, to Laer, arrives at Gambroom.

ON the 2d of February, 1674, having sold great part of my jewels, I left Ispahan, and proceeded to

Mayar, a village consisting of three hundred houses, situated between two mountains, and extending from the one to the other, so that it is impossible to pass between them, without going through it. The country about it is, however, dry and barren, without trees or the least verdure, owing to the scarcity of the water, though the inhabitants have enough to supply their gardens.

On leaving this place the next day, the valleys extended three leagues together between the mountain. Then turning to the right, we entered a beautiful plain, of a vast extent, which I have had the pleasure of crossing several times, and have found, that from the middle of March to the middle of November it is covered with flowers, flocks, grain and fruit. We stopped at **Comicha**, or **Komminsja**, a town three miles round, but full of gardens, and thinly inhabited. The finest buildings here are the dove-cots, which represent lofty round-towers. It is thought that this place is the **Orebatis** of **Ptolemy**. Within a cannon-shot from the side of the town next **Ispahan**, is the tomb of a Persian saint, covered with a dome. In a court before it are two reservoirs of water, at twenty paces distance from each other. They are furnished with fish, some of which have rings of brass, gold or silver, in their noses. The fish of one of these basons are held so sacred, that the people imagine, that if any one presume to touch them, he will immediately drop down dead.

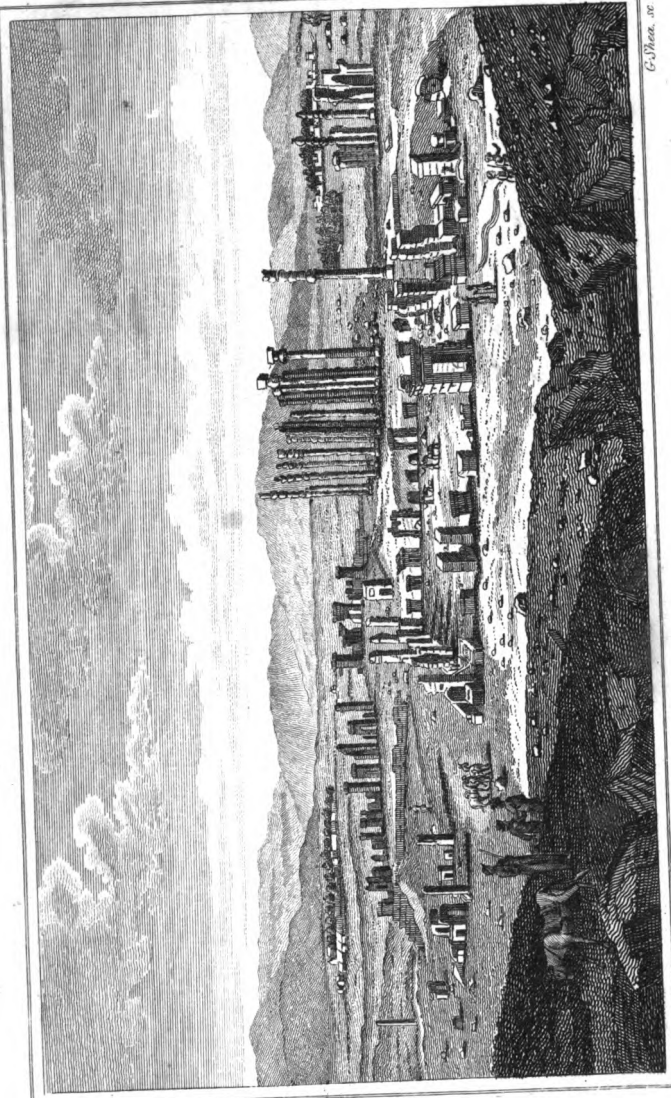
The two following days we proceeded through a fine country, interspersed with rivulets and villages, and having passed through **Anamabaet**, a large town, which is said to have separated Persia from **Parthia**, took up our lodging at a town named **Yes-**

de-cas, or Jesdegæes, seated on the side of a mountain, with a large valley before it. The houses rise from this valley one above the other, affording a fine prospect at a distance. On the top of a round eminence in the midst of the valley, is a castle built of earth, and opposite to it is a large caravansera. The inhabitants of this town eat the best bread in all Persia.

The next day I was twelve hours on horseback, in proceeding eight leagues, on account of the snow, and the ruggedness of a mountain over which we were obliged to pass; though my baggage was carried on four vigorous mules, and I myself was well mounted. I afterwards passed through pleasant plains, and at length arrived on the 13th at the ruins of the ancient Persepolis.

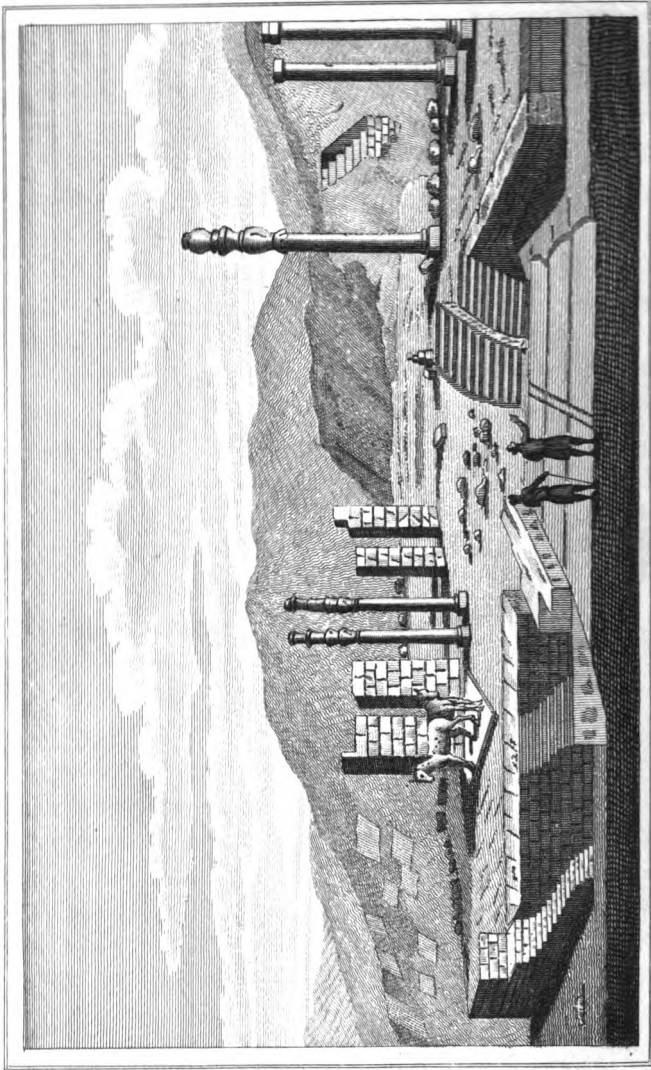
At a distance these magnificent remains appear as in a kind of amphitheatre, the mountains forming a half-moon, as if to embrace them. They are seated in a fine plain, that extends two leagues in breadth from the south-west to the north-east; and near forty leagues in length from the north-west to the south-east. This plain is usually called Mardasjo; the inhabitants pretend, that it contains 881 villages, and about 1,500 within the distance of twelve leagues around the ruins, including the villages seated among the mountains, some of which are adorned with beautiful gardens. In the winter season the greatest part of this plain is covered with water, which is favourable to the culture of the rice that grows there at that time. The soil of this agreeable plain is mostly converted into arable lands, and watered with a number of streams, that renders it exceedingly fertile. It abounds with several sorts of birds, particularly cranes, pigeons,

G. P. Stone, sc.



A View of the Ruins of the Palace of Persepolis from the East

Dublin, Published by J. Christie, 17, Regi's Lane.



The Ascent to the Columns.

Dublin. Published by J. Christie 17, King's Lane.

quails, snipes, partridges, hawks, and vast flocks of crows, which are very numerous throughout all Persia.

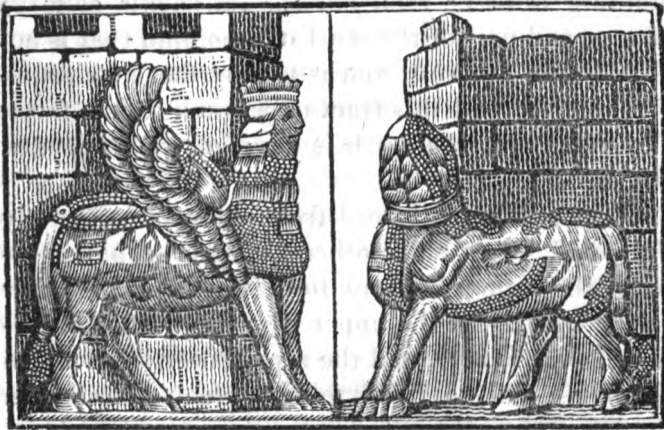
The ancient palace of the kings of Persia, usually called the House of Darius, and by the inhabitants Chel-menar, or Chil-minar, which signifies the forty pillars, is situated to the west, at the foot of the mountain of Kulierag-nét, or Compassion, anciently called the Royal Mountain, which is entirely composed of freestone. That superb edifice has the walls of three of its sides still standing. The front extends six hundred paces from north to south, and three hundred and ninety from east to west, as far as the mountain, where an ascent is formed between some scattered rocks, beyond which there appears to have been formerly some other buildings, the rocks in some places appearing smooth, and finely polished.

The top of this edifice presents to the view a platform of four hundred paces, extending from the middle of the front wall to the mountain; and along three sides of this wall is carried on a pavement of two stones joined together, eight feet broad. The height of the wall in some places is twenty-four feet, but it is not every where so high; in some places the earth about it is raised, and in others the wall itself has sunk. On examining the previous remains, we must proceed as if we were examining those celebrated beauties, whom age or sickness has brought low, that is, from the traces of the beauty we see, to form an idea of what they were. The stones of the wall are black, harder than marble, some of them finely polished, and many of them of such an amazing size, that it is difficult to conceive how they were able to remove and raise such prodigious masses.

The principal stair-case is placed between the middle of the front, and the northern end of the edifice. It consists of two flights of steps that wind off from each other to the distance of forty-two feet at the bottom. These steps are only four inches high, and fourteen in breadth; they are the most commodious I ever saw, except those of the viceroy's palace at Naples, which are, however, in my opinion, something higher. There are fifty-five of these steps on the northern side, and fifty-three to the south; but these last are not so entire as the others. I am likewise persuaded that there are several others under ground, that have been covered over by length of time, as well as part of the wall, which rises forty-four feet eleven inches high in the front. At the bottom of these two flight of steps is a single flight, extending fifty-one feet four inches from one to the other; from thence the two flights are carried off from each other, and return back from the centre at an equal distance from the extreme parts of the top; and above these flights is a pavement of large stones, and another single flight of steps, seventy-five feet wide, answering to that of the bottom, and leading up to the grand entrance of the edifice. This stair-case has a very fine and singular effect, answerable to the magnificent remains of the rest of the building.

On ascending the upper steps, the spectator sees before him, at the distance of forty-two feet from the front wall of the stair-case, two grand portals, and as many columns. These portals are twenty-two feet four inches in depth, and thirteen feet four inches in breadth. On the inside, upon a kind of pilaster, on each hand is a large figure in basso relievo; they bear some resemblance to the sphinx,

and are twenty-two feet from the fore to the hinder-legs, and fourteen feet and a half high. The faces of these animals are broken, and their bodies much damaged; but, what is most extraordinary, the breast and fore-feet project from the pilaster. That on the first portal is turned towards the staircase; that on the second, which has wings, faces the mountain. Indeed it is impossible to know what these figures, thus mutilated, were designed to represent; but the bodies have some resemblance to that of a horse. The reader will conceive a more perfect idea of these extraordinary pieces of antiquity, from the following cut, taken from Mr. Le Bruyn's drawings made on the spot.



On the upper part of these pilasters are characters, which, from their smallness and elevation, it is impossible to distinguish. The height of the first portal is thirty-nine feet, and that of the second twenty-eight; the pilasters stand on a base five feet two inches in height.

The two columns that appear between the portals are the least damaged of all, particularly with re-

spect to their capitals, and the other ornaments of the upper parts; but the bases are entirely covered over with earth. They are fourteen feet in circumference, and rise to the height of fifty-four feet. There were formerly two others between this and the last portal, several pieces of which lie half buried in the ground.

At the distance of fifty-two feet south of the same portal is a large basin for water, cut out of a single stone twenty feet long, and seventeen feet five inches in breadth, and raised three feet and a half above the surface of the floor. From this basin to the northern wall is an extent of ground comprehending a hundred and fifty paces in length, in which nothing is to be seen but the fragments of large stones, and part of the shaft of a column that is not fluted like the rest, and is twenty feet in circumference: beyond this tract of ground, and as far as the mountain, the earth is covered with heaps of stones.

Proceeding southward from the portals already described, you see two other flights of steps resembling the former, the one to the east, and the other to the west. On the upper part the wall is embellished with foliage, and the representation of a lion rending a bull, in basso relievo, much larger than the life. There are also small figures on the middle wall. This stair-case is half buried under the earth.

From hence extends a wall 45 feet in length, beyond the lower part of the staircase, and then is an interval of 67 feet, extending to the western front, which corresponds with the other, and has three ranges of figures one over the other, with a lion tearing an ass that has a horn projecting from the forehead; and between these animals and rows of figures

is a square filled with antique characters, the uppermost of which are defaced. The figures are less damaged in that part of the structure, where the ground is lower : but the wall which extends from the staircase to the western front, has not any figures. On the other side the stairs are three ranges of small figures ; but those in the upper row are only visible from the waist downwards. These figures are only two feet nine inches high, and the wall, which is five feet three inches in height, has an extent of 98 feet.

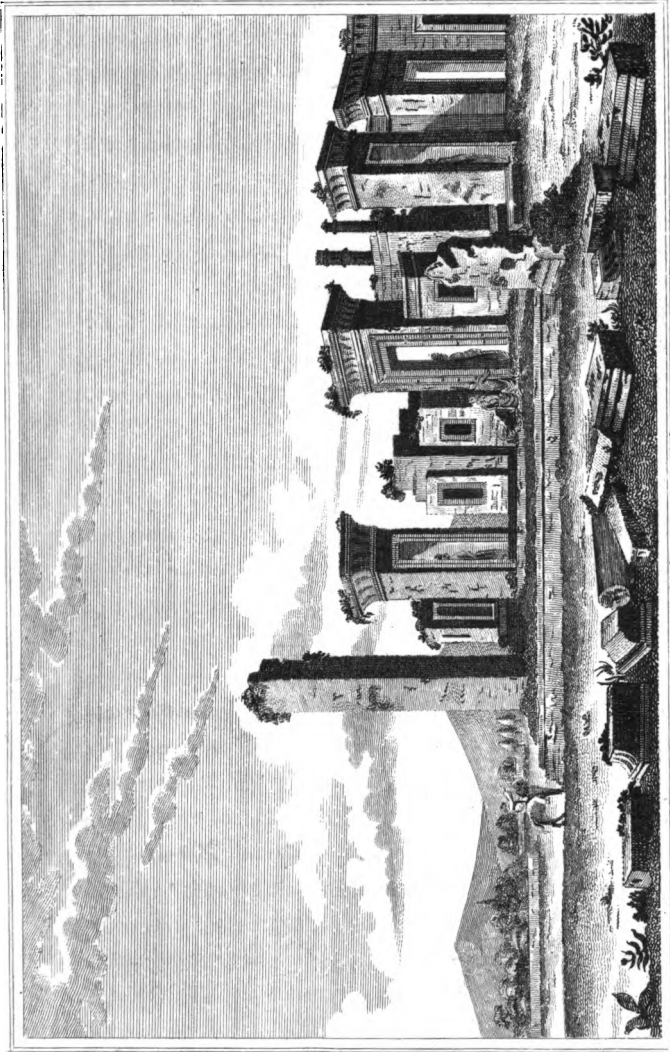
On the top of the steps last described, is an entrance into an open place paved with large stones, whose breadth is equal to the distance from the staircase to the first columns, which comprehends the space of 22 feet 2 inches. These columns are disposed into two ranges, each of which consists of six pillars, but none of them are entire ; there are also eight bases or pedestals, and the ruins of some others. At the distance of 70 feet 8 inches were formerly six rows of other pillars, each row consisting of six : these thirty-six pillars were likewise 22 feet 2 inches distant from each other, but only seven of them are now entire ; however, all the bases of the others are standing.

At the distance of 70 feet 8 inches from these rows of columns on the west, towards the front of the staircase, were only twelve other columns in two ranges, each of which contained six, but only five are now remaining. The ground is there covered with the fragments of columns, and the ornaments that served for their capitals ; between which are pieces of sculpture, representing camels on their knees. On the top of one of the columns is a compartment, representing camels in that posture.

On advancing towards the east, you are presented

with a view of several ruins, consisting of portals, passages and windows. The insides of the portals are adorned with figures in bas relief. These ruins extend 90 paces from east to west, and 125 from north to south, and are 60 paces both from the columns and the mountains. In the middle of these ruins the earth is covered with 76 broken columns, nineteen of which still support their entablature; their shafts are formed of four pieces, besides the base and capital.

At the distance of 118 feet from these columns to the south, is an edifice, that rises higher than any other part of the ruins, from its being situated on a hill. The front wall, which is five feet seven inches high on that side, is composed of a single range of stones, some of which are eight feet deep; and the wall extends 113 feet from east to west, but has neither figures, nor any other ornaments. However, in the middle of the front are the ruins of a double stair-case, on the sides of which are several figures. The rest of the building was chiefly composed of large and small portals, and is entirely destroyed. The largest of these portals is five feet wide, and five feet two inches deep. Among the rest, two portals appear to the north, with three niches, or windows, walled up. Under these portals are the figures of a man and two women, down to the knees, for their legs are covered with the earth that is raised against them. Under the other gate is the figure of a man, holding a lion by the mane. To the south is a portal and five windows, each of which is five feet nine inches wide, and eleven in height, including the cornice; their depth is equal to that of the grand portals. The two sides of this gate are carved with the figure of a man,

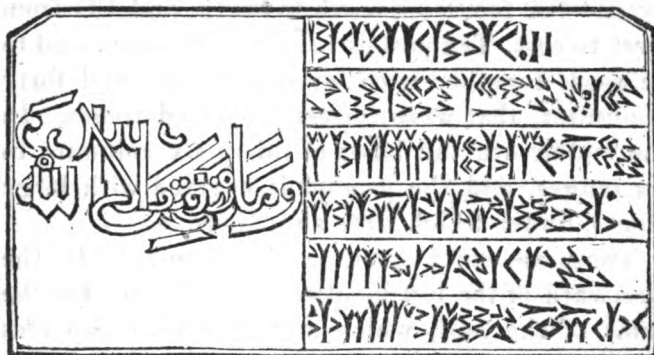


Maguire Sc.

The Portico to the East.

Dublin: Published and by J. Christie 17, Reg. J. and.

with something on his head resembling a tiara. He is accompanied by two women, one of whom holds an umbrella over his head. On the inside, three niches are covered with ancient Persian characters. We shall indulge the curious reader with two of these inscriptions. The meaning of the last is unknown; but the first, which is of a later date, signifies, "Strength is the gift of God alone."



There are two other gates to the west, that are not covered; within one of these is the figure of a man fighting a bull; with his left hand he grasps a horn in his forehead, while with his right he plunges a dagger into his belly. On the other side the figure, another man clasps the horn with his right hand, and stabs the beast with his left. The second portal has the figure of a man carved in the same manner, with a winged deer that has a horn in his forehead. Horns were anciently the emblems of strength and majesty, they were therefore given to the sun and moon; and Alexander was called by the Orientals, Dhulkarnam, or the horned, because he made himself king of the horns of the sun, that is, of the east and the west.

Behind this edifice are the ruins of another, which

exceed it in length by 38 feet. It has also niches and windows, the former of which are cut out of single stones. A little to the south is a double flight of steps, separated by walls embellished with small figures and foliage. Farther to the south are subterraneous passages, which extend a great length, and appear to have been aqueducts. Still farther to the south are the remains of another edifice, which extend 160 feet from north to south, and 191 from west to east. Ten portals belonging to it are still to be seen, together with seven windows, and forty inclosures, that were formerly covered rooms. In the middle are the bases of thirty-six columns, in six ranges, and the ground is covered with large stones, under which were aqueducts.

There anciently stood another structure to the westward of the last-mentioned building. On the ruins of the wall, which still rises near two feet above the pavement, are cut the figures of men in basso-relievo, each represented with a lance. The ground inclosed by this wall contains a number of round stones, that were the bases of columns.

On the east side of these last ruins are the remains of a beautiful stair-case, sixty feet in length, resembling that of the front wall: but though most of the steps are destroyed by time, the wall that separates the two flights is still eight feet in height, and adorned with figures almost as large as the life. The front contains the representation of a lion encountering a bull: there are also lions of the same workmanship on the wings of the stair-case; both of them accompanied with characters and figures almost as big as the life. Columns were formerly disposed between this edifice and the other last-mentioned. Among these ruins are four por-

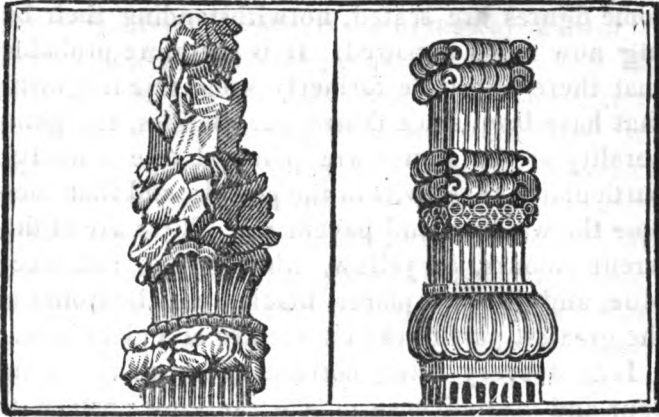
tals, each adorned on the inside with the figure of a man, and two women holding an umbrella over his head.

A little to the north side of these two last edifices are two portals with their pilasters, on one of which is also the figure of a man and two women, one of whom holds an umbrella over his head. Above these women is a small figure with wings, which are expanded to the sides of the portico. The lower part of the bust of this figure seems to terminate on the two sides with a spread foliage, and a kind of frieze. Over the second figure a man is seated in a chair with a staff in his hand, and another stands behind him, with his right hand upon the chair. A small figure above holds a circle in its left hand, and points to something in his right. Under this portal are three ranges of figures, all of which have their hands lifted up, and over the third pilaster, which still remains, two women hold an umbrella over the head of a man. The earth is covered with fragments of columns, and other antiquities.

From hence you proceed to the last ruins of the structures on the mountain. On the south side are two portals, under each of which a man is seated in a chair, with a staff in his right hand, and in his left a kind of vase. Behind him is another figure, which holds something on his head like the tail of a sea-horse, and has a linen cloth in his right hand. Below are three rows of figures with lifted hands: four in the first, and five in each of the other two rows. They are three feet four inches high: but the seated figure is much larger than the life. Above this are several ornamental ranges of foliage, the lowest of which is intermixed with small lions, and the highest with oxen. Over these ornaments

is a little winged figure, which holds in its left hand something that resembles a small glass, and makes a signal with its right. These portals are twelve feet five inches in breadth, and ten feet four inches deep, and the highest of the pilasters is from twenty-eight to thirty feet. On the two towards the north a man is seated, with a person behind him, like the preceding figures, and behind this are two other men, holding in their hands something that is broken; before the figure represented sitting, are two other figures, one with his hands placed on his lips, with an air of salutation, and the other holding a small vessel. Above these figures is a stone, filled with ornaments, and below are five ranges of figures, three feet in height: these are a band of soldiers armed in different manners. From the foot of these mountains you have a full view of all the ruins, except the walls and stair-cases, that cannot here be seen; and the whole appears as in the large plate.

No other difference is observable in the columns, except that some of them have capitals, and others have not; with respect to the elevation of those that are perfect, they are all from seventy to seventy-two feet high, and are eighteen feet five inches in circumference, except those near the first portals. The bases are round, and twenty-four feet five inches in circumference; these are four feet three inches high, and the lower moulding is one foot five inches thick. They have three sorts of ornaments, which may be termed capitals. In order to afford as perfect an idea as possible of the singular architecture observed in this palace, we have, for the satisfaction of the curious, given a cut or two of these capitals; one in its present state, and the other as it must have appeared before it was injured by time.



Besides the basso-relievos already mentioned, there are many others, particularly the representation of a triumph, or a procession of people bearing presents to a king, consisting of a great number of figures, with some led-horses, an empty chariot, a led camel, &c. The drapery of all the human figures in this edifice is extremely singular, and has no relation to that of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Their military habits are agreeable to the mode of the Persians and Medes. The rules of art are not observed in the figures, since no muscles are visible in the naked parts, and the figures themselves have a heavy air: nothing has been observed but the outlines, and this neglect causes them to appear stiff and inelegant: the draperies also have the same defects, and the whole has a tasteless sameness. However, the proportions have been finely kept, both in the great and small figures, which proves that those who made them were not entirely destitute of capacity, but were, probably, obliged to be too expeditious to finish them with proper care. The ornaments must, however, be acknowledged to be exceeding beautiful, as well as the chairs in which

some figures are seated, notwithstanding their being now much impaired. It is therefore probable, that there might be formerly some fine fragments that have been since destroyed. Besides, the generality of the stones are polished like a mirror, particularly those within the portals, and that compose the windows and pavements. These are of different colours, as yellow, white, grey, red, deep blue, and, in some places, black; but the stones of the greatest part of the edifice are of a clear blue.

Indeed every thing corresponds with the grandeur and magnificence of a great king's palace, to which the images and relievos give a surprising air of majesty. It is certain, there have been very stately portals, and grand galleries, to afford a communication with all the detached parts of the structure; most of the columns, whose remains are still so beautiful, were certainly intended to support those galleries, and there even seem to be still some remains of the royal apartments. In a word, the magnificence of these ruins can never be sufficiently admired, and the structure must undoubtedly have cost immense treasures. This palace, which was the glory of all the East, owed its destruction to the debauchery and frenzy of Alexander the Great, who, after he had preserved it from the ravages of war, above two thousand years ago, reduced it to ashes at the solicitations of Thais, a Grecian courtesan.

There are two ancient tombs of the kings near the mountain, one to the north, and the other to the south; both of them are hewn out of the rock, and are noble fragments of antiquity. Their fronts are covered with figures and other ornaments. The form of both is nearly the same, and therefore a description of that to the north will serve. That

part of the tomb on which the figures are carved, is forty feet wide: the height is almost equal to the width below, and the rock extends on each side to the distance of sixty paces. Below, a range of four columns support the entablature on their capitals, each of which is composed of the heads of two oxen as far as the breast, with the fore legs bent on the top of each column. The gate, which is surrounded with ornaments, is placed between two of these columns in the middle, but is at present almost closed up. Above the columns is the cornice and entablature, adorned with eighteen small lions in bass-relief, nineteen on each side advancing towards the middle, where there is a small ornament resembling a vase. Above the lions are two ranges of figures, almost as large as the life, fourteen in each range, armed, and lifting up their hands, as if to support the building above them; and on the side is an ornament, somewhat in the form of a pillar, with the head of some animal that has only one horn. Above this is another cornice, ornamented with leaves. On the left, where the wall projects, are three rows of niches, one above each other, each of them containing two figures, armed with lances, and three others on the side, armed in the same manner. There are likewise two on the right side, with their left hands placed on their beards, and the right on their body; on the side of these are three others, in the same position as those opposite. At some distance below, and between these figures and an ornament that has some distant resemblance of a round pillar, there is another figure on each side, very much impaired. Above, on three steps, stands a figure, that has the air of a king, pointing at something with his right hand, and holding a

kind of bow in his left. Before him is an altar, on which an offering is made, from whence the flames are represented ascending. Above this altar appears the moon; and, it is said, that there was once a sun behind the figure; but nothing of it is now to be seen. In the middle, and above all this, appears a small mystic figure, that is also to be seen in several parts of the other buildings.

Two leagues from these ruins is a place called Noxi Rustan, where are four tombs of persons of eminence among the ancient Persians, that much resemble those of Persepolis, only they are cut much higher in the rock. This place receives its name from one Rustan, whose figure is there carved to perpetuate his memory. He is said to have been a potent prince, of an immense stature; for it is pretended that he was forty cubits high; and, according to the same ridiculous tradition, he is said to have lived 1113 years.

The tombs have their bases eighteen feet above the surface of the causeway, and rise about four times that height; and the rock is twice as high as the tombs, which are sixty feet wide in the middle. Under each tomb is a separate table, filled with large figures in low relief; and on two of these tables are some traces of men fighting on horseback. Between these tombs are three other tables, covered with figures, on which is a man on horseback, preceded by two others, and followed by a third, which is almost defaced. There are also some figures in the space between the two last works, and three under the third, two of which hold out their hands to each other. One of these is a woman, and both of them are half-buried in the earth.

These tombs possess an extent of 280 paces, and

at sixty paces distance from the first of them is a little square building. The figure of a man on horseback, between the two tombs, and in the middle of the fourth niche, has his hair shaped according to our mode, with a crown upon his head, and a pointed bonnet rising above it. He is dressed after the Roman manner, and has a large sword by his side, with the hilt in his left hand; his right is presented to a person before him. The third figure, which is also dressed in the Roman manner, opens his hands like a suppliant.

The figures half buried appear on the side of the third tomb, and two of them have their hands placed in a kind of circle. That in the middle, which is on horseback, represents Rustan in a Roman dress; he has likewise a bonnet, and an ornament like a crown, with flowing hair, a large beard, and his left hand upon the hilt of his sword: but notwithstanding the pretence of his prodigious stature, both he and his horse are of the common size. Before him is the figure of a woman, with flowing hair; she likewise wears a crown. She is dressed like Pallas, and supports part of her drapery with her left hand. The third figure represents a military man, with a tiara on his head, and his left hand likewise grasps the hilt of his sword. The fifth compartment is an imperfect appearance of figures fighting on horseback. All these are carved on the rock.

On the western side of this mountain, at 200 paces distance, are two tables with figures, likewise cut in the rock. That to the left represents two men on horseback, one of whom grasps a circle, of which the other has quitted the hold.

The tomb, said to have been that of Naxi Rus-

tan, evidently appears to be that made by Darius Hystaspes, from its exactly corresponding with the description given of it by Ctesias, in his History of Persia, after Herodotus; and with that of Diodorus Siculus.

On the 19th of February I left Persepolis, and the next morning reached Schiras, the capital of the province of Fars, and one of the greatest and most considerable cities in Persia. It is situated between the mountains, in a plain, between seven and eight leagues in length, and about four in breadth; as fine and as fertile a spot as imagination can conceive.

The city, which is about two leagues round, is not surrounded with walls, for they have been suffered to fall to ruin; but the gates, which remain entire, are large, strong, and covered with iron plates. Of these there are four, opening to the four cardinal points. The great streets are bordered with trees; these are their principal ornaments, for there are not many grand bazars, nor fine baths. The coffee-houses are spacious enough, consisting of scaffolds built over the running water, to give them the greater coolness. As to the mosques, there are nine more sumptuous than the rest, and, besides them, about three hundred more, that serve for chapels.

The public gardens at Schiras, which are about twenty, are extremely delightful; the trees are the largest of the kind, perhaps, in the whole world; these are planted without order, and the soil enamelled with flowers, which are in the greatest plenty, and of the brightest colours. In the king's garden, to the south of Schiras, I observed a tree, the trunk of which was eight yards round. The in-

habitants, from the great age of this tree, conceive the highest veneration for it; they go to pray under its shade, and tie chaplets, amulets, and pieces of their clothes to the boughs. The sick, or others for them, come there to burn incense, to fix lighted candles to it, and to perform other superstitious ceremonies, with the hopes of recovering their health. There are, throughout Persia, many trees thus superstitiously revered by the people.

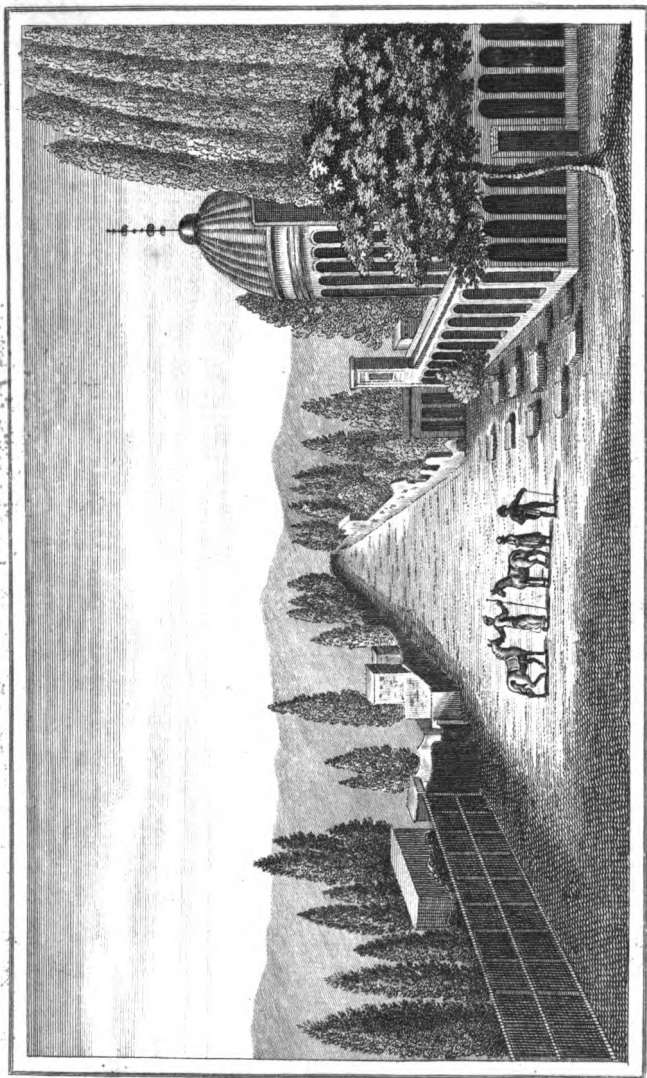
About a quarter of a league to the east of Schiras is a tomb of Sheik Sadi, one of the most celebrated Persian authors, in prose and verse, who lived about four hundred years ago, and whose works contain the finest morals. On one side of his tomb is a large octagon bason, the water of which is moderately warm, and contains plenty of fish consecrated to the sheik; but the common people imagine, that if any person takes them, he will be punished with sudden death: but though I was several times at Schiras, I never went thither without having a good plate of these fish with the Carmelite friars, with whom I lodged.

On the same side of the city, by the corner of a mountain, are the ruins of an ancient castle, and at some distance from it, a convent of the Dervises, near which are two deep holes in the ground. The mouth of one of them is four feet and a half round, and it is of an unfathomable depth, I was told, that on throwing a large stone into it, one might distinctly repeat the Lord's prayer before the noise of its falling ceased; and this I found to be true, by trying the experiment three times successively.

A league beyond these ruins, you see the remains of an ancient building of stone and marble, which, notwithstanding the solidity of the structure, and

the durableness of the materials, is greatly decayed. It is a small temple, thirty-eight or forty paces round, situated on the declivity of a mountain, with three gates, which are still pretty entire, opening to the south and east. They are eleven feet high, and three broad; on the sides of each is the figure of a woman, done in relief, as big as the life, resembling those at Persepolis. The Persians call this place Mador Sulemon, that is, the mother of Solomon; they pretend that she built the temple, and came thither to pay her devotions. Bizarus relates, that a tomb is found there inscribed with Hebrew characters; but I saw no such thing, and am persuaded that these opinions are ill founded.

To the north-west of the city is a delightful avenue, extending to the king's garden, which is ninety-five paces wide, and nine hundred and sixty-six in length. On passing through the lodge at the end of the garden, you come into another beautiful avenue, bordered with cypress-trees; this is six hundred and twenty paces long, and twenty broad, and is covered over in the middle with flowers. You there see a delightful house, surrounded with a fine canal. At each corner of the building is a square fountain, that mingles its streams with the water of the canal. This house is spacious, and in the middle of it is a grand hall, covered with a dome, filled with niches both within and without. This beautiful avenue is bordered on each side with seventy-two lofty cypress-trees, one of which is twenty-two palms in circumference. We have given a view of the avenue and hall in the print. Behind the house is another avenue, bordered with cypress and senna trees, equal in extent to that of the others.



A Beautiful Avenue near the Kings Garden at Schiras.

Dublin. Published by J. Christie, 17 Reg's Lane.

This is called Baeg Siae, or the Royal Garden.

The fertility of the country about Schiras is very surprising. It produces the finest horses, and the best pastures. The sheep are so fat, that their tails weigh eighteen or twenty pounds weight. As to the fruits, the pomegranates are as large as the head of a new-born child: but the best fruit is the grape, of which there are three principal sorts; one very small, which is sweet and delicious, and the seed so minute and tender that it can scarcely be perceived: the great white grape, and a large red grape, the bunches of which weigh twelve or thirteen pounds. Of this grape alone they make the excellent wine distinguished by the name of, the wine of Schiras, which, for its fine colour, and the richness of its taste, is esteemed the best, not only in Persia, but throughout the East. It indeed does not please at first, it appearing to be rough; but when one has drank it a few days, one cannot help preferring it to all others; and those who are used to it can relish no other wine. The people also make rose-water and oil, preserves and pickles.

On the 24th I left Schiras, where I had lodged in the monastery of the Carmelites, who give a very civil reception to all Europeans who come to them, without distinction of nation or religion, and thankfully take whatever any one gives them, in return for their hospitality.

Two days after, I took up my lodging at a caravansera named Kafer, situated by a town of the same name, that has several hundred houses, and a great number of gardens, in which is plenty of the most excellent fruits, as peaches, nectarines, figs and dates. The town is situated on the bank of a river that runs by in a deep hollow.

On the 27th, I proceeded seven leagues, and the next day reached Jarron, a town consisting of 350 houses, and most of them built of date wood. This town is remarkable for the manufacture of felt bonnets, and for a kind of camblet: but is more particularly famous for its dates, which are esteemed the best in the world. The adjacent country abounds in water, brought thither by subterranean canals.

On the 5th of March we arrived at Laer, the capital of the province of the same name, situated between the mountains, in $29^{\circ} 40'$ north latitude, in a sandy country, rendered barren by the heat of the climate.

On the 7th of March I set out from Laer at three in the afternoon, and passing by the village of Cherscoff, which is full of gardens, arrived at Gormouth, a town which, with its gardens, consisting chiefly of date-trees, was a league in length; and beyond the town groves of these trees extended as far as the eye could reach. The inhabitants of Caramania Deserta retire, during summer, into these woods, to shelter themselves from the heat, which, in that season, is insupportable. I had taken two camels at Laer, the one to carry water, and the other provisions, because the country was deserted; and really, for twenty-five leagues, I did not see a single person, every body being then retired into the woods, or to the mountains; and as the dates were then ripe, the people lived on almost nothing else. This fruit is nourishing, and wherever it grows there is a certainty of finding water.

On the 9th I proceeded six leagues through a mountainous and stony country, where are nevertheless many streams of running water, especially in spring. On the 12th we reached Courestoon, a

village that abounds in dates, and a kind of wild plums. The inhabitants cultivate tobacco, and sow great quantities of a kind of grain called zoura, which grows in bunches, somewhat like the ears of Indian corn, on canes eight or nine feet long. Of this they make bread, which is of a reddish colour; they also bake it like rice. As I was preparing to set out, at five in the evening, I observed that the air was darkened, as when the sky is covered with clouds; and considering that this could not be the case, I recollected that these clouds consisted of locusts; and indeed, as they passed, a prodigious number of those destructive insects fell to the ground: they were the largest I had ever seen, and so heavy, that they could not rise again. The peasants gathered them as they fell; and told me, that in this season such clouds appear almost every night: having gathered, they dry and salt them, after which they live upon them, and sell them to each other very cheap, as they are their common food.

This day we proceeded five leagues in a very level country; but through moving sands, into which the horses sunk. After advancing a league, we passed by a small village, abounding in date-trees and running-water: the inhabitants I found there cutting their corn; and as I had seen the people about Persepolis sowing their land about three weeks before, I could not help thinking it very remarkable, that I should see people sow corn after the middle of February, and reap it before the middle of March following. This has happened to me several times in my journeys through Persia, in the like space of three weeks. I have seen them plowing in one place; two days after the people have been sowing wheat; in a few days I have seen

the blade begin to sprout up out of the ground; then, advancing further, I have seen the green corn; then it has appeared in ear; then ripe, then cut, and then threshed. Indeed, the empire of Persia is so situated, and so extensive, that it has summer and winter at the same time; the one on the one side, and the other at the other.

The next day I set out at two in the morning, and reached Gambroon, or, as it is called by the Persians, Bander Abassie, or the Port of Abas. Gambroon is situated to the south-east of Schiras, as that town is of Ispahan. The distance between this place and the last-mentioned city is computed at 183 leagues; but these leagues are very long, and the mountains, with the badness of the roads, render the journey very tedious.

The houses of Gambroon are built so near the water, that, in a high sea, they are washed by the waves. It is situated between the isles of Ormus and Kismis, the one to the left, and the other to the right; and the coast of Arabia, being bordered by high mountains, may also be seen in a clear day to the right, at 20 leagues distance. Three leagues behind Gambroon are also very high mountains, which are far from barren, being covered with trees, and abounding with water. The territory belonging to Gambroon is, however, dry and sterile, consisting of a moving sand. The town is surrounded by a wall on the land side, and has two small fortresses. The houses are computed at 14 or 1500, one-third of which are Indian Gentoos, or idolaters, and a few Jews; the greatest part are Persians, and the rest English, French and Dutch, belonging to their respective companies. The governor of the province usually resides there, and not at the

capital, which is called Neris, and is ten days journey from thence: he has a pretty large and commodious palace at the end of the town, at the greatest distance from the sea, built with stone brought from the isle of Ormus.

This town has no port, but the road is as large, good and safe, as any in the universe; however, it has one great inconvenience, which is, that the vessels that stay there during the summer are subject to damage by the worms. The ships lie at anchor in four or five fathoms water, in as secure a situation as if they were in a basin.

The water of Gambroon is very brackish, and drank by none but the poor: it is taken out of pits dug three fathoms deep in the sand. The common people drink the water of Mines, a village at the distance of a league from the port; and the people in easy circumstances drink the water of Issin, a large and fine village, situated at the foot of the mountains.

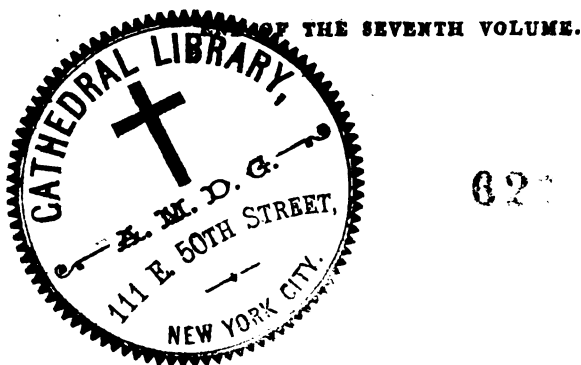
As to the air of Gambroon, it is extremely disagreeable and unhealthy; the wind almost throughout the year changes four times a day. From midnight to break of day it blows from the north, and is cold: from break of day till ten or eleven o'clock in the morning it blows from the east, and is also cold: a south wind arises about three o'clock, which is hot, it proceeding from the sea: this changes to the west at sun-set, and blows hot till midnight. These sudden changes of the air from hot to cold produce many diseases, that are extremely fatal to foreigners, the most common of which are the dysentery, the bloody-flux, and malignant fevers.

Provisions are here very good, and in great plenty, particularly fish, which are brought fresh on shore

night and morning; they sometimes catch antelopes and partridges, but the natives live chiefly on milk and plants, of which there are all sorts here. As to fruits, they being brought from a great distance, cannot be had very cheap; the most common are nectarines, quinces, citrons, oranges, pomegranates, figs, melons, apples, pears, nuts, almonds, and grapes of several kinds.

On the 13th of March the principal person belonging to the French company took me with him to dine with the governor, who entertained us with great magnificence, after the Persian manner; we had music and dancing, and, among the rest, a young Indian posture-master.

I had not been long at Gambroon before the climate affected all my men, who were taken very ill, and I was much disordered myself, when, being informed of the danger of our being soon carried off, if we remained there, I resolved to return to Ispahan, without waiting any longer for a vessel I expected from India. I therefore set out, but was taken so ill at Tanguedelan, that my life was despaired of; I recovered however, reached Ispahan, and soon after returned to Europe.



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